

# MORNINGSTAR

## The People's Intersolar Republic of Bhosnaya

1.1

Dossier

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2026

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# THE RIMWARD SHIELD

On the duskward edge of the Hegemon lie the war-torn sectors of the **People's Intersolar Republic of Bhosnaya**, more commonly referred to as the **Bhosnaya Republic**. Situated across the Plentar and Renethal Supersectors, it is one of the last heavily populated regions before the Gulf of Bhos, a nearly starless void between two stellar formations of the Perseus Arm. The Bhos cluster is nestled along the Yaga Nebula, once the Hegemon's contested Rimward Frontier.

After the Progenic Recession, in the interest of Hegemon security, the Summit Council declared that, with the existential threat of the newly strengthened Karanova Republic, a 'shield' had to be forged to ensure the collective security of the Midworlds. That very shield would be made of the Bhos cluster.

The Bhos were a fractious people divided across thirty star systems rife with internecine conflict that often spilled across the border, threatening Hegemon tradelanes. Mercenaries and pirates, nevermind the various warring national entities, posed significant complications, engendering little desire to emigrate in Consumers who rightly believed the cluster to be dangerous.

Ashakai-Bhenk, Speaker of the Summit in the 4th Fiscal Century, had been struggling with the aftermath of the Heritage Wars and the Declaration of New Mankind. With costs rising and countless Unionist attacks peaking as a result of billions no longer considered licensed members of the human species, the notion of yet another war ran counter to public sentiment.

However, not long after the Declaration reached the Bhos sector via quickship datagrams, roughly half the cluster's governments cried out for membership to the Thousand Empires, while the nations that decried the Hegemon were met with spontaneous protests across their territories. Wanvath Underwriting MacroCorp determined that more than forty percent of the identifiable population was pro-Hegemon and that, in this, there was opportunity for mutual gain.



*Top: Current flag of the People's Intersolar Republic of Bhosnaya, circa 9/90. Note the incorporated Windrose, a common feature on flags of Hegemonic states.*

*Bottom: Administrative flag variant. Note the purple color and additional crown.*

Bhosnaya's political instability was legendary. They predated the Hegemon with ancestral origins dating back to the Second Exodus and the time of the Solarians. While each major world is culturally distinct, they are ultimately all Bhos and while they have no consistent history, their culture is strong. War was a constant to them, their relations riddled with ancient hatreds and legendary animosity. The task of unifying such a fractured people was not a task to be treated lightly.

**Joint Venture Accrual**, consisting of Armasyn, Source Unlimited, Teranos, and the newly formed Muskov Milisya MiliCorp, among others, was created in an endeavor to bring The Market and Stellarization to the eager Bhos. They were met with resistance from half the nations, who rejected the notion of Hegemonic membership with the barrel of a gun.

Directorate Tributaries instantly engaged with Bhos pro-monarchist fleets and armies as they defended MacroCorp assets. Meanwhile, Corpo-financed mercenaries took the offensive, linking up with pro-Heg forces on planets, orbitals, and asteroids throughout the region. Countering them were operatives hailing from the Karanova Republic, as well as the Uthmani League.

War was prevented from spilling back into the Hegemon at any cost, resulting in several deployments of Barakan Elite that saw the destruction of three orbitals and sterilization of the world of Pydna. Justifications for further military action grew over time, extending to Near-Human populations that the Joint Venture insisted undermined the destiny of New Mankind, but also included the discovery of several anomalous encounters that required direct involvement by the Audit's High Oversight. This instability, combined with hundreds of millions of new Consumers, briefly destabilized The Market, but with reassurances from the Joint Venture, the brief recession was considered worthwhile.

Thirty five fiscal-cycles of constant, grueling conflict saw the new Bhosnaya Republic carved out of eleven star systems in 4/81-324, although the holdout nations would continue to resist the new 'unified' government. Agents of the Karanova Republic continued to weaponize Unionist groups and hostile governments to varying degrees of success, as nations collapsed and reconstituted with adjusted loyalties. Meanwhile, the Uthmani League siphoned sector resources to aligned factions, especially those with near-human populations.

The Bhosnaya Republic itself continues to shift, but the region perseveres, despite experiencing several wars every generation that reshape borders or shift the capital to new planets. Regardless, Corpo entities continue to pour vast amounts of material and products into the economy. In the end, unification resulted in both a wildly lucrative collection of star systems as well as a permanent quagmire that contains Karanova and Uthmani League's influence on the rest of the Hegemon.



*The Star of the Republic is the symbol of the Bhos cluster between the Nebula and the Gulf. It represents the entire Bhosnaya sector's twenty-five colonized systems and six orbital habitats.*

# BHOSNAYA REPUBLIC



## STELLAGRAPHY OF THE BHOS CLUSTER

## **Odris: *First, Eldest***

Oda was the first planet successfully colonized, and so the Odris believe themselves the first true Bhos, despite the claims of the Vuta peoples. Their massive colony ship remains grounded at the center of the planet's primary city of Odrysae, where it serves as a place of governance, and is home to Konosa, the greatest library in the Bhos cluster.

The Odrisians value scholarly pursuits and are dedicated to the rituals of their ancestors, many of which have been lost or altered over the centuries. This has put them at odds with the many religio-subscriptions that have spread after alignment with the Hegemon, which makes Odris an on-again off-again ally, depending on religious tensions.

Konoso Library is a shining beacon of academia and has been heavily invested in by Wanvath Underwriting which keeps a permanent office here and protects the grounds with Milisya MiliCorp mercenaries. While the library has been burned down several times, it retains one of the oldest collections of logicors and even *books* in the southern Hegemon. Here scholars from across Known Space come, paying tuition fees or gaining sponsorships to learn.

The planet remains sparsely populated despite its age, its three continents predominantly wild. Early provolved fauna with direct genetic lineage to Cradleworld stock still roam. Most famous of these are the Minayan styrs that are prized all the way to Protea for their tender meat. The Oda drovers regularly clash with one another as they drive their herds, leading to countless visutel serials that depict these territorial groups known for fighting off bandits and dueling in quickdraw contests to the death.

## **Vuta: *Opportunists***

The Vuta take their name from the first captain of the starship that discovered the bountiful world they would colonize. They were supposed to be scouts, but something happened and either they shirked their duties or adhered to their avarice. They did not return to their masters and claimed Vuta, a rare habitable world, for themselves.

They are a proud people, but they have inherited a hatred by many other Bhos who view them as inherently untrustworthy. Legends still tell of this in several cultures with claims of entire vessels needing to be abandoned due to starvation as their ancestors sought a home in the Bhos cluster. Vuta consider themselves the *first* Bhos in contradiction with the Odris, and will

happily throw a punch if contested. Their planet is abundant in resources, especially hydrocarbon and fissile fuels vital to the sector.

Twin major polar city zones and matching skyhooks made Vuta the 'gateway' to the Bhos cluster. Heavily defended with soldiers armed to the teeth with advanced weaponry, pocketsteel and even several regiments of assault-harness shock troops, they wear the hatred for them by other Bhos with a smug pride.

If the Vuta were the true firsts of anything it was membership to the Hegemon which has never wavered, a relationship that has made them vital to the Thousand Empires. This has led to further investment with Armasyn and Stratos MacroCorps establishing various facilities including Velanite storage facilities in orbit.

A Vuta has never been Supreme Chairman of the Republic and they do not seek political influence. Instead the unified government of the Vuta star system focuses entirely on managed development. Amongst the Bhos they are exemplary merchants and business people with strong relationships with the other Midworlds and the ExeCor which they will use to leverage against any that take their animosity to violence.

### **Dayan:** *Last, predators*

The Dayan are descendants of the Bhos who took longest to find a planet of their own. Made up of outcasts and refugees of countless conflicts, these Bhos made a final push to the furthest rimward territory before erupting out of the Outside into the lonely orbit of a rogue planet they called Iba. A massive gas giant without a star, it is warmed by its own core that ignites sections of the surface while maintaining a small network of rocky moons that the Dayan settled.

For generations, they survived as a wandering and almost piratical culture, raiding orbitals and preying on weaker settlements. They often played the part of mercenaries in the wars of the greater nations, but some time two hundred years before Market Open they were driven out of the central sector by the Harvat. This history has left them with a poor reputation that has never fully faded. Among the Bhos, the Dayan are often treated as opportunists, raiders, and unreliable partners. They have close ties with the Uthmani League and will even work with Exogen which have made them *persona non grata* with the Hegemon.

### **Harvat:** *Warriors, unyielding*

The Harvat are believed to be direct descendants of a Solarian militant order or warrior tribe, potentially shipboard security. They have retained ancient customs that are questionable, including human sacrifice, but this is tolerated by the Hegemon despite protests from Trappist Papists. The Harvat are a fiercely martial people, defined by inherited discipline, ancient rites, and a long history of conflict with the Dayan who they see as the worst aspects of the Bhos peoples.

The Harvat settled their star system only after the largest colony ships settled the core of the sector, which makes them somewhat an Orbiter strain of humanity with many shared genetic and evolutionary aspects associated with living in space. They make great use of bionetics to supplement any shortcomings while in gravity wells.

The Harvat system has dozens of rocky planets that orbit a massive quasi-star, which anchors dozens of leylines that connect Harvat, and in turn the Bhos sector, to the rest of Known Space.

### **Thraesh:** *Unbound, Builders*

The Thraesh are an Orbiter people who inhabit hundreds of asteroids throughout the Thrae Asteroid Super-Belts which stretch across over a dozen star systems in the largest, densest, network of asteroids in Known Space. The Thraesh people are known as miners and shipbuilders with customs that go back to Béal Feirsde.

At the heart of the Thrae mass is a large proto-planet, which has been dug out over the generations and is home to several million. The Thraesh believe the belts are their own and protect them fiercely from all comers, but they are known to align to any faction for resources that they deem vital.

The Thraesh are defined by extraction, construction, and orbital life. They are among the great industrial cultures of the Bhos and are even responsible for the construction of several Starliner-class vessels, which has put them at odds with Stratos Industrial while it has also made them fabulously wealthy.

### **Sha'rur:** *Reborn, undaunted*

Sha'rur is an ice world and the former power broker of the region before the Hegemon's Joint Venture and once the seat of the Daeshian Empire. Notorious for slavery, the Daeshian kings were aligned with the Catraethi Regenum and the Kantaur Dominion, providing a steady source of Bhos slaves for both powers.

Sha'rur resisted the Joint Venture outright, even attempting to counter-invade into Civil Space with the help of Karanovans. This resulted in the Joint Venture's first use of Barakan Elite during the conflict that later depopulated the southern hemisphere of Sha'rur's capital planet.

Despite this mixed and brutal history, Sha'rur is the current capital of the Bhosnaya Republic with Supreme Chairman Ahldar Tomovyr, a Sha'ruran, having held the position for a decade. Sha'rur's population remembers the Barakan, and they will never betray the Hegemon for fear of their return even six centuries later.

### **Autariat:** *The Broken Mirror Cuts*

The Autariatae lost their first world, Baghrez, in a fierce conflict millennia ago and were driven to a nearby star system without any habitable worlds. They found a gas giant so massive that it unbalances the orbit of its weak local star and possessed hundreds of moons which they colonized and developed until they passed as livable. Wary of ever being displaced again, the Autarian moons are each a fortress, bristling with orbital capable artillery and ordinance while their surfaces are paved over formacrete hiding gunports and redoubts ready to repel any threat.

The peoples of these moons are fiercely independent despite their shared heredity. Their nations have rarely known a century of peace between them, often using little more than assault towers to invade one another. Conflict among them is constant, but their disunity has limits: especially when any outside power attempts to dominate the region, the Autariatae unite.

By many, they are considered some of the best Orbiter and void shock troops in Known Space. Their distinctive helmets and bespoke armor as well as their unique thruster packs were the basis for the Muskov Milisya MiliCorp's Armored Mobility Unit heavy assault harness.

