

Groups

Ideologies

Interplanetaryism



Figure 1 (Foster + partners)

The successor ideology/lifestyle to internationalism. Unlike the libertarian internationalists the interplanetaryists favor unifying institutions like OTA and the Lunar Council – still leaving plenty of individual, cultural and economic freedom but keeping the interplanetary community together. They worry that the plethora of isolationist and politically independent habitats has led to a situation where there are many potential abuses of human rights. The risks from destructive weapons, industrial accidents and genetic contamination are great enough that there is a need for unified policing.

Interplanetaryism is resisted by both various independent or nationalist polities that regard it as meddling and intrusive, as well as radical groups fearing that the various interplanetary organisations are trying to set up an oppressive “United Solar Nations”. Earth powers are also wary of a too strong OTA, especially since they feel themselves constrained by many of the interplanetary policing rules.

Japan is the exception. The Japanese nationalists see interplanetaryism as sensible and worth promoting. Opponents to interplanetaryism think this is because the strong Japanese position and sometimes accuse interplanetaryists of being bought by Japanese interests. Interplanetaryists on the other hand point to Japan as a great example of how societies can pull together and achieve the impossible by working together.

The Nagapartai

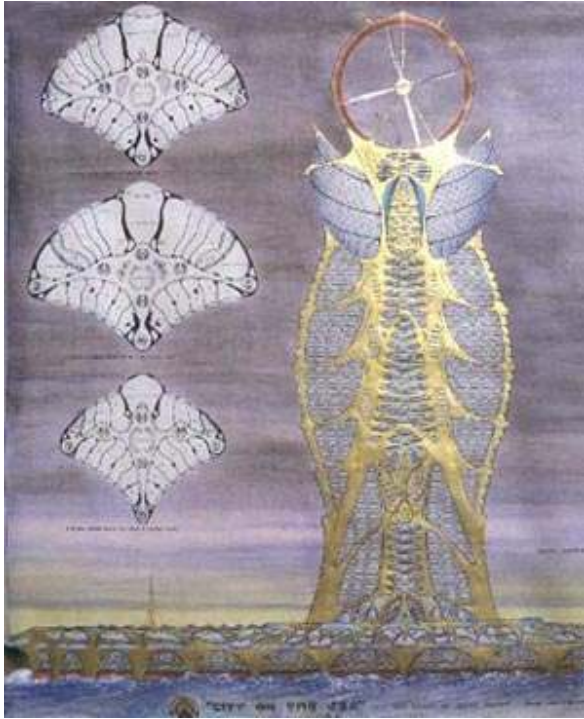


Figure 2: (Eugene Tsui)

The Nagapartai originated in Djakarta and has spread widely across former Indonesia. It is a lifestyle combining Islam with dragons; according to the founders the Dragons are the spirits mentioned in the Koran, and their arrival is a sign that a new era of miracles is dawning.

While not quite as willing to be absorbed by the dragons as the Voices the nagas skirt the edge of assimilation very closely. They are helped by what outsiders think is a homebrewed immunity, or more properly a dragon-human neural filter. This neural network seems to be consciously spreadable between willing participants and enables not only neogenetic manipulation and resistance, but also produces an intense sense of kinship – nagas easily recognize each other. More worryingly, it also seems to have a mind and personality of its own: people clearly change as they join the Nagapartai, becoming wilder, extrovert and sensual, often exhibiting odd tics and fragments of behavior that seem to belong to someone else. They also seem perennially immature: even the oldest naga has teenage mental traits.



Figure 3: (Roger Dean)

After the dragons colonized the Indonesian archipelago the Nagas have run much of it on their own; the rest of the population fled to highlands, abroad or into space. In the regions where the Nagas are active they are reshaping the landscape according to their whims. The result is something out of an organic thousand and one nights, integrating dragon growths with wild imagined "classic" architecture. Indonesia is turning into a jungle of the imagination, with the nagas as its apparent lords. Unfortunately, there is no shortage of bizarre aberrations in their creations - visiting can be very dangerous.

The outside world regard the Nagapartai as relatively manageable compared to the Voices. However, many muslims find their practices and religious ideas abhorrent. There has been some conflicts when Naga missionaries have been going abroad.

The Society of Mind



Figure 4 (Mondolithic studios)

The people with syntronic enhancements gradually found themselves forced together by circumstance and shared thinking. While they physically remained mixed with other groups of humans, their new modes of thinking set them apart and led to intriguing new possibilities. The possibility to link thinking and share memories and functions enabled the syntronics to work together. They could interface with AIs at enormous intimacy. The resulting system is often called the society of mind, after the ideas of 20th century AI researcher Marvin Minsky.