### **Ghetham:** *They March*

Ghetham was once a beautiful world, or so legend claims. Colonized by a united effort of several different coldships, the Ghethamites insist that it was their world that was meant to be where all Bhos should live. If that was the dream then the reality speaks to the truth of the Bhos culture.

Millennia ago, part of the Ghetham population was driven below the surface after an atomika exchange. In response they unleashed a neutronic bombardment that killed everything on the surface. While the survivors have thrived in tunnel systems riddling the planet's mantle, the world above is crisscrossed with wartime trenches that can reach a kilometer deep. Here, ancient, pre-Hegemon creations and self-repair "Cobots" seek out resources and pathways into human held tunnel systems to continue plans their forgotten creators set for them. Seasonal assaults on the human populace are a grim constant as the Gethamani struggle to survive, able to leave their homes only when the Cobot hordes are defeated fisk in and fisk out.

Ghetham's primary resource is *bodies*. Its people are fed into the armies of Bhosnaya and, increasingly, the Directorate who use them as anti-ergoid shock troops. The planet is a recruiting ground, a wound that keeps bleeding out soldiers from vast subterranean cities, warmed by the planet's core.

### **Sharmaeth:** *Twinside, the Breadbasket*

Sharmaeth is a tidally locked planet with one day side and one night side orbiting a gentle star still shrouded in the nebula gases that gave it life. Sarmeath is one of the few Bhos worlds capable of supporting mass agriculture at significant scale. Because of this, it has been relatively spared from direct conflict. Its value is too obvious to waste in a sector that is, almost, always starving.

Sharma Bhos are no less able of combat but insist on ritual battles when it comes to their own territories. Sharmaeth's moon, *Polje*, is where all conflicts for the surface are fought. Interestingly, this custom is maintained by Karanovans, Hegemon and the other Bhos peoples although no formal contract exists.

### **Ghomb: *Half-Kin***

Ghomb has the only major near-human population among the Bhos peoples that survived the creation of the Republic. Ghombians are believed to be cousins of the Kongari of the Uthmani League. They appear in the region some time during the Wandering, an epoch of abandonment and "Habit" craft capable of Outside travel. The Ghombians are initially embraced by their neighbors, appreciated for their physical prowess, willingness to combat the dangers of the region and arrival with new technologies.

After membership with the Hegemon, the Ghombians were driven out of Bhos space and forced back to their own system. Ghomb is now one of the constant warzones of the region, financed directly by the Uthmani League, and sees the Bhosnayan military entrenched in half the star system with the Ghomb defending what few worlds they have left.

### **Baghreza Dva: *The Culture***

Baghrez Dva has the largest population of the cluster and is by far the most developed system. It has often been the Republic's capital than any other world. Unlike the older Bhos worlds, Baghreza Dva was worldshaped by LaansCorp in the Fifth fiscal-century, usurping Teranos MacroCorp for the rights to do so.

Prospectors determined that, with enough particulates seeded into the mid and upper atmosphere, the planet could be shielded from the worst of its parent star's intense heat and radiation. An aggressive atomika campaign was carried out to achieve these conditions at half the price that Teranos could in a quarter of the time. The project succeeded, but imperfectly.

Baghrez is now wracked by constant, polluted, storms. Its inhabitants must wear protective gear and filter-masks, yet they are a proud people made up of the hard Bhos who lived there and the descendants of colonists from Protea. Baghrez is a Hegemon creation, forged from heavy, multilateral investment for the express purpose of making something valuable from nothing. This was done with a direct hand by the Dumno Clan, including Dumno-Ualos' descendent Dumno-Naamjaak who maintains his estate there.

Baghreza Dva is home to the sector's only ansible array other than the capital and communicates developments with The Market directly. Every MacroCorp maintains an office here but it is LaansCorp that must be dealt with for every deal holding a rare sector wide monopoly on trade deals.

### **Suden:** *The Armed Strangers*

Caught between the orbits of the Divine Twins, *Auklion* a large red dwarf and a parasitic neutron star, *Auseklis*, the Sudeni live aboard a relatively new Stratos designed *Bastion* class space station. At forty kilometers across, it presents as a reflective 'cube' that was christened the *Kospol*, absorbing energy from both stars on every inch of its hull. Wildly expensive to build and one of the few macrostructures built in the Eighth Fiscal Century, this was done to utilize new methods in stellar mining.

The Sudeni population was drawn from Bhos security ships that escorted the *Kospol* as well as Stratos employees, predominantly indentured from all over the Hegemon. The century that it took the haul the station into place resulted in strong ties between the two groups who weathered pirate attacks and the constant risks of operating so close to the Divine Twins.

Sudeni have evolved a unique martial culture with a rich blend of different warrior and soldiering customs from across the Hegemon, especially dueling. This is paired with their stellar miners who are, despite their title, more technologists than the mental picture of burly pick-ax wielding laborers. In order to harness and derive resources from a star requires brilliant minds and Stratos has further invested in an Academy, the *Kavadratas*.

The station now also serves as a vital kosmoplex for Armada fleets operating along the border of the Karanova Republic which use it to refuel and rearm in conjunction as a mine and foundry for stellar resources. The station has grown in the last century, even building outposts throughout the system and a few of their own colonies on the scattering of rocky worlds in the system. Despite this wealth and opportunity, Sudeni are not welcome on many worlds or station in the cluster and are often challenged by Bhos who still regard them as foreigners due to their mixed culture.

### **Bujan:** *Endless Dawn*

Orbiting the Thraesh star, the cylindrical Bujan station was placed too close to the volatile red hypergiant and thus it is constantly needing to accelerate away. Similar to the citizens of the Last City on Protea, this is embraced by the populace who regard their need for fuel is an expression of Avarice.

The Bujan maintain shipbuilding customs linked to the Béal Feirsde and have ancient relationships with many of the peoples of the Thraesh asteroid fields. In their cradles, starships of unique design are built, typically designed for war rather than comfort.

### **Arkona:** *Pillars of the Stars*

Built with the help of the MassTraders, Arkona station is one of the Hundred Wonders of the Hegemon and is one of the largest artificial constructs in Known Space. Seven 'monoliths' each hold tens of millions of Orbiters and are connected by three 'crowns' that orbit the Ondoran star.

Arkona's massive fleet and expert pilots are responsible for keeping many tradelanes in the cluster safe which has made them one of the wealthiest factions in the Bhosnaya Republic.

### **Yarok:** *Warmakers*

Yarok is one of the Hegemon's few remaining "mobile" colonies built by the now defunct White Star Guild. Although their population is relatively small, the Yaroki are fierce Orbiter warriors who use their station's armored mass to threaten and raid smaller orbitals or even entire planets.

Despite this they are regarded as relatively harmless by other Bhos. If one can pay their ransom then they will move onto the next target. If they aren't paid, they will often lay a rudimentary siege, sending their most able fighters to harass and pillage until their demands are met. Their loyalty extends as far as one's bankroll permits.

# Government: The Closed Fist of Bhos

The People's Intersolar Republic was founded in the 4th Fiscal Century by representatives of twenty-two governments that petitioned the Hegemon for membership. These were backed by several MacroCorps, primarily Armasyn and Wanvath Underwriting, who assisted in the creation of a formal unified government and constitution.

The Republic is lead by a Supreme Chairman, elected for life, who is chosen from the various parties that represent the nations still existing at the start of every fiscal century. There have been several instances in which these politicians represent a nation that has either has been destroyed or is in outright opposition to the Hegemon, making for awkward governance.

The constitution is derived from the First Manual with philosophy drawn from Dumno-Ualos himself. Dumno-Ualos was always a proponent for securing Bhosnaya with a very positive public opinion of the Bhos. He believed that the Bhos peoples in their entirety represented the inherent truth of New Mankind and Avarice existing before his invention of Stellarization. As such, the Bhos, even those in opposition of the Hegemon, are fond or even fanatical in their praise of the Founder.

The Republic wields a massive national military that is called the Intersolar People's Army. Constantly engaged and armed with a combination of archaic and cutting edge weapons, they are one of the most capable national fighting force, although only a handful of units ever become Tributaries. This is likely due to the need of Bhos to be in their own sector.

The People's Army is primarily used to secure the sector which holds back multiple Hegemon threats while providing little in exports. As such, it is the single largest invested military after the Directorate. They answer directly to the Supreme Chairman but it is very common for them to be inducted into operations or Joint Ventures that are lead by the Directorate as anti-Unionist operations often require Hegemon leadership.

The majority of the planets, regardless of membership status or their national affiliation, have been developed in the style of Protea. Massive, fortress like cities poured and formatted from formacrete are utilitarian and brutalistic surrounded by as much agriculture and power generation that their poor worlds can maintain.

Local government is maintained through the threat of force and the regulation of resources. The Bhosnayan sector is poor in water, food and fissile fuels however it is rich in geo-scarce elements which it uses in conjunction with the Triplex to create localized military products. Almost every planet is dependent on tradelanes both to pay for their needs and to receive shipments that can sustain their populations.

Communication between the systems is entirely reliant on quickships managed by the Order of Syrin which date back to the initial colonization. This Order has been nationalized by the Republic in an unusual move of Bhos solidarity. Systems that remain independent or are clearly supported by the Karanovans are still visited by these hundred meter long fleet of ships. They are the only ships in the Bhos cluster that will not be fired upon, even by the Mehndax, by any means and their proximity has actually stopped shooting conflicts for fear of a stray round harming them. Syrin have, for thousands of years, delivered their messages no matter the obstacle or who might bar their path.



*Many Bhos take pride in their poorly worldshaped planets. Baghreza Dva, seen here, is likened to Protea and is populated by an unusual number of immigrants from the ExeCor. This is both for financial opportunity and pride in hardship.*

## The Epoch of Bhos

The history of the Bhos peoples is a long one, impossible to summarize in a single document and certainly impossible to get a consensus as to who did what and why. The greatest events, however, are worth noting and integral to comprehension.

### **(Unknown)**

Founding: Colonists of Old Humanity from the Cradleworlds settle the stars just beyond the Yaga Nebula along the Perseus Galactic Arm. This is done via coldburn generation ships called *the Farflung*.

### **-7200 BMO**

The Outside: Dodger drive powered vessels, possibly early MassTraders, visit the region but do not share their technology, only their services.

### **-6850 BMO**

Broken Roads: The Astral Portals are built, connecting star systems and uniting the major star systems Vuta, Dayan, Harvat, Odris, Thraesh, Sha'rur, Ondor, Ghetham, Sharmaeth and Autariatae into the first Bhos Electorate, governed by an elected Monarch that rules from their world until their death before another is chosen and the throne is moved.

### **-6250 BMO**

The Ghomb: Near-humans arrive in the region for the first time. Uplifted or created, the Ghomb add their strength to the Bhos.

### **-xxxx BMO**

The Black Age: Drekaevak appear in the region, slaughtering their way across the sector. Myths persist to this day and represent the Bhos rejection of their Solarian heritage for what they consider a betrayal.

### **-5000's BMO**

Manifestations: Arkillect intelligences visit the Bhos region with some staying.

### **-2100s BMO**

Eyes Inward: The Aramaxians appear, hunting down a God Make named *Pahsoglav* plaguing the region but ultimately turn back toward the Cradleworlds, leaving its corpse in orbit over Khaz.

**-1500 BMO**

The Third Exodus: The Bhos systems receive an influx of new colonists. Some welcome them while others deny immigration. Small scale civil wars break out.

**-1490 BMO**

The Aramaxians intervene in a limited capacity, siding with the Third Exodus colonists. They cite ancient, pre-Bhos claims to the region. They devastate any who resist, especially those who have near human and Exogenic races amongst them.

**-1463 BMO**

The Aramaxians fall, the Bhos area is engulfed in war as the Bright Age dies.

**-900 BMO**

The War of Afterlife: Catraethi missionaries arrive inspiring small cults to the Empress. Ondor and Odris begin warring as they pick sides in various wars of faith. These conflicts spread.

**-500 BMO**

The Dissention Wars: Ongoing civil conflicts across Known Space weaken the Bhos Electorate, made worse the assassination of six Monarchs in the span of two years.

**-450 BMO**

New Threat: The Harvester exogen invade the outlying systems of Herbeg and Cian, overrunning the star cluster. Hasty treaties are signed and Bhos is temporarily united against a new threat.

**-430 BMO**

The Autariat peoples are driven from Baghreza by the Dvati, an unknown people believed to be part of the Kaidan demographic or possible Orbiter pirates. They rename the world Baghreza Dva.

**-323 BMO**

First Bhosnaya War: Exogen  $\beta$ \_4k, the Harvesters, are driven out. Herbeg, Cian and nearby systems are ravaged but morale is high as reconstruction begins.

**-250 BMO**

Second Bhosnaya War: Territorial disputes among competing allied blocs lead to widespread skirmishing throughout the Duskward portion of Bhos as reconstruction rewrites the borders of planets and systems.

**-227 BMO**

Third Bhosnaya War: A resurgence of the Harvesters spill into the cluster, ending the internacine Bhos conflict and starting another. The activity awakens Drekvak creating a three way war as Bhos scrambles fleets to try and contain both threats.

**-200 BMO**

Burning of the Library: The nations of Odrysae fall into civil war spontaneously and the Grand Library is partially destroyed. It is believed by historians that Chapak agents did this deliberately in order to raid the data vaults therein.

**-198 BMO**

Among Us: The Harvester Exogens occupy a dozen worlds. The Monarch Essano is assassinated by a family member who claims the throne. Starvation reduces the Bhos cluster's population by a tenth.

A Catraethi warlord known as the Mysor arrives and claims he has come to save the Bhos.

**-151 BMO**

Lord of War: The Harvester threat is smashed as a single Catraethi Phalanx hits their colonies. Lead by the Praesor [REDACTED] Zehdak [REDACTED], he is first praised a hero.

What follows is a violent purge of near-humans, the destruction of several government bodies and the capture of several Chapak beings who are publicly tortured until they admit their artificiality.

Starvation and hatred for the Catraethi result in further purges as Zehdak orders the mass abduction of Bhos artifacts and male children.

**-75 BMO**

Absentia: The Catraethi withdraw from the region, leaving it broken and burning. Slowly, nations new and old pull themselves back together.

A deep and abiding suspicion for any non-Bhos prevails throughout the cultures of the cluster.

**-10 BMO**

The Hand that Feeds: MassTraders arrive, sent by an unknown benefactor, and begin to form the beginnings of new trade routes stretching all the way back to Vaensar.

In addition, an ansible is installed on the heat-ravaged central world of Baghreza.

**0/01-001: First Fiscal Century**

Market Opens: While unclear to the Bhos of Baghreza, they are informed by ansible that The Market has opened.

**0/21-082**

It is believed that Dumno-Ualos visited the cluster. Evidence of this is cited at the sudden economic boom of several nations that form around cultural lines. Connections are made, an early network.

**0/40-158**

New Mankind: Copies of the Manual arrive to friendly parties in the cluster and are translated and proliferated. Still weary from the wars of the previous century, the Manual is regarded a key element in what many Bhos regard as a slow re-unification of the region.

Subsequently, near-human populations are attacked, with their property claimed by Bhos.

**1/13-050**

Refugees: The Kantaur Trinity Dominion collapses, driving mostly wealthy refugees through the Bhos region.

Some are aided, others captured while many more are enslaved by the Daeshian Empire of Sha'rur.

**1/21-081**

Rise of Daesh: invigorated by the influx of Kantauri appropriated wealth, the Daesh begin to topple adjacent nations and enslaving fellow Bhos.

When the Monarch on Ondor calls for peace, the Daesh besiege Ondor itself and flense him.

**1/22-087**

False Strength: The Harvat strike against Sha'rur in an attempt to decapitate the Daesh Emperor.

In response, the Daesh unleash the *Plavigeni*, a provoked soldier drawn from slaves and modified with Kantauri technology.

These mass produced super soldiers annihilate the Harvat.

**1/23-090**

War of Stone: The Thrae asteroid fields become a light-year spanning conflict as the Daesh move to their next conquest of the mineral rich star systems.

The Bhaghreza system falls in a day, its ansible captured and used to broadcast signals to Kaidani pirates which overrun the borders, killing millions.

**1/80-320**

The Founder is Gone: Dumno-Ualos disappears aboard his personal ship, the *Sundiata*.

A final transmission is logged at Bhaghreza's array, although the contents are still unknown today and avidly hunted by Wanvath Underwriting and the Audit.

**2/39-155**

Marketfall: Contact is lost with Protea. The Daesh are emboldened and ally with dispossessed near-humans who they offer settlement rights for loyalty.

**3/02-005**

Decline: The Daesh cannot maintain their empire as each nation and planet constantly rebels days after their conquest.

Sparad, a Plavigeni leader or champion, is able to combat his neurogenic conditioning and leads a rebellion against the Daeshi overlords in the Thrae asteroid belts.

With the loss of faith in the Plavigeni, the Daesh withdraw to Sha'rur instead of trying to hold onto their territory.

**3/50-199**

A Man of Ill Intent: Baron Skhad Jadete of the QuadStar MacroCorp flees into Bhos space pursued by skiptracers. He bribes the nation of Norkad for safe harbor and marvels the agricultural peoples of Sharmaeth with products from the ExeCor.

He builds a manse in the province of Bahravan, offering aid of any kind as long as he is kept safe.

**3/89-318**

Court of Madness: Baron Jadete's influence stretches to most of Sharmaeth with wealthy Bhos flocking to Bahravan for parties and revelry that become known across the stellar region.

Jadete claims to hold the secrets of longevity, stolen from the Patron class of the Hegemon. Those who prove their loyalty or enter into dealings with Jadete are offered this rare "S Grade" technology behind closed doors.

**3/99-396-359**

RevShare Celebration Massacre: A Wanderman of the Fargol Kritarchy arrives on Sharmaeth and investigates Jadete resulting in an outright battle in the streets.

**4/03-011**

Seeking Justice: Mercenaries from the ExeCor charged with the authority of the Audit arrive in the Sharmaeth system seeking the Wanderman.

**4/03-012**

The Incursion War: Skahd Jadete, now styling himself as a man of the people, petitions the Monarch of Bhos for aid on behalf of the nations of Sharmaeth, saying the Hegemon is violating the sovereignty of free peoples throughout the cluster.

**4/04-013**

Bhos from across the region arrive via Astral Portals, lured by the wealth of Jadete and the affront to Bhos honor. The ExeCor mercenaries lead a concerted assault against Jadete's estate. They manage to recover the Wanderman from Jadete's cells but can only get him and six others out.

The next day, hundreds of Hegemon bodies are transfixed to stakes along the mansion's curtain wall, the images broadcasted across the planet and eventually back to the Hegemon.

The remaining Mercenaries in space withdraw, swearing vengeance for these barbaric crimes.

**4/10-036**

Muskovak's Raid: Mercenaries from the Fringe and the Midworlds continue to respond to bounties placed on Bhos units, officers and Jadete himself. They begin intercepting signals from Sharmaeth claiming that the populace around Bahravan is being preyed upon, used for experiments, with hundreds disappearing every fiscal-cycle.

A daring raid made by a mix of Bhos and Mercenaries in an unlikely alliance lead by one Cheven Muskovak hit Jadete's compound, revealing a full-on infestation of parasitic Exogen called Bysos who use human beings as hosts. Jadete is wounded, his nest destroyed.

**4/11-041**

The Fourth Bhosnaya War  
The cluster collapses into all out war with Jadete's loyalists. The cluster starves as Sharmaeth battles ravaging hordes of Bysos-infected humans.

**4/31-123**

Orion's Promise: An Armada fleet under Admiral Cheven Muskovak is launched with heavy assistance, and large numbers of mercenaries from several Electorates are sent. This is in despite of the Monarch's outspoken, and ignored, resistance to Hegemon activities.

The Hamangian near-humans, a member of the Uthmani League, are scattered, their worlds taken resulting in a worldrush. Bhos mercenaries form the core of the new Muskov Milisya MacroCorp, elevating Bhos to popularity in the Hegemon.

**4/61-243**

LaansCorp supports Electorate Uago Pavlos of Ghetham, who leads a coup of the unpopular Monarch Constinayen of Sha'rur.

The Palace Guard resist and kill Pavlos, but he becomes a cultural hero who represents the Bhos desire to join the Hegemon.

**4/70-279**

Rise of the Republic: Full blown rebellion breaks out, splitting the Bhos Electorate into pro-Hegemon and Monarchists. The Vuta call for help from Protea.

**4/77-307**

Unleashed: Barakan of the 27th Division, the Bato, are authorized to prevent the Hegemon being attacked by Monarchy forces. This results in partial depopulation Sha'rur, leaving half the planet uninhabitable. The Bato commit the destruction of several orbital habitats and the sterilization of Pydna before they can be recalled.

**4/78-309**

Weakness of Strength: The Bhos are shocked by the use of Barakan. Constinayen loses support and his own people turn against him, highlighting his reliance on near-humans and Karanova.

He is executed and the Electorate system is abolished.

**4/81-324**

Republic Consolidated: The Bhosnayan Republic is established, the Electorates become one national body with dozens of political parties that roughly follow planetary cultures.

The first High Chancellor, Ysolla Pavlos, is the daughter of Uago Pavlos and a veteran from the war. Her first executive order is to adopt the concept of New Mankind throughout the Bhos cluster, formalize LaansCorp as the singular Bhos MacroCorp with the support of the Summit Council, and to launch a devastating attack on those systems that still harbor any anti-Hegemon sentiment or are believed to be working with the Karanova Republic and Uthmani League.

Fleets are launched, financed by the Summit Council, and the so-called 'shield' of the Hegemon is established.

**5/01-001**

A New World: Baghreza Dva is rapidly worldshaped by the LaansCorp MacroCorp who outbids the Teranos MacroCorp for the right to do so, causing a drop in their stock.

Investment pours into this new world along with millions of colonists eager to capitalize on this new constant state of war.

**5/03-009**

The Hegemon Era: The Bhos sector solidifies, with the Karanova Republic to the duskward edge, though with several worlds still rejecting the Hegemon and bands of battle-hardened pirates and rebels constantly plaguing trade.

The Bhos are strong, and in the end, the Bhos know what they are. They will be the shield, they will fight the war, they will reap the benefits and survive as they have always done.

**5/23-090**

Century of Thrivation: Investment pours into the cluster. Education centers, kosmodromes and the portal network repaired are amongst only a few major works the Hegemon bankrolls.

While military build-up is tied to these advancements, the Hegemon's desire for stability and peace forces the warzones into interdiction zones. Any combatants that breach these borders will be dealt with by Barakan.

**5/89-353**

The Coalition: Dumno-Kaget rallies allies claiming that Protea is his birthright. While the conflict in the Midworlds and ExeCor is far from the Bhos, the ideological conflict causes a schism amongst the Bhos.

**6/01-001**

RevShare War: With the atomika attack on the ExeCor, all Directorate and Barakan forces are withdrawn from the Bhos region.

**6/01-004**

The War of the Prince: Bhos from every culture form the Prince's Guard, loyal to Dumno-Kaget, and launch a series of attacks on both Independent and Hegemon factions.

**6/13-052**

True Daughter: Dumno-Lyzashas, eldest daughter of Dumno-Ualos, defeats the Coalition and the false Dumno-Kaget, who she declares was a chapak.

The Prince's Guard devolves into infighting between those who remain loyal to Dumno-Kaget's ideals and those who now refute his status as a human being.

The survivors fall back to Vuta where they depose the planet's government and take over, setting up a military junta.

**6/97-386**

The Tomb: A Dreka vak awakens on Harvath, massacring the Brotherhood of Spears and taking the head of their grandmaster.

**7/01-002**

**Monster Hunters:** Storve Eshen, a big game hunter from the ExeCor, arrives in Bhos to hunt the Drekvak, creating visutel serial dramas as his elite band of skiptracers seeks out the monster.

Transmitted from Storve's personal ansible, the Bhos cluster is romanticized by Consumers across the Thousand Empires as he hunts various Godmake creations and Exogens in his search for the Drekvak.