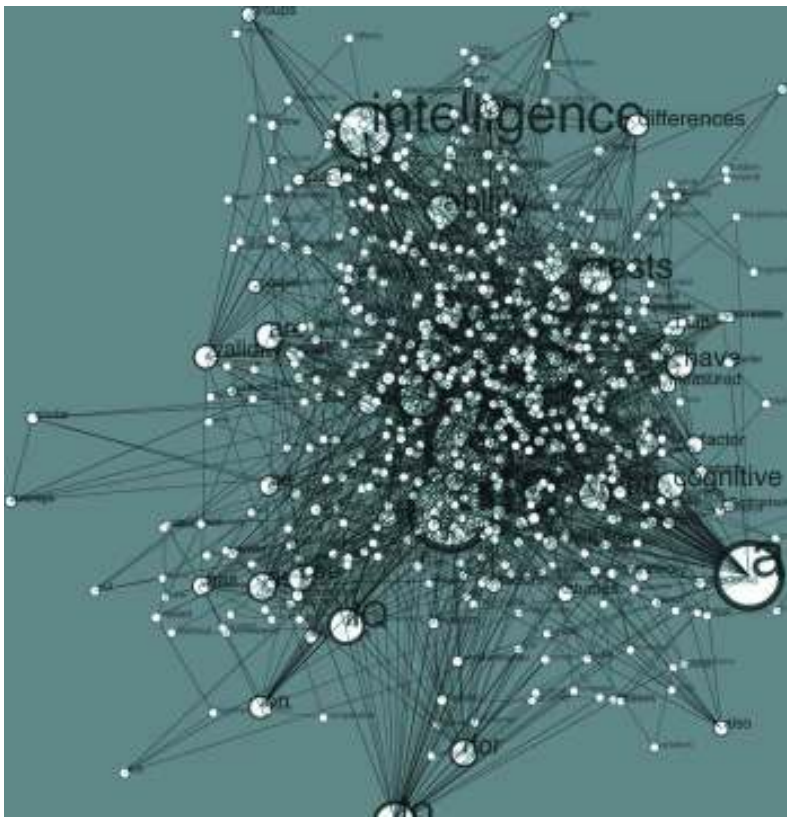
The Society is not a group mind, but rather a mind economy. Syntronics trade mental resources with each other, partly in an economic manner, partly in a social manner.

The Society requires high bandwidth communication and was hit bad by the Spamocalypse. In many ways the current Society is a recreation of the old society that was broken up by the chaos. Many of the older syntronics have responded by ensuring the robustness of their software links

and safety of their wetware by relocating into small, well-protected clusters of habitats near the Moon.

The Society has strong economic ties with the Netocracy, especially since members tend to live within it (but it also has sizeable populations within the Immunities, forming an unusual bridge of systems). While originally extremely cautious about links to the Dracosphere, these days the Society has neural interfaces with it and exchange information according to complex mental protocols. The Society is in many ways the key player in solar system economy, with its intimate ties to the orbital stocks and banking institutions, its intermediary position in many trades and its flexibility. It sometimes act as a single enormously diversified employee-owned corporation.

The Netocracy



While the Netocracy has roots going back to the turn-of-the-century internationalist culture, it was largely formed by the demands of the Spamocalypse and the move to a nanotech economy. It is essentially the arch-internationalists, hoping to do another jump in freedom and fluidity just as their grandparents did in the 2020's.

The Netocracy is on one hand extremely fluid and informal, with few constraints on intellectual property, custom or organization; adhocracy is the norm to a far greater extent than even in the old internationalist culture. On the other hand it is very focused on certain individuals – coordinators, organizers, leaders, gurus and wizards, usually just called netocrats. These netocrats are the key people that act as cores for the adhocratic networks, and set their protocols.

Especially the netocrats that create widely used computing or social protocols wield enormous influence.

While the Netocracy is used to denote all the information-technology societies mainly in orbit, many of the societies within this framework are culturally and economically very different. Some notable societies are the Indigos, cultures that have refrained from neogenetics and many other forms of modern technology, essentially cutting themselves off from mainstream civilization.

Economically the Netocracy benefits from its space location and access to cheap energy and raw materials, but are hampered by the constant need of making what is needed rather than relying on an outside environment. It is the leading developer of nanotechnology and hard technology, trading it for biotechnology from Earth and other system habitats.

The Netocracy and the Society of Mind are not compatible; the Netocracy requires individuals and focuses on hardtech, while the Society is approaching everything as cognotech. They are however often allied.

Al Qala'a

Islamic movement that denounces neogenetics and immunities. A sceptical reaction to the Caliphate Immunity, it crystallized around the comments of an anonymous Syrian online preacher using the handle Jabal al-Qala'a. Qalaists refuse neogenetics and other enhancement for multiple reasons (from safety over concerns of coercion to issues of whether the Koran allows it). The most controversial reason is the concept of the "Koran of the blood": just as the original Koran exists in heaven with Allah, so does the original human genome exist in Heaven. To deliberately tamper with the genome is deeply blasphemous and might even bar entrance into Heaven. This view has landed some Qalaists in hot theological water, and even members who do not agree with the concept are viewed with suspicion by many authorities. Qalaists have been persecuted in Egypt and Iraq, while they are tolerated in the Palestinian arcologies. Many have migrated to "safety" in the Asian inland or das Immunität.

The Realist Movement

Realists think virtual reality and other forms of mediation are unhealthy. Realists think human civilization is suffering from a global VR addiction, where people lose their sense of self, reality and place. Most realists are people who have little need for VR and telepresence, either sufficiently upper class that they can decide for themselves how they organize things and afford travel, or people living in local small communities rejecting the mediated world.

Re:Connect

Techno-ideological fraction, seeking to reunite the disparate networks. They claim that their network architecture is able to prevent spam takeover thanks to its integral security AI, and have repeatedly tried to demonstrate it in large-scale demonstrations. The Restoration Authority has been strongly against it, and over time both organisations have turned into enemies. Re:Connect radicals sometimes open network wormholes bypassing mandated firewalls and quarantines, and the RA systematically disrupts Re:Connect attempts to field their infrastructure.

Global Liberation Society

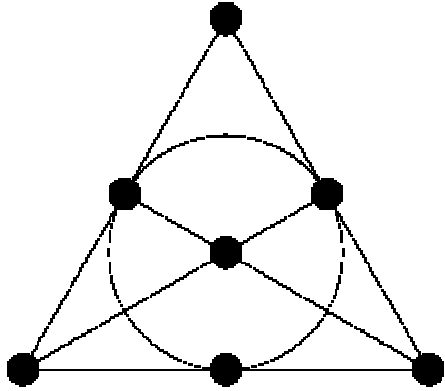
GLS is devoted to break the hold of OTA, RA and other transplanetary organisations over mankind. GLS members believe the transplanetaries are abusing their power, hobbling the freedom of both individuals and their societies, suppressing information and technology and promoting ever increasing social and technological control that in the long run will leave them, the global elite, in total control over everybody and everything. A mixture of traditional anti-authority activists, online franchise-rebellions and technoliberation, most of the time GLS is constantly squabbling over minor issues or protesting nearly everything in the modern world.

Afrix Movement

Immunity movement in Nicaragua, rebelling against the government and anglo-mexican influence in favor for African immunities. Especially widespread among Caribbean refugees, who combine their syncretisms with local syncretisms and pro-African ideology.

International organizations

Orbital Transport Authority

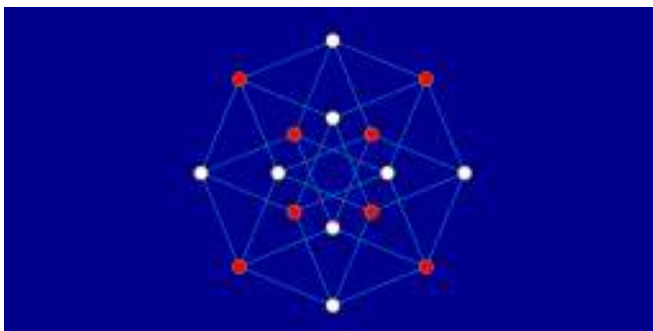


The Orbital Transport Authority is the closest thing to a united nations of the solar system. The organization has more power than the UN ever had: thanks to its control over energy beaming it is both wealthy, has teeth and every spacefaring group needs to deal with it.

The OTA was established in 2052 to help organize the increasingly complex traffic in the Earth-Moon system. The original purpose was both to coordinate space activity, traffic control, safety standards and to ensure that the beamed power systems were not used as weapons – goals everybody in the 40's space race saw the benefit of. It also acted as a forum for the space powers and a way for them to safeguard their interests. Since then it has expanded to deal with numerous space issues, from allocating orbits and mandating clean standards for reaction mass to maintaining decrepit habitats and arbitrating debris conflicts.

OTA was originally Orbital Transport Alliance, but it became the Authority after the ratification of the Spica Agreement 2065. This set up an organization with a Council composed of member states and organizations (all major spacefaring ones, as well as special observers from major Earth nations) setting agenda, and a Board implementing it through the various bureaus and SIGs. The official headquarters are on *Heaven Station*, although much work is done across the larger LEO and GEO habitats.

Restoration Authority



The RA is an engineering task force/standards body/certification authority helping to set up secure communications within and between communities.

It was founded in 2072 when a number of ad-hoc and local authorities decided to join forces to stop the spread of damage from the spamocalypse. As software replicators and wideband traffic wrecked the old net infrastructure there was a real threat not just to the fragile space habitats but also to the infrastructure of Earth. Various groups struggled to contain the outbreak, inventing ways of coordinating their efforts. As they connected they formed the RA as an umbrella organization. The RA became known for efficient, ruthless tactics in ripping out diseased infrastructure. They got habitats to set up proper firewalls and quarantines, directed relief efforts and in the eyes of many, saved humanity.

After the spamocalypse the RA did not disband. Fearing further outbreaks many polities supported the organization and helped it become a permanent system to protect the information infrastructures of mankind. It is funded by income from certification and support activities, but in many polities the local member organization is also part of law enforcement, civil defense or a government department.

RA and OTA have a kind of sibling relationship. While OTA commands enormous resources and plays a key political role, RA has a pervasive and subtle influence. It is also regarded by many more as unequivocally good, despite expert skepticism against its sometimes heavy-handed methods. RA is very firmly on the interplanetarist side, unlike the mild internationalism of the OTA management.

RA is very distrustful against the Dragons and Society of Mind, regarding them as potential outbreaks in the making.

Biosphere Integrity Standards Authority

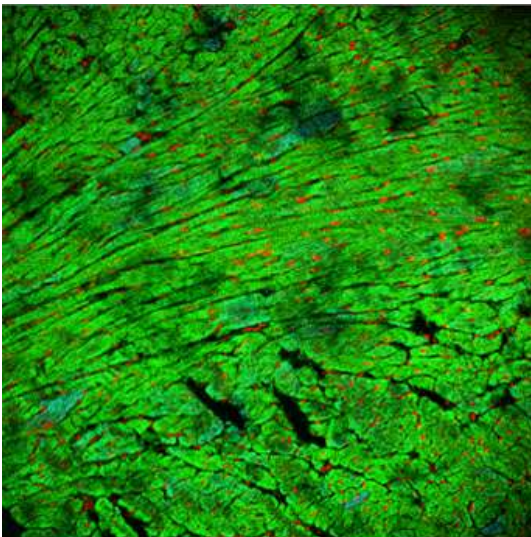


Figure 5: Scan for neogenetic control plasmids in heart tissue.