**7/24-093**

**Bohem Commonwealth:** Hegemon Corpos are publicly hanged along with corrupt government officials by a Unionist uprising that declares itself the Bohem Commonwealth.

With weapons supplied by the Karanova Republic, they defeat the local Tributary Regiment and capture the Armada vessels still at anchor. This new 'Commonwealth Navy' scores several further victories in-system.

**7/88-351**

**The Leyline War:** The Oryx and the Sytrak MassTraders fight a devastating war that disrupts Hegemon travel. In the cluster, the worst of this war is avoided with their Astral Portals that LaansCorp further invests in.

A brief cooperation between all Bhos no matter their affiliation sends refurbishment efforts to tend to the Astral Portals and, for several fisks, there is relative peace, save for local planetary wars already being fought.

**7/98-391**

**Savior Slave:** Uleb's over industrialization causes a catastrophic failure across the ecosystem. The planet freezes, millions dying in superstorms that cut off the planet.

An unknown entity, possibly a god, appears on the planet, restoring the atmosphere and cleansing the oceans, allowing the people to return.

Stratos vessels appear suddenly and capture the creature, leaving the planet to it's fate as the storms return.

**9/01-001**

**Race of Kings:** Newly elected Speaker, Jiahna Macardy, gives a speech in which she describes New Mankind as a race of kings. In Bhos a thousand statues of Dumno-Ualos are built across the Republic.

**9/01-002**

**The Wasting War:** Mass starvation cripples the Midworlds. Billions starve as crop failures spread.

LaansCorp-modified grow crops are used across the Bhos cluster and, oddly, do not suffer any crop failures.

Suddenly Bhos seeds and crops are in demand in the Midworlds causing a disruption of Bersarang Multi-Stellar's stock.

**9/03-010**

**Pauper Prince:** Magnate Talan Hod of Wanvath Underwriting steps down and forms the Mehndax Pirates in a region bordering the Republic.

**9/09-034**

**Hostile Demand:** Unknown parties cripple LaansCorp grain freightliners heading toward the Midworlds and sabotage the Astral Portals.

LaansCorp stops shipments causing several nations to collapse as starving Consumers rise up. The Directorate is called in, safeguarding Bhos tradelanes at high cost.

**9/55-218**

**Profits Rise:** The Market reports record profits with several more MacroCorps minted, while the Midworlds expand fifteen light years into the Frontier. Thirteen primary worlds of the Bhos unify for the first time, at the same time while twelve remain contested, divided, with the Karanova Republic gaining support in light of this new unity.

A new currency is minted, the *thollaria*. Usable on any world in the Bhos cluster, it is backed by the unified economy of the cluster by the reckoning of The Market.

**9/63-251**

Pirate Wars: Pirate "King" Talan Hod brazenly attacks settlements, worlds and tradelanes, often leaving thousands dead, floating in space or in burn pits hit with matritic beams.

The Republic launches fleets to hunt him down and places a bounty of one hundred million thollaria on Hod, dead or alive.

**9/71-282**

Strikebreak: Hundreds of independent Unionist movements work together in the largest coordinated strike in the Midworlds.

As if in response, Karanova, Mehndax and near-human populations aligned with Uthmani and the Sapien Council attack Hegemon targets emphasizing tradelanes rather than military positions.

Commander Iderland Grovak of the Republic disobeys the Directorate and launches an invasion of Karanova aligned systems, indiscriminately shooting everything that moves.

**9/75-228**

Alliance Born: Karanova makes a declaration of formal alliance with the Commonwealth of Bohem, something it has never done before.

This brazen diplomacy within Hegemon claimed territory turns the outer Bohem system into a new warzone, although Karanova and Armada assets refrain from direct combat despite being within sensor range.

Instead a massive proxy war is fought with Bhos Republican nationals against Karanova-backed Bohem.

**9/80-319**

Old Enemy: Rumors abound that Jadete and his Exogen are haunting the Thraesh asteroid belts, even working with local mining outposts.

This time the Commission authorizes skiptracers to hunt the sector-spanning asteroid fields as Bhos forces can no longer spare any to stop this newest threat from Bhosnaya's history.

**Old Machines:** Ghetham welcomes new interest from Yinntosh, which places a permanent orbital facility beyond the range of the surface-to-orbit weaponry of the Cobot surface machines.

The Cobots have infested the planet ever since their creators were annihilated by neutrino weapons, stuck in a rudimentary decision-tree loop that keeps them hunting the scattered peoples hiding beneath the surface, who have no memory of why the war was started.

Yinntosh entices contractors down to the surface, hoping to recover Cobot technology for study in the hopes of improving ergoid function. Known as the 'Clockwork Empire', various Joint Ventures have formed to combat and unlock the treasures that lie within the migrating *Juggernaut* manufactories, while the Ghethamani have launched a personal crusade in an attempt to rid the tunnels of their planet once and for all of the nightmarish *Prowlers* that hunt them in turn.

Observers note that the escalation has caused a shift in Cobot branch-nodes, resulting in the appearance of new patterns and tactics, as well as the first encounters of airborne assets. Currently, Yinntosh has kept the engagement level fixed at Grade 2 until they can carry out a proper risk assessment.



*Cobot Prowlers regularly assault Ghetham tunnels and cities hunting for resources that they drag back to the mobile manufactories on the surface. They are cobbled together, crudely matching the general patterns of their original designers. Twice a year they gather in hordes and assault the largest transit tunnels that connect the fortress kosmoplexes above to the cities near the planet core. During these times the planet is sealed off until the battles end and the hordes withdraw. In 9/99 the largest ever attack was recorded, overwhelming all but one main transit tunnel and breaching the city of Zarijos.*

# Bhos at War

Much of the culture of the Bhos is oriented toward war after centuries of defense. They are fighters, whichever subculture of Bhos they are a part of. They fight each other for resources, fight the raiders and barbarians of the Fringe and have been fighting the horrors unleashed by Old Humanity since the beginning of their history. The rest of the Hegemon views the Bhosnaya Republic as a leashed canid, one that can bite the hand restraining it as much as it savages the enemy. They see themselves as warriors and soldiers first, individuals that understand commerce in the transactional way of a bullet fed into a rifle.

They are deeply ritualist, proud, a culture older than the Proteans or the Yinn, who might rival the Myroit in prestige had they been able to maintain a coherent national timeline. The Bhos embrace their chaos, for in it only the strong, the shrewd, and the cunning can rise to their rightful positions. They are *not* trapped by their traditionalism but wield it as a weapon in their arsenal.

None can say that the Bhos do not truly *believe* in Stellarization. Long before their region became an official sector and their government recognized as one of the Thousand Empires, the Bhos loved Dumno-Ualos and cherished his vision. Dumno-Ualos is said to have visited several systems before his passing in 1/80 and despite being unable to verify such claims, the Bhos of Baghrez claim that he lived amongst them for a year.

However, they are riven with exigency for the resources their worlds and colonies need. Everything from water to velanite must be shipped in the quantities the Bhos need. War for resources is the main reason that the various nations turn from Karanova to the Hegemon or even the Uthmani despite the indemnity between cultures.

Just as *Avarice* is the hallmark of human evolution, according to Dumno-Ualos, so too is its darker cousin, *Invidia*. Each nation and world of the Bhos is both jealous of and prejudiced towards the worlds of Karanova and their Midworld neighbors alike. Bhos planets are hard, their space is dangerous, and they can never truly rely on one another as survival is a constant pressure. This environment has created a superstitious people, highly militarized and proud who dream of brighter fisks ahead when they might have cleaner air, water, food.

Until then, they have embraced their suffering proudly and will not tolerate *handouts*.

Perhaps this is why there is such kinship between the Proteans and the Bhos who accept their own planets' rapid decline as the price of success. To suffer is to imbue value into what one suffers for.

But this has also created a deep animosity for the outsider who cannot be vouched by Bhos, and such endorsement does not come easily. A newcomer to Bhos systems must do so at their own peril as they will instantly be identified and either taken advantage of, attacked and robbed, or simply ignored as a nuisance even in the smallest village.

Each Consumer brought up in the culture of the Bhosnaya Republic suffers from a unique cognitovirus that, like so many things, is tolerated by the Hegemon. Identified by Five Hands Panceuticals as *krajuojantic sapanas*, or the "dream that bleeds," the constant state of stress, cultural ritual and danger response makes Bhos respond to events in unexpected ways. Laughter in the face of danger, sadness at the birth of a child, ambivalence in victory.

Worst of all, the Bhos will not accept the help of those who can improve their lot. Most famously, the bid from Teranos to worldshape several Bhos planets along with Bhosnaya Dva was met with outright hostility, resulting in the disastrous choice of LaansCorp. The Bhos will not let themselves be lifted up by others and so the Bhos dream will never be realized. Despite this, they continue to survive, in spite of their region's shortcomings. Their struggle has become an exemplification of their own expression of Avarice. Bhos live, fight and die just for the right to exist in that struggle.

This psychological disposition, their hostile lifestyle and their endless training makes Bhos some of the most able fighting forces in Known Space. They are often armed with the bleeding edge of technology or have spent centuries perfecting the execution of what is reliable. They are not without innovation either with the Bhosnayan Landship super-heavy tank built across Known Space by both the Hegemon and their enemies.

While most Bhos will not leave the cluster willingly, the single most successful example of their kind operating in the broader Galaxy has been Muskov Milisya MiliCorp, which was

founded by nationals of several planets in the cluster. Catapulted to near celebrity status and responsible for technologies such as the CrashPod and the Armored Mobility Unit heavy assault-harness, the MiliCorp is a rare opportunity that Bhos feel comfortable taking advantage of.

Between the People's Army and the countless Tributary Regiments that operate in the Bhos cluster, the mercenary outfits and miliCorps that have prospered since the creation of the Republic, the cluster is the most militarized region of Known Space, and that is before one factors the Karanovan-propped up factions and the independent states. Out of all the Hegemon cultures, the Bhos and the Republic itself is a self-sharpening knife that the Summit Council can use against any other stellar power that would threaten it.



*The worlds of the Bhos cluster typically support hostile environments due to cheaper world shaping techniques, unregulated atomika deployments in previous centuries and the continued use of biological and nanoid weapon systems despite public outcry. As such, national forces and Bhos Tributary Regiments and mercenaries alike typically don full protective suits of local design to weather the elements.*

# Baghreza Dva: Rain and Steel

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The planet Baghreza Dva was worldshaped into an irradiated wasteland that looks, out of all the worlds in the Hegemon, like Protea. Originally, the planet was a desert world named Autar, with a modest population of Bhos that had settled the place and embraced the environment. For generations they adapted themselves to the world rather than it to them, gradual provolvement with the technology of that distant age made it a simple thing. They called themselves the Autariat and were known as resilient and expert warriors. They defended their world from all comers until none would challenge their claim.

Nodal points for more reliable transit through the Outside were discovered and cultivated, with the Autariat becoming wealthy and influential throughout the cluster and in other nations. Orbitals were cobbled together or built, making Autar a significant refueling port.

Then the Dvati came, breaching the orbitals around a nodal point and savagely butchering the crew. They sealed the point, indiscriminately firing upon any ship within their guns' range. When the Autar sent ships, the Dvati sidestepped them and drove hard for the desert world itself.

They obliterated the Autariat's few cities from orbit and then dropped in a lightning fast campaign, razing townships with uncompromising brutality. The reason for their savagery is unknown. It is believed that these people came from ancient Horai, a world that one day would become Karanova. If so, these would make them Kaidani, a near-human population that predated the Bhos to the region and, perhaps, could have been displaced by their arrival in the 8th millennium .

The Dvati adapted to Baghreza where other attackers had died in the blazing deserts and, soon, the Autariat fled with the help of a fleet of merchant ships sympathetic to their cause. Their conquest complete, the Dvati renamed the planet and began the process of major urbanization and development.

Initially, the Bhos responded as they typically do, with attacks and attempts at dislodging the invaders in the name of honor and shared cultural pride.

The Dvati defended their stolen world and orbitals with the same savagery they had used to take them, hanging thousands of vacuum-mummified Bhos above the nodal points as a warning.

Gradually, the attacks subsided and trade returned which the Dvati regulated without bias, which earned a delicate peace with the Bhos who needed the resources of the wider Galaxy. A generation later and Bhos, seeking work opportunities and further trade, emigrated.

Baghreza Dva itself constructed a massive skyhook and a city to support it. This early mercantile development resulted in the formation of LaansCorp, headquartered in the skyhook, made up of Bhos and even several foreigners that legend says could have been members of the Clans of Protea.

Centuries later, LaansCorp surprised the Summit Council by taking over the entire cluster, with tariffs set against other MacroCorps that would not work with them. They even beat Teranos to worldshape their headquarters world, using disastrous methods to speed up the planet's orbit and shroud it with nuclear winter.

Despite this, ExeCor populations surged to the planet, further developing the planet and making it a shining beacon of the Hegemon on the farflung Perseus Arm. A massive city grows in spite of the tortured atmosphere, rated a prime location for colonists who hope to elevate themselves by being close to the wars that will never end.



# Another Shift

The flap of the tent opened, unleashing the triple sunrise that cut through Venkla's closed eyelids and deep into the back of his skull. His fist rose, defensively, all muscle memory and trauma that had kept him alive through three Joint Ventures and growing up on Ghetham.

"Management wants to see you, Major."

"Jebiseh!" The curse slid through his teeth with old spit.

The hangover made his eyes throb and he covered them again, "Shitheel, close the damn flap!" The private stepped in, closing the flap behind him and stooping in the tent, his youth and inexperience bleeding off of him.

He was tall but little more than a child with big, confused eyes, looking as though he had only just breached his twenties, barely old enough to have survived the journey through the Outside that had brought the Directorate Regiment to this world. He was hale and hearty, thick brown hair, without scars or pockmarks. Clearly a stranger, a "stranakoi," part of the reinforcements the Hegemon was sending into the Bhos cluster ever since the Adevdev Kingdom decided to publicly execute a gaggle of Corpo tip-tops and declare independence.

"You're Thomo, yes?" Venkla's hands turned to massaging his temples.

"Gendrey, sir. Engine Five. Thomo's on Engine Three."

"Engine Five. With Captain Gorik."

"Yes, sir—"

"Gorik is a good man, but if you had pulled this shit with him, I don't know."

Venkla passed his hand casually over his neck with a what-can-you-do.

"Sir?"

Venkla smiled at the young foreigner's naivety. He himself had never left the Bhosnaya star systems to pierce the Yaga Nebula and witness the greater Hegemon, but he marvelled at the riches that it must hold to produce such soft 'warriors' like this Gendrey who stood before him, his hands down and his gut out and his legs too close together. If Venkla had wanted, he could kill this child in seconds. No son of Bhos, even a subordinate, would leave themselves this

vulnerable. But Venkla wouldn't teach him a lesson with fists, the war would do that fast enough.

Instead, he reached for the plastek narco stick in his breast pocket and sucked in his own chemical mix that would suppress the hangover, wake his mind and tickle his heart back up to speed.

Opening his hands conversationally, "Maybe wait next time for me to say 'in.' You might be some filthy Unionist, yes? You might be a starving canid trying to take a bite from my face, yes? Maybe I stick you, or maybe you get shot, you understand?"

His eyes went wide. Confused, he stuttered in his Kantauri-accented interlex, "I-I'm sorry, sir, it won't happen again." Venkla stood, smiling, a hair's breadth from the younger man's face which he took time to study. Healthy skin, with full cheeks, gifted from a life of uncountable meals, with brown skin from a lineage of living beneath a stable star. No chem stains, or pattern baldness, or bleached irises that were only some of the many gifts of the Bhos star cluster.

"I don't threaten you, son. We Bhos learn to shoot with a rifle at five, kill with our hands at nine, soldier at twelve... What were you doing at twelve?"

"Primaries, sir." Sweat beaded on Gendrey's brow, "I-I worked my family's upcycle shoppe."

"And I can see you are probably good at counting the coins!" Venkla said, slapping Gendrey in the chest and almost knocking him down, "But we Bhos, we are good at fighting! We only count the ammo ticker, yes? We are useless for anything else. We are only soldiers! We only count bullets." He winked and, finally, Gendrey smiled back with straight, perfect teeth. Then Venkla dropped his mask, his eyes going hard as the Sha'rur ice trenches that he had been born to. "War is our only trade and war our only business. In my unit, you will either become as I am, or you will be left broken on the side of the road. If you enter where a Bhos man sleeps - nevermind a Bhos woman - enter with caution or you will be gutted. Do you understand, Private?"

Gendrey, to his credit, saluted, "Sir! Yes, sir!"

*“Go.” Venkla waved him off and Gendrey disappeared.*

*Only then did Venkla let the pain contort his face. He looked into the small mirror that hung on the tent wall. In his own eyes he saw the old grime, wrinkles and stubble. A datattoo beneath his right eye would identify him and his credit rating, the stick-and-poke sigil of the Morningstar would make him the enemy of all those who would deny the Thousand Empires.*

*He took a small razor and wet it with spit, and only stopped when a tremor set his hand dancing, a condition earned from a life within the bowels of a Hegemon tank. He could take the prescriptions from Five Hands that would suppress these attacks and probably make him feel five fisks younger, like Gendrey.*

*But drinking was cheaper.*

*He pulled the flask from its home in his jacket pocket and took a pull. Captain Artex brewed the vile drink in the bowels of Engine Two and it hit like a sabot round but it killed his memory and drilled him to the present.*

*He put his hand on the flap, feeling the solar heat absorbed by the material of the world they had brought him to fight upon. To lead his fellow Bhos, as well as the newcomers, in the name of stability for the Hegemon. Venkla touched the Manual that he kept in his other breast pocket and, in its own way, it emanated a kind of heat that reminded him who he was.*

*“I am Tank Squadron Major Kyba Venkla, son of Kyban, son of Kybanico. Hellscrapper two, level thirty eight. I fight for the Hegemon, I fight for the future. I die for both.”*

*The words helped, they always did.*

*His mind refocused, pure in its intent.*

*He stepped out, ready for another shift.*



The Landship heavy battle tank is a common enough sight throughout the Hegemon, however the Republic class Landship is a pattern unique to the Bhos cluster.

Due to the constant saturation of vantic nanoid clouds year in and out, long range combat in the Bhos war zones, certainly with guided munitions, is useless. This has created a niche for superheavy fighting vehicles, armored behemoths that drudge across the battlefield towards the enemy line to hit them up close with exceptionally destructive weapons.

The Republic Landship reinvests in additional nusteel plating and super heavy artillery munitions to become the tip of the spear for almost all Bhos advances when available. The three large-bore cannons of the turret are purpose-built to annihilate bunkers and other field fortifications, while the vehicle's hull-mounted gun stations and firing ports allow the crew to engage light targets in all directions.

While the wider Hegemon's war machines are increasingly being outfitted with velanite-based power systems, the Bhos conflict zones often make the resupply and maintenance of advanced technologies a logistical nightmare. For this reason the most widely-deployed variant of the Republic Landship, like many other Bhos-designed vehicles, runs on "black cake", a locally-produced potent, if crude fissile fuel.

# Consula: Heart of the Republic

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Similar to the shifting of the Monarch in earlier Bhos history, the Republic's capital moves as need be, in response to threats, opportunities, and the volatile nature of the cluster. The Republic's government comprises several hundred Senators from various political parties, typically local to the thirty-one major cultures of the Bhos, and is lead by a Supreme Chancellor directly supported from by Magnates of various MacroCorps.

The capital itself consists of a series of modified Mill-style mobile manufactories, gifted by Armasyn, a series of structures representing a great boon for any planet that they reside on. Referred to as "Consula" or "Consula City," it maintains its own population of almost a million staff entirely dedicated to the management of the Republic, an ansible array, and the Senate Block itself. The Republic's Battleliner, one of the largest combat-oriented ships built by Stratos Industrial, was another founding gift, although the Bhos prefer to use it as Consula's method of transportation than as a vessel of war. Instead, they prefer their unique Bhos *Dreadnaughts*, heavier warliner-type vessels whose patterns are derived from designs of the now-defunct White Star guild.

Consula established itself on Sha'rur in 9/85-340, after the increase of Mehndax raids and Unionist activity around Baghreza Dva. It landed atop what once were the foundations of the home fortress of the fallen Daeshian Empire, called Topuz. The Daeshian architectural style, one that emphasized cylindrical dome-topped buildings, has been almost entirely superseded by brutal formacrete-based habitation blocks; the only intact element of the original bastion-city that remains is the tall interplanetary communication tower rising from a hill overlooking the city, now converted into an ansible station in the Hegemonic age.

The hostile environment of Sha'ur was originally settled for its immense mineral wealth, and the Daeshian seat of power sat atop a cavernous system of mines operated with slave labor. The modern city now exists as a multi-level urban sprawl over and within these mines, the tunnels now converted into more habitation zones.

The outside areas of the city span a landscape of canyons, many of which were originally created or expanded by cave-ins from voracious mining by LaansCorp, which has since sold the rights off to local Corpo initiatives. Now, the canyon cliffs have been heavily reinforced with retaining walls as a safeguard against the seismic instability of the region, another consequence of extensive underground excavation.

Aside from the ansible tower, the Consulan skyline is dominated by a series of power stations supplying power and heating to millions of city denizens living in constant sub-zero temperatures. Some stations are remnants of the original mining infrastructure, while others are later installations brought in thanks to Hegemonic sponsorships. Local power generation relies on a wide variety of technologies, from ancient hydrocarbon boilers to new-model velanite furnace generators. The city kosmodrome is situated close to the largest power facilities, ensuring an easy supply of fuels from interstellar markets while also serving as a conduit to orbit for raw ore, Consula's other primary export.



*Topuz city, now home to the Consula, welcomed the arrival of the capital city and its wealth. Its patronage has inspired many, stoking local pride in their heritage and of their membership to the Hegemon.*

# Astral Portals

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Perhaps the most defining feature of the Bhosnaya Republic are its network of trans-luminal gateways. These astral portals are not faster than light travel; descent into the Outside is always the quickest option available, but the portals are cheaper and safer. Each portal comprises a chain of circular rings large enough for a freightliner to pass through, connecting Autariat, Baghreza Dva, Harvat, Odris, Ondor, and Sha'rur, the network even extending to almost all Bhos systems once long ago. Although similar in function to the interplanetary TranStar Highways of the TransStar MacroCorp, the Bhosnayan astral portal network operates on a far greater scale thanks to technology from the Second Exodus.

Each ring pairs with its neighbors, forming a connection via transdimensional link. The resultant "path" does not allow traveling to ships to bypass the speed of light, but instead "crumples" the fabric of space between paired rings, enabling faster travel on account of decreased physical distance between a vessel's point of entry and destination.

This method of travel still remains slower than a descent through the Outside, with such trips usually measured in months rather than days (from perspectives external to the portal). The relativistic speeds achieved must be limited for the sake of living passengers, but can be sustain exponential acceleration in the case of commodities. The drastic reduction in potential damage to commodities or the Self, combined with a significant reduction in assurance premiums, make the portals quite an attractive option when time is not of the essence. These savings are further compounded by the lack of other descent-related expenses; Merchant ships within the local portal system often forgo the installation of dodger drives, bypassing significant costs in both the initial purchase and maintenance of a dawn drive, let alone the cost of purchasing keyheads.

The portals also allow for another peculiarity of the Bhosnayan worlds linked by these rings. A great majority of vessels traveling via the network are uncrewed, direct human involvement in each voyage ending at towing ships to and directing them through the portal. Once underway, a rudimentary *Fabricated Cognition Program* onboard acts as autopilot, executing the last set of commands and navigational directives programmed by human codesmiths. Once the vessel emerges at the end of the path, it is recovered by human crews and towed into port.