Interplanetary organisation for ensuring that safeguards to prevent biosphere cross-contamination are up to spec. People who have visited non-BISA certified habitats will be placed

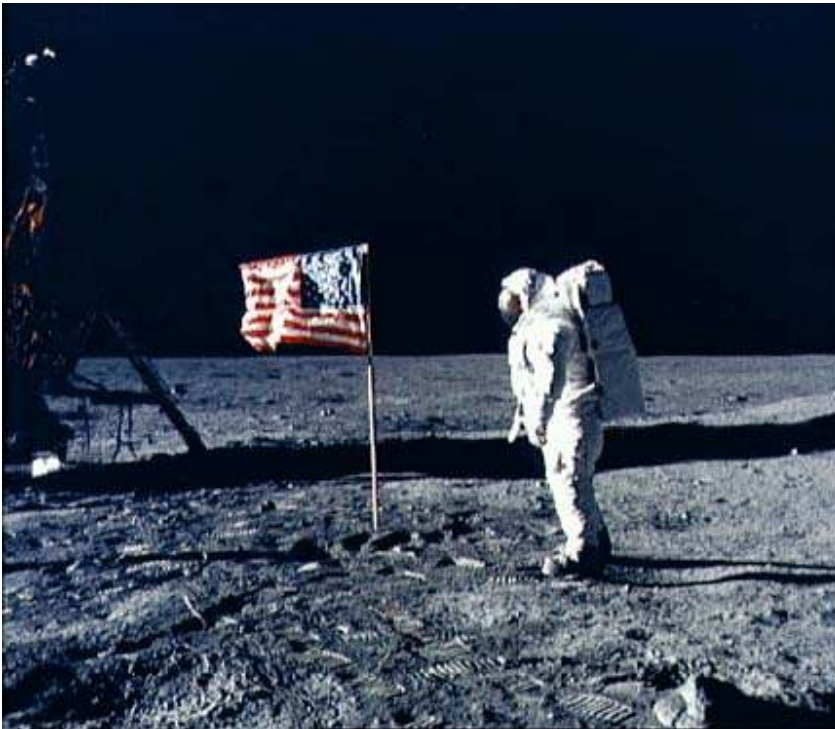
in quarantine or even refused entry in other biospheres. Conversely, habitats that meet BISA specifications for compatible biospheres tend to allow free travel between themselves.

The Circumlunar Conference



Informal organisation for the habitats, platforms and organisations active on or around Luna. While largely lacking any formal power, it is a key political and public opinion forum. In the various virtualities, debate boards, SIGs and adhoc much of the joint political life around Luna occurs. Many habitats and corporations tend to follow the consensuses that develop within the conference.

Heartland



As a result of an early deal between Brothers of the Land and PSD there are a sizeable number of American habitats with conservative values. Various churches, community organizations and Midwestern charities sponsored the space solution to the refugee crisis. These organizations often migrated at least partially themselves to the safety, biological purity and potential isolationism of

space. Often they retained ties to the stay-at-homes, forming one of the more solid spacer-earthier relationships.

The Heartland habitats are diverse, but tend to center around a Midwestern conservative protestant mentality. They do not regard themselves as having stopped being Americans just because they are de-facto independent citystates. Instead the Heartland habitats often get involved in US politics. They are at least rhetorically against the devolution of the country into regions and states, although they would likely not accept any federal government attempting to control their habitats.

Heartlanders are sometimes accused of being racist. They abhor genetic enhancements and neogenetics (many are Indigo habitats), and have a sizeable distrust for the internationalist culture. But they are also relatively ethnically homogeneous: since the migration was community-based, the same kind of people ended up in the same habitats. The number of African-Americans or other minorities in a typical Heartland habitat is very small (although the opposite exists; the *People Get Ready* and the *Exoduster* are prime examples). Most heartlanders vehemently deny that they are racist – they would welcome people willing to live like them.

The Heartland is no formal organization, but the habitats tend to network together and form caucuses in OTA or the Lunar Conference. The oldest habitat, *New Kansas*, is the “capital” of the Heartland and often used as a meeting point. Its adjudicators and magistrates are often used to settle inter-habitat disputes.

The Normalist Block

The Normalists are the descendants of the nationalists and conservatives that refused to join the internationalized neogenetic world. They are now largely isolationist communities seeking to retain the traditional values in face of the "chaos" outside. Over the decades they have formed a loose cooperation on the government level to safeguard their interests against the rest of the world.

Agence de l'immunité

The organization develops and maintains l'immunité (as well as acts as an umbrella organization for all government neogenetic initiatives in France). Although formally subordinate to the French government, the organization is tremendously powerful and often can dictate policy in any location that uses the immunity. It is entrusted with immunological policy and often can “suggest” courses of action to protect the welfare of people under its protection that tend to be implemented without question. AI has an extensive research campus in Épernay, centered on the original quarantine site set up in the 2030's by the French military to handle a very early dragon outbreak. Director-General Théodore Carpentier is well-known, respected and very powerful across the Francophone world; in many ways he is more powerful than the political leadership.