Originally skeptical at the lack of human involvement in such a vital process, the Hegemon softened its view on the matter when the Bhos perspective was explained. One might run a factory, but once an item is placed on a conveyor belt, there is no need for human intervention; it simply moves down to the next station in the production line. Likewise, the Bhos believe sending a vessel through an astral portal to be no different. After all, despite leaving human hands, the ship remains along a fixed path set by human minds, and returns to human hands.

An additional benefit to this system is the lack of required life support on such cargo vessels. Space normally required for crew quarters, food, water, air, or gravity generation is minimal, or absent entirely. In the case that cargo must be temperature regulated or atmospherically controlled, small portions of the ship can simply be individually retrofitted.

Of course, as with all cost-saving measures, there will always be unintended consequences. In one notable incident approximately fifty fiscal cycles ago, an Autariat codesmith accidentally forgot to program pre-exit deceleration procedures into a shipboard FCP traveling to the Baghreza Dva system, resulting in a freightliner-sized shipping container hurtling through the system at near light speed and obliterating the tug crew on the other side. Through sheer luck, the runaway vessel barely missed Baghreza Dva itself, but the resulting upheaval sparked ten fiscal cycles of war, as the peoples of Baghreze Dva were convinced that this mistake was, in fact, an intentional act of aggression driven by ancient animosities. Eventually, a truce was called after the codesmith was handed over to the Baghreze Dva local government for public execution, a common practice in the cluster, but relations remain strained, and Autariat is the only portal linked system that Baghreze Dva does not have a formal treaty with.

It should be noted that this incident was part of the reasoning the Summit Council gave for allowing the continuation of the practice. It was determined that human error resulted in the conflict, and human intervention resolved the problem; At no point was the FCP allowed to make a decision, and the path of the shipping container was entirely guided by human hands.

There is one other item of note concerning astral portals. In addition to the five remaining paired portal chains, there are a number of nonfunctional portal networks scattered throughout Bhos space, suggesting that these artifacts from the Solarian era once connected far more of the star cluster than they currently do, and possibly beyond. One might suspect that these broken rings are the result of lost, ancient technology, but that would be incorrect. It is well known that the systems with functional gateways are fully aware of how to maintain and repair the rings.

Instead, the disrepair can often be linked to a number of factors. The first is simply the ongoing violence within the Bhosnaya Republic. While most warfare is waged with the use of the much more modern and expeditious dodger drive, the possibility of military use of astral portals is still a concern. The war between Autariat and Sha'rur did include descent-capable craft, but only after both sides fortified their respective sides of the portal - a response to Autariat initiating the conflict, where a number of troop transports disguised as unmanned cargo vessels were sent through the ring in an attempt to gain a foothold in the Sha'rur system.

The second factor is one of logistics. Maintenance of the astral portals must be done in tandem. If one ring is shut down while the other is still active, they are decoupled, and a longer, more involved pairing process must then begin.

Currently done by ansible communication, it is believed that the Solarians accomplished this through the use of highly regulated maintenance and generational schedules, coordinated by synchronized countdowns tracked through the decay of thorium elements.

To repair a ring, one would need to first assume benevolent intent on behalf of the corresponding star system, conduct repairs, and then synchronize the gates through the use of ansible transmissions or by synchronized atomika timers. As one might imagine, both the political will and necessary expenditure of capital to accomplish this can be hard to overcome, especially when descent through the Outside remains a viable alternative.

The third factor is the general delay presented by travel via astral portal. After all, astral portals are best suited for linking nearby star systems, and while the Solarians may have needed paired rings connecting Cian to Zeriani to reduce travel time to something even remotely acceptable, such an endeavor would be entirely pointless now thanks to the Outside.

Still, there have been some attempts made to reactivate old rings. The Anthes and Baghreza Dva systems have been allies for well over twenty fiscal cycles, and the potential economic benefit to Baghreza Dva from adding a fourth paired set of rings to their system is seen as more than offsetting the price of subsidizing the Athenes' repair of their astral portal.

Footnote: It has been long-rumored that Baghreza Dva deliberately sabotages any efforts to disrupt the economic advantages it enjoys by being the most-connected hub in the Bhos cluster.

# The Generation Ships

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There are currently two major generation ships making their way through Bhosnaya-controlled space, the *Lepena* and the *Balanita*. The *Lepena* is a strange case, as its current course sees it traveling Dawnward, while most other observed generation ships have been recorded on Duskward courses. The reason for this stems from the previous Exodus periods that saw the Cradleworlds, now the ExeCor, seed Known Space with billions and billions of such vessels, the Solarians being only one such demographic. As such, the coldburn ships, incapable of FTL travel, have continued their courses, often becoming waystations in between the stars and hotbeds of antiquity trading but typically pushing outward toward the Fringes, away from the worlds that sent them tens of thousands of years ago.

The *Balanita*, likewise, is not heading Duskward, its movement suggesting that the vessel hails from beyond the fringes. Even as it cuts across the Hegemon to reach its eventual destination, its trajectory remains unknown, even to the its occupants, the Balan people. The colony ship's ancient logic seeds have grown into such complex decision trees that the *Balanita* appears fully sentient, and yet, it will not disclose the destination. Whatever the case, thousands of fisks have passed; the Balan have been traveling long before the birth of the Hegemon. Much of their history has been lost, the onboard logicors damaged and repaired over and over, and written records dating back more than a few fiscal centuries ago are nonexistent. Neither ship remembers their birthworld nor their destination.

As might be expected, the overall state of technology on these ships is highly limited, understandable given what regulated resources the generation ships have to work with. Aside from maintenance or improvements to existing systems, most scientific progress has stagnated. This, combined with strong, traditional cultures, have led to extremely limited adoption of new technologies offered by the Bhosnaya Republic. Both the *Lepena* and the *Balanita* have refused almost any advancements in organoids, bionetics, communications, logicor systems, or energy production, and both have flatly refused to trade for weapons.

This is not to say the generation ships are uninterested in trade. Both show a healthy, if primitive, understanding of Avarice, and are regarded by the Commission as some of the 'truest' examples of human stock, exhibiting almost no provolution, besides natural selective breeding.

They are more than willing to trade artisanal goods for food, water, and raw material, or medical equipment and training. They often seek defense services as well, as they lack any substantial fleets, making for easy raiding targets without Bhos or Hegemonic assistance.

The Directorate clashes constantly with the Mehndaxan pirate kingdom and other terrorist states within the region. Beyond these conflicts, unaffiliated systems remain in a near-permanent state of war against Directorate forces, local rivals, mercenary companies, and corpo-backed military interests. None of these factions would seek to actually *conquer* the generation ships, as such a feat would be impossible to achieve without the destruction of these massive vessels, and no one wishes to be responsible for the loss of such vital creations. Despite this, temporary occupation has occurred before, causing great suffering for the local populations.

As such, the *Lepena* and *Balanita*, as well as the handful of smaller generation ships still pushing through the Bhos cluster, often pay multi-generation tithes of goods and services in exchange for protection. Notably, owing to the nature of the divided Bhos nations, the generation ships often ensure overlapping periods of guaranteed security from different nations, especially those at war with one another, ensuring that they do not solely depend on the protection of one nation for too long or get caught in the crossfire.

# The *Lepena*

Slightly smaller and the more primitive of the two generation ships, the *Lepena* holds a population of roughly sixty-five million. Ship governance is broken into two bodies, the first headed by the ship's captain and officers, hereditary positions given authority over the physical ship. Maintenance, repairs and navigation fall entirely under their purview. The second body is a theocratic council, made up of clergy elected by their peers, responsible for society and ensuring that all Lepenans are tended to, both physically and spiritually. Education, medicine, and rationing all fall under their authority. Both bodies can issue decrees regarding their respective domains of control.

Given the length of their journey and the confines of their living quarters, the *Lepena* has strict population controls. The total number may fluctuate slightly, but the council has put a definitive cap on the population at seventy million individuals. While the *Lepena* could in theory hold about eighty million, it was the joint decision of both the Captain and the Council at some unknown point in the past that a buffer must be maintained, as to avoid taxing the ship's resources during potential crises.

As mentioned, Lepenan society forms a theocracy, worshipping a kind of animistic representation of the ship itself, a spirit known as the Domovoj and his host of lesser minions, who are said to watch over specific parts of the ship. The Domovoj is often depicted as a kindly, ancient man in traditional Lepenan festival clothing. Offerings to the Domovoj usually involve a small bowl of salted vitagrue, pottage, or other common colonial dishes.

The shipboard spirits are almost never depicted as malicious entities, and although guilty of occasionally enjoying a good prank, would never attempt to hurt a Lepenan. However, should one instead actively seek the approval and assistance of these spirits, they are most responsive to and interested in those who follow traditional cultural norms and mores. While thought not be actively hostile to any who might break with societal norms, it is said that they tend to find such people confusing, and thus limit any interaction with them. Depending on the spirit, this may manifest as a kind of grumpy dissatisfaction with anything new, or simply a wish to avoid something they don't understand.

So what are these norms? After generations of drifting through space, Lepenans are notably

risk and change averse. While generation ships are massive, they are by no means as resilient as a planet or even a world ring. When traveling between the stars with no dawn drive or ansible, outside help is entirely nonexistent. Any change, be it to the way the ship functions or what is considered socially acceptable, must be done slowly and with great care because of the risk such changes bring to all aboard.

Those populations referred to as Orbiters would call the Lepenans orthodox to an extreme degree, while Grounders would find Lepenans absurd in their degree of reusing gear or withholding from overeating, even *overbreathing*. Family and community are highly regarded, and many children are expected to learn and take on the trades or specialties of their parents. While official lists of the original ship's crew and destination have been lost to time, most families have oral histories that stretch back to the earliest epochs of Old Humanity.

Further, Lepenans are notably averse to waste. Anything that can be recycled or reused can and will be reclaimed or repurposed. Old items are seen as especially valuable as they have proven to be well made and durable enough to last for years. When trying to trade with a member of the Lepenan security crew, one would likely get nowhere trying to offer them the newest model of Armasyn Liberator. If, however, one were to offer them a piece that had been actively used in multiple Bhosnayan brushfire wars, that may spark their interest in a durable, reliable tool that has lasted fiscal cycles of hard use while remaining functional. That said, Lepenans typically eschew weapons of any type, preferring hand-to-hand combat weapons that do not threaten the structural integrity of their vessel with a stray bullet.

This avoidance of waste plays a great role in Lepenan dress and aesthetics. Clothes are made to be handed down, usually dyed in shades of green or brown from byproducts of algae growth tanks. Decoration is done either by an individual or a family member, usually in the form of intricate embroidery.

Most Lepenans have a trade or specialization they follow, such as codesmith, engineer, ship security, and so on, but certain families are also known for their crafts. Parents teach their children to embroider, knit, etch, or whittle from the precious groves of trees that grow in the colony's habitats. Embroidery and knitting are fairly self-explanatory, but etchings are often done throughout the family living quarters, each panel a handmade masterpiece, and many of the corridors and hatches are similarly adorned. Whittling is done with blocks of raw material produced by formatters and slowly worked into a finished piece, as all waste is fed back into the

formatter. These finished products then serve as a kind of barter economy for luxury goods and there is demand, all the way to Protea, for such rare and unique items.

## The *Balanita*

The *Balanita* is the second generation ship in the Bhosnaya Republic. Larger and slightly more advanced technologically with a population of roughly ninety million, the *Balanita* would still be considered primitive by Hegemon standards. Overall, the Balanitan and Lepenan cultures demonstrate a great degree of overlap, implying shared origins despite the fact that they clearly came from different points of departure, given their current trajectories. Family structure, population control, and frugal resource management are strongly emphasized by both cultures, a logical development given the circumstances of coldburn ships.

However, there are some important differences. First, while the Lepenan believe in a host of helpful spirits, the *Balanita* has two patron spirits, Va and Je, appearing as male and female embodiments of both onboard culture and ancestral traditions. Unlike the *Domvoj*, Va and Je have no minions or servants, instead seeing the occupants of the ship as their children. Offerings are still made, but rather than pottage, the dregs of a hot spiced drink made of dried fruit, commonly served after dinner, are poured out into ceremonial cups and placed in household shrines to the two deities. Religious devotions are now almost entirely done in the home and are viewed as a family activity, with the oldest members of any given household leading rituals or placing offerings.

The second major difference is in the governance of the ship. While the Lepenan have divided authority of the ship into Captain and Council, the Balanitans have seen these two roles merge. The Captain and officers still hold authority over the ship's navigation, but these are not hereditary positions. Instead, these positions are assigned after rigorous testing, as are almost all other roles in their rigidly hierarchical society. In such a closed society, one's ability to perform well on these tests can dictate one's entire life, as advancement depends entirely on one's exam scores, with little to no consideration paid to any other factor.

As one might expect, the Balanita has a highly structured society and, much like the Lepenans, they are extremely resistant to change. While positions within the ship are not hereditary, these appointments are life-long, with the only chance for improving one's circumstances coming when one's superior retires or dies, resulting in an examination for advancement to their position conducted by the elders of the vessel.

The Balanitans are hesitant to adopt new technology, both because of the risk of failure that comes with any changes in the fragile environment of a generation ship, and also because doing so would require widespread overhaul of the system of bureaucratic examinations used in their society. Should new equipment be adopted, people who had been in their positions for well over thirty years, quietly training their successors to pass the tests required to take their position when they finally retire, would be forced out. Rather than let this happen, the Balanitans adopt new ideas and advancements slowly, usually as an older generation slowly ages out of their roles. But of course, by then, their mentees have learned the same exact way of performing the role. Unless succeeded by someone exceptionally strong-willed and determined, things on the Balanita are done the way they are, because that is how they have always been done, and how they will always be done.

That said, the Balanitans are very much interested in trade. While they may not want new equipment or hold the Lepenans' fascination with antiques, they are always interested in raw materials, especially those that they are unable to make themselves on their ship. Wood, ivory, and various textiles are always in demand, and in return, they have formed a cottage industry out of their cuisine, which reached such a height of popularity that it has already begun influencing the regional cooking practices of the Harvat system, even spreading to Sha'rur and Hu'iri. Recently, the Balanitans have begun importing raw foodstuffs to keep up with their demand for exports.

While the Lepenans put great emphasis on a long tradition of family crafts, the Balanitans are far more interested in performance arts. Dance, live theater, storytelling, and musical performance are considered high culture, and those selected for this role in Balanitan society are trained in exacting detail. Emphasis is placed less on one's own interpretation of any given work, but rather on just how closely one is able to perform the work in accordance to customs. Even new works are judged based on how well they cleave to these standards. Visitors to the Balanita are encouraged to stay for such performances, and they have become something of a cultural pilgrimage for the elite from nearby star systems. Many times, a troupe of Balanitans will be sponsored to travel the cluster.

# Jebede

There can be no discussion of the generation ships of Bhosnaya without touching on the *Jebede*. Largest of the ancient coldships, the *Jebede* moves quickly along an erratic orbit through the Bhos Cluster, like a colossal, hundred kilometer-long bullet. Clearly built by Solarian architects in a bygone era, the ship now sits at the center of an Armada interdiction cordon, placed by order of the Audit. Despite the Armada's best efforts, the vessel often slips its escort, seemingly disappearing entirely at times, and for good reason has become something of a ghost story amongst both Heg and Bhos.

While illegal, many treasure seekers attempt landings, boldly delving deep into twisting corridors and ancient service tunnels in search of the rumored "paradise" within. None have ever found an entrance, or if they did, they've never returned. Even venturing close is not without risk, as a particularly vicious colony of Rurō have infested the hyperstructure, nevermind the Armada vessels with orders to shoot on sight anyone and anything that attempts a landing. Further rumors persist of an even worse horror within known only to the Audit, waiting in the gloom, *something* ancient that never must be woken.



# Adrift Between the Stars

Navigator Alev stared with bored resignation at the view screen. The Uthmani they were there to meet weren't supposed to be anywhere near this location for another two shifts. They were strange beings, he wasn't even sure that some of them were properly human, but he couldn't help but trust them. The rest of the Bhos might hate the Dayani and her two allied systems, but the Uth had never shown a hint of distaste for their people. Well, that wasn't entirely true. There were things he probably should have been insulted by, like their clear disdain for the concept of Avarice and disregard for the philosophy of New Mankind. But it never felt directed at them, only the Hegemon, and to Dayani that barely even counted as a slight.

A faint chime from his instrument panel brought Alev back, and he looked at the data output on his display. He stared for a moment and shook his head. His fingers clicked over the keyboard, initiating a reboot followed by a diagnostic test.

"Something wrong?" The pilot of their packet ship asked, turning to look at the navigator.

"I..." he paused. "Maybe?" He pointed out the view screen. "Do you see anything out there?"

Glancing at the screen, the middle-aged woman with graying hair and organoid eyes licked her lips. Alev got the impression that if she could still squint, she'd be doing it right now. When Nidya found out she had SANS, Spaceflight-Associated Neuro-Ocular Syndrome, a simple and treatable condition, Wanvath had still denied her assurance claims. Proper treatment was out of their price range, so she'd told their Uthmani contacts they would need to find someone else to run their messages for them. The Uth had talked among themselves in their own language, clearly confused, and then gestured her towards the medical bay on their ship. Less than a shift later, she was back with organoid replacements, and a dazed look on her face. At first Alev thought it was the analgesic, but later, when the two were back aboard the *Lehy*, she told him that the Uth had asked nothing from her in return... *barbaric*. But Nidya had remained enamored by them.

"Stars. Black." She pointed at one of the larger points of lights and grinned. "And Dayan. Why? Are our friends early?"

The diagnostics results scrolled across his screen. No errors. No logicor corruptions. Alev shook his head and said, "No. Nidya, I thought the upgrades the Uth gave us were supposed to outclass any Stratos equipment we could afford."

"They are; we installed it all together. Grade 1 stuff."

Alev keyed in a few more commands. "I thought so too." The *Lehy* was a sleeper. Anyone looking at the ship from the outside would see a broken-down trampliner that no one but the most desperate Indigent would try descending into the Outside in. But underneath the painted-on grime and superficial corrosion was high end custom work. Grey market grade thrusters and reactors that belonged on a much larger ship, nusteel plating, and a sensor array not legally available to Cons anywhere in the Hegemon. He gestured at his console, "But then what in all the hells is this?"

Getting up, Nidya squatted down next to her friend, slinging an arm around his heavy shoulders, the grin slowly slipping away from her face as she scratched her nose. "Asteroid, maybe?"

He tapped the keys again, and the screen began to scroll through countless layers of sensory readings. "I don't think so. It looks like a ship, but it's huge. Kilometers long."

Nidya grew pale. "At least the size of the *Balanita*."

Alev nodded, "Bigger. There's no power signatures. No broadcasting. It's just..."

"Lifeless", she finished. She leaned closer, staring intently at the console, and then hurried back to her own station. The engines shuddered to life. "To hells with it. Let's see if that Uthmani sensor package really is that good." The ship rolled and accelerated, slightly reorienting itself before aiming for what the sensors indicated should be nearby. Alev wanted to protest, but there would be no arguing with her. Still, something felt wrong, the same kind of wrongness that one feels as they try to hold everything together against the endless nothing in the Outside, even as their brain screams out for sleep.

"By the balance", he breathed out in a whisper. It was almost impossible to see from a distance if you weren't looking for it. No running lights. No lidar, radar, or any other sensory output to pick up on. No internal radio chatter from one part of the ship to another, or even a pinprick of light from the massive engines. At first, all they could make out was a faint outline, an emptiness while everywhere else, this far out, was an endless field of flickering stars. As they drew closer, they saw it, and Nidya hit the *Lehy's* flood lights.

It was a corpse suspended in space, pockmarked by countless meteoroid microimpacts. It continued onwards, drifting towards Bhosnaya as Nidya hit the directional thrusters, slowing them to keep pace with it. "Do... Do we hail it?" Alev's voice was soft. "We found it. If no one's on board, the salvage rights are ours, right? Even if there's nothing on board, that's a hundred kilometers of scrap! We could retire on our own moon!"

"No," Nidya said, her eyes fixed on the screen. "Something's wrong about it."

Alev scoffed, "It's a floating wreck. You're really going to let ghost stories scare you off?"

"Maybe I am; why do you think it's adrift? Do you really want to be the first one to crack an airlock and find out?" Nidya crept the ship closer, unable to shake the feeling that something was deeply, deeply wrong. "It's old, too old, I don't recognize the make."

"It's dead, Nidya..." A slight pause as a thought bubbled up unbidden. *Wouldn't that mean it had been alive once?* He pushed that thought aside and continued, "I mean, whatever's in there has to be. And we've got the hard suits. Even if there's no life support or some sort of biovirus that's survived crossing light years without a host, it's not going to get through something rated for a void walk."

Nidya grimaced. Neither one of them wanted to call it by name; it was bad luck. "And if it disappears while we're still on it?"

"Nidya..." Alev watched the pitted hull through the view screen, trying to cover his own misgivings with a thin layer of confidence.

"Don't steershit me. We both know what that is. If you're not afraid of it, then say it."

"*Jebede*. It's the *Jebede*." The false bravado leached out of his voice as he said it out loud, "But so what if it is? If we touchdown, plant our marker, it's ours! Then we can float back to the *Lehy* before anything goes wrong!" Nidya seemed to consider so he pressed, "We might even have a *buyer* when the Uth show up!"

"Alright." A deep breath followed by a long, shaky exhale. She hated the idea, but maybe Alev was right. "Alright, screw it. We get in, drop one of the emergency tracking beacons, and we go. We'll see if our friends want first right of refusal... but we play this safe."

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The Uthmani ship, the *Tarahild*, hung among the stars, the planet Dayan a distant mote of light. It was a small ship, perhaps the size of an Armada Carrack warship, but sleek and streamlined without a single logo, visutel screen, or advertising broadcast, practically Exogenic this deep in Hegemonic space. Instead, it was covered in a matte radiation-absorbent coating that protected the crew from ambient cosmic rays, and made it mostly invisible to passive sensor sweeps as it waited to rendezvous with the *Lehy*.

"How much longer do we wait?" Karlesath thought-pulsed to the others on the bridge. He, along with the others of the bridge crew, were connected directly into the ship's systems, allowing for near-instantaneous communication between all of them. "Dorth, are we getting anything at all?"

The ship's onboard autonetic sophonce responded through inlaid speakers, preferring spoken words than integrated thought, "Nothing, Kar. I don't like this. Does anyone mind if I recalibrate for a longer-range sensor sweep? I'll need to draw power from emergency reserves in order to boost the signal."

The rest of the bridge crew transmitted back their approval.

"Give me a moment. I'm going to take my time with this one."

Karlesath sent a wordless sense of understanding, similar to a grunt and a nod, and then - "Armaan, you've worked with them before. Have they ever been this late? We can't risk being this close to the Hogs for long."

"No." Less the word, and more the general feeling of concern and dissatisfaction. "I doubt it's a trap, at least not one set by them. They take as many risks as we do."

"Everyone, can you take a look and verify this isn't a glitch in one of my cores?" Dorth sent the sensor data to everyone on the bridge, feeding it directly through the ship's network. Almost at the edges of their sensor range was a faint signal, tentatively labeled as a Hegemon distress beacon.

Armaan sent a twinge of concern. "It's pretty degraded, but I don't think so. Set to intercept. Kar, can you check in with medical? There might be survivors."

"Belay that." The rumble of thought from the man at the center of the bridge interrupted all other functions. The immersion pod had been modified with so many autonetic machines that it appeared as a clockwork rat's nest, constantly pulsing with data comprehension activities. The ship's Elder sent a flood of data from his multiple memory stacks.

The entire bridge crew shuddered from neural feedback. Images, sounds, and raw data overloaded their primary reasoning faculties. It told them to fear, to be wary, to prime weapons and to run as fast as they could back to League space and the safety it represented.

"Yes, Elder, changing course." Dorth intoned, their own reasoning bristling at the Elder's data send. None contradicted the decision.