NERDs and TAGs

The old Nanotech Emergency Response Division has been dissolved for a long time, but the term NERDs still refer to the various technosecurity organisations protecting habitats, nations and biospheres from various threats.

TAGs, Threat Assessment Groups, are still around and often very powerful. A new form of organisation is the Threat Investor Alliances: when a potential threat is identified, investors invest money and expertise in TIAs. The TIAs develop solutions, find markets and (when enough interest has been gathered) charge hefty fees for averting the

Re:Grow



Biore restoration network, a coalition of political pressure groups, biotech companies, ecodesign teams, volunteer organisations and biologists working to recreate lost biodiversity. The Earth has lost at least a million species or more due to human and dragon activity, and the ecological damage is staggering. While many groups try to contain unwise neogenetic ecoengineering or protect the remaining wilderness, Re:Grow instead tries to restore lost species.

Fortunately modern biotechnology is well up to the task. Given a sample of tissue from a lost species new individuals can be cloned. However, to successfully restore a species genetic variation is needed, either from different samples or by painstakingly inserting genetic variation within the genome. Even when living individuals can be created they often need adult input, which has to be supplied using other species or simulations. Once a stable breeding population is created the next task is to reintroduce it into an often very changed environment.

Biorestorers are often engaged in intense debates about the right way forward. Some are purists, unwilling to fill the biosphere with “surrogates” that are to a large extent human guesses of what the species were. Most are pragmatists who think it is enough to get so close to the original as possible, but that there is no reason to aim for the unobtainable original. Then there are the radicals, who see no reason to stick with just what existed or what was recent. They promote reintroducing older extinct species like mammoths and sabretooth tigers (not to mention dinosaurs), mythological beings or entirely new creations. The rest find the radicals both tiresome and against the spirit of biore restoration. So far radical “restorations” have tended to remain in zoos or space habitats.

Disco Volante Red

Internationalist network based in the Disco Volante habitat. As South America was threatened by the Dragons, the Sao Paolo nuke and the Church of the Three Saviours, many internationalists with ties to the continent and wealthy nationalists regrouped in space. They formed a network aiming at “protecting” South America from threats, invest in infrastructure and expand their own interests. While ending up in conflict with the Three Saviours and largely limited in their direct South American activities, they gained many allies in North America, the Catholic Church and among internationalists fearful of neogenetic “cults”. The network grew into a very wealthy, well connected cluster of foundations, corporations, interest groups and net movements that helped spread alternate immunities, perform neogenetic research, invest in space infrastructure and support various cultural activities.

ImmuneHelp

Charity helping people to get immunized.

Tanzania Fine Arts and Crafts Society

Spreads East African biotech.

Polar Org



Organisation devoted to the restoration/recolonization of formerly glaciated areas in the north.

Wasserwacht



German eco-security organisation, tasked with maintaining defensive immunizations in the Baltic. Over time Wasserwacht has expanded and now is responsible (together with their other national counterparts) for containing the Mediterranean Dragon Zone.

Corporations

Phoenix Space Development



*We had little more than hope and a bad idea. Two key ingredients for global change.
-King Silas, Kings*

The most successful and biggest of the original space colonization corporations. They were first to send a manned expedition to a NEO and industrialize it, first to build a functional laser launcher, first to build a real space habitat (*Heaven*), first to catch a comet and place it at L4 and a key player in setting up and funding OTA. They are recognized as the most important industrial consortium of the century – as well as one of the most ruthless.

Besides some pretty wild cutting of safety corners and use of less-than clean Russian reactors during the bootstrap phase they have the distinction of having propped up more puppet-states than any other organisation (most notably the Baikonur Science and Technology Worker's Republic and the Free Marshall Islands), been involved in amazing levels of bribery and downright blackmail, were the key player in destroying the US federal government as a viable organisation, set of a debris cascade in LEO when a badly tested Orion rocket blew up – to just name a few of their less honourable activities.

When PSD built the space infrastructure in the 40's and 50's it was untouchable. Although many knew or suspected the corporation's malfeasances it was simply too essential, powerful and popular to attack. Compared to the threat of human extinction almost anything was acceptable. But as the first generation of leaders were replaced by less ruthless executives and the threat of extinction faded critical voices were increasingly heard. Especially among the Earth nations (with the exception for a handful of allies and puppets) it was regarded as a symbol of everything that was wrong with the old internationalism. There were several attempts to bring it to court, but the

earthbound criminal courts found themselves unable to affect the PSD, and the international organisations in space were far more willing to give corporation amnesty. The bad publicity still affected the corporation which withdrew from public view to focus on its core capacities: space system engineering, habitat construction, asteroid mining and transport. The enormous income from habitat rent and investment also kept the corporation firmly in the black regardless of public opinion; by most account PSD is the single richest corporation in the solar system. Registered on the Dominican Republic, the current headquarters are located on Daedalos. They also have a major lunar orbit presence on *Da Vinci*. The Baikonur Republic remains strongly entangled with PSD and many PSD installations are Baikonur registered.

Nekonospace



The Nekono group (Nekonano, Nekonitrogen, Nekonuclear, Nekolaunch, Nekoimmune, Nekoclean, etc) emerged in the 2040's. Unlike Phoenix, Nekono always aimed for the high-tech solutions. They invested in presently worthless resources they expected exponential technology growth would make useful and valuable – cast off porcelain bell capsules, random space junk etc. When the late 40's breakthroughs in nanotechnology occurred this strategy paid off, and they could rapidly bootstrap a space infrastructure. Since then they have diversified into numerous companies. Some, like Nekonitrogen and Nekonuclear have become solid parts of the space infrastructure. Others like Nekoratio, Nekohabitat and Nekoverbics have been total flops. This does not worry the Nekono group, as long as the overall profitability is good enough.

Nekonospace does not have any real headquarters, but are formally registered on Nauru (the nation is currently located on *Rebis*).

Bolton Solar Apex Investments



Orbital metafinancial firm/network/joint ad-hoc institute. Run by syntronic financiers, it is utterly fluid and baffling to outsiders to the space financial markets. Exactly what it does and why it is so important requires a profound understanding of syntronic economics.

Snyder Recreational Pharmecutical Instructional

“Banned in 40 habitats! And counting!”

Windseeker Cosmotronics

Cosmetics corporation, a pioneer in interactive nano-ink (“Atramentum™”) and elegant bioware.

Platinum Life Inc

A key artilife corporation, owning several important patents and holding immense cred in the open metabolism projects. While not marketing any artilife itself it provides the building blocks other artilife systems are built around. The owner, Mahmod El-Gamal, has been one of the most visible promoters of artilife.

Squall Hermeneutics

Network devoted to monitoring distributed cognition in the world. Squall analyzes the activity of the Dracosphere, Spam, financial markets, game worlds, the Society of Mind and many other phenomena to infer what they are up to. Academic, cautious and theoretical it has a pretty good track record of warning for emergent phenomena and even uncovering new technologies from the distributed systems.

Ethicorp

Moral management, memetics and sociotechnology. Ethicorp assists habitats and other polities in maintaining social order.

Re-integrate

Treatment of neogenetic infections. Reintegrate detects and attempts to neutralize infection, allowing Infected to rejoin the greater society. This has made the various Reintegrate installations and camps

Strategic Pharmecuticals

An early adopter of plasmids for medical uses, it rose to prominence by selling medications for space life. Since then it has focused on developing new forms of lifestyle drugs.

Astrologistics

Space construction and transport corporation.

Surete Atrous

Telepresence mercenary firm, active worldwide but with the operators safely home in Lyon.

Heloise Graumont Aerspatial

French aerospace company (originally Clairvaux Aerspatial). Known for their advanced shuttles and orbital technology. They were pioneers in using syntronic design and morphing surfaces.

Originally seen as overly elegant and mysterious, over the years their designs have become regarded as the standard for ground-orbit shuttles and scramjets. HGA has very close ties to the French Government and some immunity agencies. The founder, Philippe de Clairvaux, was a famous eccentric and entrepreneur, and he willed his sizeable fortune to a foundation intended to further gardening.

CDA Gruppe

German aerospace firm, responsible for the Sperber and Turmfalk shuttles that are the workhorses of high-comfort ground-orbit traffic. They are mainly involved in the design and construction of orbital habitats and industry, with close ties to the Deutsche Nanotechnologie Gesellschaft which is their main customer.

Rakko Dynamics

Japanese aerospace firm. It manufactures all sorts of orbital vehicles and course-correction devices, from propulsion ice packaging to shuttles.

It has strong ties to an engineering/invention network, the Toyohashi-MacKay Network that develops various cutting-edge equipment such as nanoparticle fission fragment thrusters and gamma-ray powered sensor dust. Rakko, TMKN and the Japanese navy have a deep and long-running mutual cooperation.

Suntory Group

Originally a Japanese brewery that branched out into biotechnology. When the great emigration occurred it sold off most terrestrial holdings, setting itself up as one of the largest and most competitive chemical processing/biotech on Luna. The subsidiary Wild Translation performs genetic scanning, recompilation and limited enhancement. Their rugby team Suntory Sungoliath is in the top league.

Cardinal Investments Group

Internationalist financial corporation, with strong ties to the Australian Lunar territories. They are deeply involved in the volatiles futures market.

Corporation of Copenhagen

When Copenhagen built the protective cover in 2056 CoC was formed to handle its function. Over the next 40 years it slowly grew in power, taking over more and more of the infrastructure – transport, net, security, biocontrol etc. Today the city is essentially an arcology run by CoC on behalf of the inhabitants and the government.

Nitrogen Network

A consortium handling much of the nitrogen and volatile trading in cislunar space. While NekoNitrogen has a dominant position in supplying outer system ice, much processing needs to be done before it can be used in a biosphere. The Nitrogen Network produces fertilizers, liquid nitrogen, ammonia and organic chemicals at the Corral and in installations on and around Luna.

N-Space

One of the old launch companies, still in business. These days it mainly maintains LEO installations and runs various shuttle services. In 2098 it suffered financial troubles and was acquired by Tagame Holdings.