Only after the *Tarahild* was pointed home did Karlesath pulse a query to the Elder, "What is the *Jebede*?" Minutes passed in silence and, for a moment, he wondered if the Elder had fallen asleep when a single word drifted into Karlesath through his autonetic connection.

"Folly."



## The Hegemon

The Bhosnaya Republic is part of the Hegemon, and however fractious or violent the Bhos might be within their own territories, they still recognize the authority of the Summit Council and the influence of the various MacroCorps that have seen fit to invest in their star cluster. As might be expected, the influence of the Hegemon is most strongly felt in the Dawnward portions of their territories, especially the Vuta and Enkov star systems, who have bought themselves protection, stability, and economic growth by fully opening themselves to the Directorate and other miliCorps, allowing them to build permanent bases of operations within their borders and welcoming Tributaries into their cities to spend their leave (and chit).

Of course, those benefits come at a cost. Misconduct by Tributaries and other Directorate personnel is often overlooked or dealt with by a gentle slap on the wrist by the local Vuta and Enkov governments. There is a common sentiment in these systems that while the Bhos might be in charge, the Directorate gives the orders. Duels are not uncommon, with bands of Tributaries on leave often also smashing into local units of Bhos law enforcement.

Further into the cluster and these cultures blend, intermingling over the centuries. It is on Baghreza Dva though that the the cluster becomes almost like the ExeCor, with towering solar deco buildings with such density as to reflect the Last City on Protea, andwith products and brands available that any ExeCorite would appreciate this far from home.

# Karanova Republic

m\_eeg2



On the Duskward borders, the Karanova Republic remains an active player in local politics, proving that the Summit Council correct in its assessment that the Thousand Empires would need to leverage Bhosnaya as their shield. Herbeg and Bohem are especially prone to this influence, as both are far enough away from the rest of Bhosnaya and the Hegemon that access to Karanova's markets is pivotal to the continued economic stability of both systems. nevermind the adjacent scattered small systems. Karanovan Corpos attempting to gain a toehold in Bhos often offer more lucrative deals, and it is an open secret within the two allied systems that Karanovan arms and equipment can be purchased almost at cost, so long as Civitate officers are allowed in to advise on the ongoing conflicts with Penova and Ondor.

These long-standing low-intensity conflicts are the result of over a fiscal century of arguments over local politics, religio-subscriptions, and inter-system tariffs, among other issues. One conflict would break into violence, then wane in intensity until another disagreement would drag the systems back into yet another brushfire war. But now, with outside assistance and supplies, they have finally tipped over into full-scale war as Karanova pushes for Bohem and Herberg to control Ondor, which would finally allow the Karanovan Republic access to one of the Astral Portals with all of the influence, both economic and political, that would entail.



# The Uthmani League

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The Uth provide ongoing support to three closely allied systems of Cian, Dayan, and Labenoi. The Uthmani have paid special attention to Dayan, whose long history with extra-solar refugees pouring in and outcasts finding home has left them mistrusted by the vast majority of Bhosnaya and thus far more open to the Uthmani's guiding principles of inclusivity for near humans, autoclaves and even synthetics.

Dayan now leads it's two allies by example as the Uthmani introduce them to technology capable of automating and supplementing their food production, as well as investing in geothermal energy farming on the moons surrounding Iba to reduce their need for polluting fissile materials or hydrocarbon boilers.

The thought process is fairly straightforward. By making Dayan, and eventually Labenoi and Cian, self sufficient, it will remove the systems' reliance on the Hegemon. Once this is done, all three would look to the Uthmani as their benefactors, allowing the Uth to provide their new allies with technology prohibited by the Thousand Empires. Perhaps in time these three could be brought into the League. If not, they would still serve as an invaluable link to Bhos territory and a steady stream of information regarding both Karanova and the Hegemon.



# The Mehndax

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Talan Hod and his Paupers are a divisive figure among the Bhos. Hated and feared by the Hegemon, Karanova, miliCorps, and local governments alike for the chaos and loss of profits his raiding parties inevitably bring, Hod is known as a violent madman surrounded by tales of barbarity, slave trading, and outright murder. But among Indentured and Indigent, the narrative is very much different.

Wherever the Paupers appear they bring with them gifts of food, air, water and chit, and anything they take is generously paid for. The stories of murder and slavery pushed by the local governments are often treated as a joke as low-credit Cons know they are safe. Hod kills those who stand in his way, but more often than not, those Cons are members of management, or even the occasional Baron foolish enough to try fighting the former Magnate. As for the slavery, what Dent mourns the Person who owns their time debts and works them in sixteen hour shifts? In fact, many are more than happy to help Hod and his Paupers hoping for just such an event.

While Hod is most active around Harvat, Hu'iri, Ghomb, and Vlog, it should be noted that he has never raided the Balanita. Treating it instead as a port of call, he lavishes the generation ship with treasures in exchange for entertaining his crew. Hod has never attempted to start a fight while on the ship and there are stories of him amiably chatting with Patrons from Harvat or other nearby systems. These Patrons were only to find out when they returned home that the man had raided one of their ports, gifted most of their Indentured enough chit to free them from their time debts, and let his Paupers hunt and kill every miliCorp security contractor they could find who was responsible for keeping the former Dents in line.



# LaansCorp: *We are Bhos*

LaansCorp's beginnings are unusual in that they began *outside* of the Bhos cluster in the Midworlds, originating from a group of Consumers financed by several Dumno Clan Scions, one of which was none other than Dumno-Kaget, the son of Dumno-Ualos.

In many ways, LaansCorp is the embodiment of Bhos *Invidia*. Those who attempt to do business within Bhosnaya without involving this localized MacroCorp often see their work flounder and die, as Bhos Cons will deliberately shun anyone who has not been vouched for by their own people.

LaansCorp was founded in the fourth fiscal century by a small group of Bhos tradesmen in response to the Summit Council's declaration that Bhosnaya must be made into a shield to protect the Hegemon from Karanova. Excited by the possibilities of new capital being invested into their region, they were still hesitant to the deluge of Civil Space Corps entering their cluster. The potential flood of new investment could easily result in their obsolescence. To protect their assets, they collectively formed a new development corporation that welcomed the influx of money and trade, so long as they got their cut first.

Using their resources, they approached Hegemon MacroCorps, preemptively offering to form joint ventures to help develop Bhosnaya to the requirements of the Summit Council. These Joint Ventures were lucrative affairs for all parties, but undeniably slanted in LaansCorp's favor. MacroCorps new to the region relied heavily on LaansCorp to navigate the fractious, often confusing array of interlocking and shifting alliances, non-aggression pacts, low intensity conflicts, and the various ancient grudges and prejudices which continue to this day.

With LaansCorp advising them, the Hegemon was able to stabilize a large enough territory to ensure the birth of the Bhosnaya Republic. Certainly, the project would have been doomed to failure without the constant intervention and investment of the LaansCorp, which continues to invite Corps into Bhos in the form of Joint Ventures to improve infrastructure and economic development of the region. Thus, LaansCorp was soon invited to the Summit Council and its Magnate, Rhea Olagana, was made an Archonist.

Publicly, the Magnates behind the foundation of LaansCorp wanted nothing to do with politics. In fact, every member of the original board of directors repeatedly refused every request to take any position within the Republic's government, whether elected representative or appointed official. But it is an open secret among the Bhos that without the LaansCorp's extensive holdings, influence, and steady stewardship, the Republic would collapse under the weight of so many competing factions.

That the Summit Council was at all surprised by the sudden ascension of LaansCorp to the status of MacroCorp, or their many monopolies in the region, was less a statement of the group's subtlety or strategy, and more so a clear pronouncement that despite the Hegemon being involved with Bhosnaya for fiscal centuries, only the Bhos truly understand the Bhos. The only thing that confused Cons living within the Republic was that it took so long for this fact to be formally recognized.



# The Plavigeni

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The Plavigeni were created through trade with the Kantauri Dominion and the Daeshian Empire, who struggled to tame their territories. They exhibit 'typical' super soldier parapsychical abilities with high stamina, faster healing factors and enormous strength, but, most importantly, boast seeming immunity to any known biological weapon and can operate, for a time, in nearly any combat environment.

Their history stretches back to the tumultuous period after the rapid decline of the Aramaxians. Caches and vaults of Grade S technologies and artifacts were ransacked, igniting entire wars for ownership between nations, remembered by none. It is believed the technology to create Plavigeni could have [REDACTED] but cannot be verified with inquests resulting in attention by [REDACTED] the Audit. Wanvath Underwriting, on study of Plavigeni corpses, have recognized certain elements found in the Azakar of the ExeCor and their own ancient provolvement, implying a connection or shared origin.

Since their uprising against the now defeated Daeshian Empire, they have fled into the Thraesh asteroid belts where they act as mercenaries, hiding in that maze of shifting rock where their dwindling numbers operate. Others have scattered into the Fringe, and are not an irregular sight beyond the Hegemon's borders. They are strange beings, persecuted by most Bhos for their crimes, in spite of being slaves when they did so.

Plavigeni present as male and female, but fall under the 'mule' designation and cannot easily procreate, requiring unique tertiary means of fertilization. Long-lived, they were once hunted by several interested parties eager to see if their process of creation could be copied, or at least, their longevity commercialized. The study proved to be a dead end after several trials.

What is known is that the first Plavigeni were taken from slave stock in the hundreds of millions, the odds of survival after the process remaining little better than a one in a thousand chance of success. The process was excruciating, driving subjects insane, necessitating extensive reconditioning before they could be trained, drilled, and deployed as shock troops.

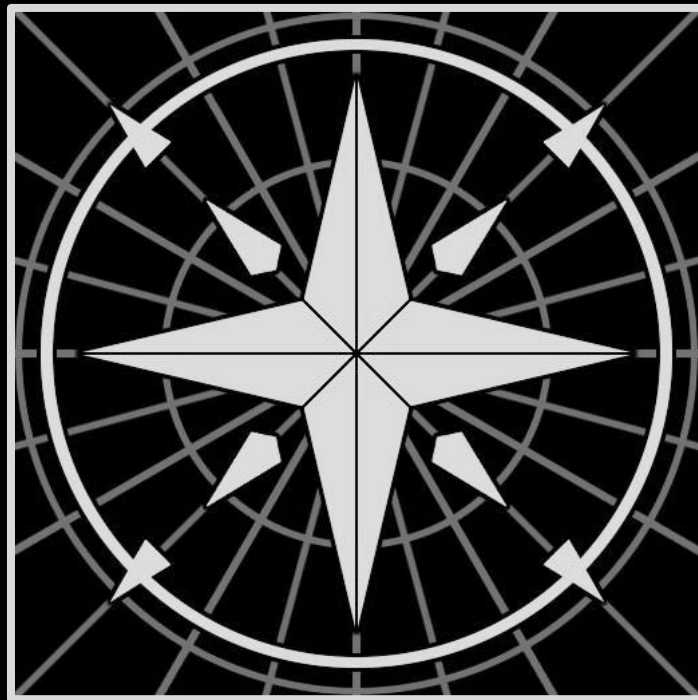
Over time, at the height of their conquests, the Plavigeni rebelled against their masters, quickly dispatching their overseers and escaping. Soon, the Daeshian Empire began to decline, abandoning their gains and relinquishing their rule without serious contest.

Plavigeni are what the Hegemon classifies as a Grade 3 supersoldier, and are more of an oddity than a true security concern. Sufficiently trained and armed Tributaries in pocketsteel can generally hold their own against such creatures, nevermind the overwhelming strength and power of a Barakan. Thus, Plavigeni are better suited as muscle and many of their kind can be seen working as such in criminal syndicates and organized crime ventures, making for excellent situational mercenaries when local environmental hazards are a concern. Likely, this is the reason they have not been targeted for extermination, and their loyalties are with chit and goods rather than any notion of patriotic or philosophical adherence.



*Enlarged red eyes, black gums and dense, plate-like scales of keratin separated by deep cracks that form geometric shapes make the Plavigeni easily identifiable.*

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