Westerfeld Extreme Environmental Engineering (WEEE)

Arcology, reclamation and colonisation corporation. Originally merely in the “ark business” in the 2040’s, constructing hopefully secure refuges in remote parts of the world, it has branched out into resource extraction in dragon zones, reclamation of ecologically crashed land, recolonization efforts and radical ecosystem design. It has close ties to the exile Indian, Indonesian and Thai governments, maintaining a number of their safe arcologies (especially the New Kolkata/Prince Edward Point arcology on South Georgia) and being the main contractor for various restoration projects.

Kitakami Photonics

Japanese smart optics company, manufacturing nanofilms and metamaterials. They produce solar sails, stealth clouds and artificial skies. Their solar sail *Nimble Peach Blossom* is a favorite in this year’s Eagle Cup.

Koch Tronics

Major designer and online seller of fabbing blueprints. Koch object designs are ubiquitous in space: standard, sufficiently reliable, uninteresting. Among spacers being a Koch implies that one is utterly ordinary. Koch has a number of subsidiary brands that are far more high profile, such as Cosmomantics (beauty and apparel), PaRe (food), Accomo (optics, electronics) and Flowering Bird (toys).

African Genetic Bank

Major financial group, based in Lagos. It rose to prominence during the 2060’s thanks to its investments in applied neogenetics, and today has branches across Africa. AGB was heavily criticized for its biased immunization programs, and have done its best to clean up its reputation by sponsoring ecological and social charities worldwide, including treatment of infected people in East Africa and repatriation programs for biological refugees.

Rodgers State Agricultural Software

Ecological monitoring and modeling software, control systems for environmental smart dust and biosphere maintenance solutions.

Alternative Airlines

Earth airline corporation, based in California. One of the few international airlines, it maintains a fleet of high-altitude or quarantine-safe planes that enable it to connect different continents safely.

Vis Viva

Luxury space transport, mainly between habitat constellations. Their flagship is the *Wie*, a cruiser moving between GEO habitats at a leisurely rate.

Raymond Data Insurance

Backup storage, data integrity maintenance, escrow and other forms of digital safekeeping.

Thabeet-Zawose Services Inc

Neogenetic/immunity corporation originating in Tanzania. They are active across Africa and Asia, selling immunity services, neogenetic designs and biotechnology.

Humware Polifónica

Colombian-Venezuelan neurotech company

Ediacara Holdings

Australian/internationalist corporate group that grew out from Ediacara Heavy Industries. Mainly invested in advanced technology, especially AI and nanotechnology. The group is involved in an acrimonious series of lawsuits against the Japanese government after their AI research lab on Luna failed economically and was seized by Japanese authorities.

AusSpace

The state Australian space colonization program. Responsible for maintaining many of the orbital and lunar installations.

Shogun Security

Well renowned security firm in Kaguya city.

Urgenta

Major intrnationalist finance corporation/network.

Exterminateurs Lyonnaise

French ecodefense group.

Mabuchi Life Sciences

Japanese agritech corporation.

Shinano

Japanese nanotechnology and artilife conglomerate.

Bhabataran Consulting

The first private neogenetic consulting group, founded 2042. The founder, Dattan Bhabataran, started a very profitable business when he recognized the bioengineering potential of being a Host. Since the 2040's the company has hired numerous hosts and are now active in many places Earthside. It also runs the Bhabataran School of Neogenetics, training Hosts.

Takenaka Agricorp

Tamron

Trend Transit

Kinetsu Corporation

Atlas Lifting
Macrotech
Spectrascan
Solar Telecommunications
Stark Imperial Horizons
Sawyer Photoco
Faulkner Netics
Douglas Software Bank
Humanodigital
Hobbs Augmented Frontiers
Phytoenergetic Network
Sleepless Security
Morphogenetic
Kern Security
Klustercorp
Futukora corporation
Japanese Mechanical Biological
Luna Genetisystems

Terrorist organisations

Lotus Eaters



Figure 6 (Murray, J.D., Karas, B.J., Ross, L.M., Brachmann, A., Wagg, C., Geil, R., Perry, J., Nowakowski, K., MacGillivray, M., Held, M., Stougaard, J., Peterson, R.L., Parniske, M., and Szczyglowski, K. (2006). "Genetic suppressors of the *Lotus japonicus* har1-1 hypernodulation phenotype.", *Molecular Plant-Microbe Interactions*, 19(10), pp. 1082-1091)

*And so your life's been a success
And you have pleasure in excess
Don't worry it will all end soon
The crack of doom is coming soon
And so your future's looking bright
And you've reached the giddy heights
Don't worry it will soon end
It is all shallow and pretend*

*The crack of doom
Is coming soon
The crack of doom
Is coming soon
Ha-ha-ha-ha-ha-ha-ha-ha
--The Tiger Lillies, The Crack of Doom*

While Black Lotus is gone, their followers remain. Most "lotus eaters" are just naïve or destructive people who consider Black Lotus cool or an excuse for being antisocial. But given the

access to neogenetics and the many unstable corners of the world, even small groups can cause significant damage.

Most Lotus Eaters agree that what Black Lotus really wanted was more chaos in the world: keep the powerful afraid, keep the world unpredictable. There is no real “why” beyond chaos for chaos sake, but that does not stop many Lotus Eaters from inventing elaborate philosophies. Some have even gained a modicum of mainstream respectability such as the works of Irene Elekid or the anti-immune rock of Rex Rod Rack. They tend to be highly critical of the Immunities, Interplanetarism and attempts at social engineering, but also strike out against internationalism, isolationism, Indigos, syntronics or hardtech depending on brand.

The Lotus Eaters that get the headlines are the neogenetic action groups. Most are based around Hosts in the heterogenous zones, smuggling biological contraband into other regions to wreak havoc. Some actions are quiet ecological sabotage like introducing the J7843 bacterium into the Mexican ecosystem to sabotage the growth of maize. Some are prank-like, like the 2078 release of psychosis-inducing rhinoviruses in Los Angeles or the spread of graffiti on plants. Others are serious attempts to contaminate sealed habitats with neogenetic material or the spread of neogenetic infections that prevent induction of immunity (counter-immunities). Real terrorist attempts occur, often using neogenetics. At the Izhevsk massacre 2086 nerve-toxin producing wasp swarms attacked thousands of people and killed 693. In 2099 a series of massive detonations wrecked parts of Amsterdam; it was discovered that a modified dry rot fungus had been used to produce explosives inside building foundations. The real target turned out to be the dikes: had the fungus not accidentally exploded early other fungal infections would have used detonations to undermine the dutch seawalls.

There seems to be an ongoing competition between activist cells on who can commit the most outrageous atrocity. Everybody compares themselves to the standard of the original Black Lotus – they were able to manipulate the gametes of a sizeable fraction of humanity or even raised the Dragons.

Knights of St. George



Anti-dragon terrorist group. There are many, many people who have reason to hate the dragons. The Knights are radical humanists, regarding the Dragons as alien interlopers or a natural disaster with no intrinsic moral worth, but they are open to those seeking revenge against the dragons for what they have done to the world. Like most distributed terrorist networks, it is more of a franchise than a firmly organised group. The knights work with various neogenetic hackers to discover ways of defeating the dragons. However, several nations in the Mid East are officially supporting the group and sheltering internationally wanted members.

Dracocide is hard - the leading biowarfare experts of the 2040s completely failed at even slowing the advance of the dragons. Dragon knowledge is distributed and there are no "minds" anywhere. A nuclear weapon can blow up a dragon castle, but the only response is that a few new ones will sprout. Poisoning the biosphere works temporarily, but the dragons are good at adapting.

Some knights have tried to adapt the Blight into something that sabotages dragon ecologies, with limited but promising results so far. They are also interested in nanotech and artilife attacks, something which could make them very dangerous – to humanity at least.

In lieu of a good method for dracocide they often concentrate on human collaborators like the Voices or the Nagapartai, or even Hosts or enhanceds. The brewing conflict between the Ijyë-iyanu and the Caliphate immunities may involve the Knights.

Conspiracies

The Marshall Islands Rocketry Club

A network of aerospace engineers that gained notoriety by using their ties to PSD in the 2040's to develop various forms of nuclear propulsion under minimal scrutiny. After the Orion disaster and independent auditing of their nuclear scramjet project the club formally disbanded. The Kodiak scramjet project ended up as a local museum, and the Kwajalein "clubhouse" was eventually sealed in nanobinder to prevent radioactive leakage.

Despite this, the MIRC appears to be still active. Former members have resurfaced with proposals for interstellar spacecraft, in nuclear propulsion projects such as FragmenTech and in online networks devoted to radical engineering. There have been claims that PSD or Japanese funding has been used to develop various borderline legal space technologies, and that MIRC is active in the Jupiter system. Most people discount such claims as amusing "mad scientist conspiracy" theories – it could even be that the current MIRC activities are a hoax from somebody wishing to divert attention from something else.

The Dragon Conspiracy

Unsurprisingly, a plethora of conspiracy theories emerged around the Dragons. 50 years later only a few remain current. The main theme is that the Dragons were of human origin, and the story about them being aliens was manufactured to shield the real perpetrators.

The most common variant is that the biotech corporations at Socotra accidentally unleashed a neogenetic replicator that subverted the biotech islands and then began to evolve into the current Dragons. Variants blame other groups such as the French, the Americans or even rogue AI. The accident version has led to endless scrutiny of all remaining evidence surrounding the local research, Omicron Technologies, Black Lotus, the Mogadishu Incident a few days earlier or anything else possibly connected.

A more paranoid version of the theory claim the Dragons were not accidental. Instead someone benefited from the disaster. A common variant is that it was the big space corporations such as PSD, seeking to force mankind into space and hence into their power (which is provably untrue, since none of them existed at the time; the theorist will merely respond that they did not exist *openly* at the time). Another variant is that the Dragons are the next stage of human evolution, as envisioned by some shadowy internationalist network seeking to transcend mortality as the Dracosphere. This variant implies that the Dragons were actually human, and now form a posthuman civilization covering much of Earth.

Omicron Technologies

A shell company hiding various internationalist interests in the 2030's. It was involved in the Socotra Incident, triggering it by bringing in various members of Black Lotus (voluntarily or not) for study. After the Incident the company disbanded, selling off its assets and knowledge to threat assessment groups and biotech concerns in order to effectively hide the identities of its real owners. Since the Incident numerous investigations have been made, only partially piercing the corporate secrecy.

Omicron Technologies has become a stand-in name for any kind of encryption-based conspiracy. To some it represents everything that is wrong with the internationalist order: unaccountability, callousness and secrecy. To others it is a term for mystery and excitement. Numerous imitation "Omicron Technologies" now exist, ranging from game guilds to religious cults.