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Cthulhu Rising - Horror Roleplaying in a Dark Future was first devised by John Ossoway in 1999 as an alternate campaign setting for Call of Cthulhu. Call of Cthulhu(R) is Chaosium Inc.'s registered trademark for its roleplaying game of horror and wonder.

The Chaosium Dudes, for being such excellent people.

HP Lovecraft and his contemporaries - they know what lurkest in the dark spaces between the stars...

All those who have ever written scenarios / supplements for Call of Cthulhu - your influence is in here somewhere.

Hugo Foscolo and the Foscolo Discontinuity are taken from the novel 'Starworld' by Harry Harrison

Influences for the feel of the look and feel of the 23rd century include Philip K Dick (and movies made from his books, such as Minority Report, Blade Runner), Harry Harrison, Pitch Black, Aliens.

The overall look and feel of Earth and the colony worlds in the 23rd century draws a lot of its inspiration from that envisioned in the Alien saga of films, specifically the second film, Aliens. In these films the future is seen to be a dark and dangerous place, where outer space is the new frontier, and humanity in its ignorance has left Earth to exploit the galaxy for its own ends.

I have taken inspiration for technology and organisations from the films, the Colonial Marines Technical Manual and the Alien 3 script by William Gibson that was rejected.

Some of the equipment and character skills were inspired from the original Traveller rules, by GDW, and from Cthulhu Endtimes, by Dr. Michael C. LaBrossiere.

Cthulhu Rising only pretends to be hard science-fiction. This is a world with interstellar travel and artificial gravity after all!

The above list is far from complete. Respect where respect is due - if I have missed you off this acknowledgments page, apologies, and thanks.

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INTRODUCTION

It is the year 2271. The future is a dark and dangerous place. Outer space is the new frontier, and humanity has left Earth to exploit the galaxy for its own ends. It is over a century and a half since the United Earth Federation (UEF) first began to colonise the solar system and beyond.

The conquest of space was never an easy undertaking. Indeed, the first tentative steps into space by humanity were difficult and often costly. Despite the many obstacles and deterrents, Humanity gradually edged off Earth into space. The colonisation of space and with it the struggle to survive in often strange and hostile surroundings challenged the determination and ingenuity of human civilisation, but three hundred years since Neil Armstrong first set foot on Earth's lunar companion there are millions of people who call planets beneath alien skies home, many of whom have never set foot on the planet which will always be their spiritual birthplace.

Space is vast. Just how vast is hard for us humans to visualize intuitively. An interstellar society like that in Cthulhu Rising exists under many unique restrictions as a direct result of this vastness. The most notable restriction is that this interstellar community consists of many island-planets scattered across an ocean of deep space, separated by unavoidable communication and travel delays. Even with technological marvels like the Foscolo Interstellar Drive and FTL communications, travel between these star systems takes weeks, if not months, and communications suffer delays of days if not weeks. Interplanetary and interstellar travel is still an expensive business. Most people who travel are either company employees, military personnel or government staff.

Because of these restrictions, the UEF is a remote, centralised government. Like the ocean-going civilisations of old, humanity has had to readjust, taking what some regard as a social step backwards. In-system communications remains near-instantaneous, but communications with extra-solar colonies is as difficult as it once was to get messages from one side of an ocean to another on pre-20th Century Earth. Though the UEF would deny it in the strongest terms, it is to all intents and purposes an imperial power, with regional governors administering colonial assets.

The maintenance of order in an interstellar civilisation requires a degree of control which to many is in itself undesirable, and the nearer one approaches the administrative centre of such a society, the more rigid its constraints. Despite Sol being little more than another star in the night sky to many colonists, the majority are still tax-paying citizens of the UEF. Of course there are the minority of worlds who rebelled against this control, and whom even now live outside the Federated Colonies.

Life is not unique to Earth. It thrives in the oceans of Europa, and on planets orbiting stars other than our own. Intelligent life is another matter though. As humanity pushes further and further out into space, contact with another intelligent space-faring civilisation has not yet occurred, yet still seems inevitable. It is only a matter of time before one of these craft stumbles upon some remote, alien edifice, a cosmic mausoleum of the Great Old Ones. But who is to say this has not already taken place..?

Players take the roles of the Investigators of the future. Those enlightened and oft unlucky individuals who know something of the true nature of the universe. Be they fools or heroes, they take the fight against the Great Old Ones to the stars themselves.

This book is split into two parts:

Part One endeavours to provide an overview of the Cthulhu Rising universe, enabling Keepers to create and run a science fiction campaign set in the late 23rd Century.

Part Two provides supplemental rules for generating Cthulhu Rising Investigators, as well as information on the equipment and weapons that will aid them in combating dark cults.

I hope you have as much fun playing Cthulhu Rising as my group and I do!

John Ossoway

TIMELINE

THE 21ST CENTURY

In the early decades of the 21st century, as fossil fuel production peaked then began to fall there was a global scramble for the dwindling reserves of oil, natural gas, minerals, and clean water. Governments throughout the world defined resource security as a prime objective, which caused widespread global instability, especially in those regions where competition for essential materials overlapped with long-standing territorial and religious disputes.

As the century progressed the political map of Earth was to change dramatically. New superpowers emerged to challenge the world dominance of the USA, with the most notable amongst these being China. Even the USA wasn't immune to change, uniting with Canada, Central America and parts of South America to form the United Americas, in direct response to the shifting economic climate.

By the middle decades of this century the global energy crisis was averted by the discovery of nuclear fusion, and Humanity also took it's first tentative steps towards colonising the solar system, but the real start of the Interstellar Space Age would have to wait until the dawning of the 22nd Century.

Perhaps the most important event of the 21st Century was the formation of the United Earth Federation.

2026: JERUSALEM ACCORD SIGNED

A coup backed by elements of the army deposes the current hard-line Israeli government bringing an end to the Fifth Middle East War. The war was not fought over religious beliefs or territorial disputes as in the past. In 2022 Syria, Jordan and Israel went to war for the limited water resources delivered by the Jordan River.

The United Nations step in to broker a peace deal between Israel and the Arab states in the region.

The Israeli occupied West Bank becomes the nation of New Palestine while Jerusalem becomes an independent city much like 20th Century Kosovo. United Nations peacekeepers are deployed in Jerusalem for an indefinite period.

2029: FORMATION OF THE EUROPEAN FEDERATION; FINAL DISSOLUTION OF NATO

The USA's unrelenting support of Israel during the Fifth Middle East War causes NATO alliance to unravel. This clears the way for the formation of the European Federation from the member states of the European Union.

The European Federation is a Federal super-state of more than 40 countries stretching from Iceland to the Caspian Sea. As well as the obvious member states, it includes the Balkans, Belarus, Moldova and Ukraine, and the Caucasian states of Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia. Turkey's membership gives the European Federation a direct border with the troubled Middle East.

The Trade War of 2017 had already driven a wedge between America and Europe. The events during the Fifth Middle East War push the UK and other ex-NATO countries into full membership of the European Federation, despite not fully accepting all of it's policies. This puts an end to the once treasured 'special relationship' between the Americas and UK, that has existed since WW2. Relations between the USA and UK will remain strained for several decades, but cooperation during the colonisation of the Moon restores ties between the two nations.

2030: WORLD BANK DECLARES BANKRUPTCY.

Earth's fossil fuel based economy reaches breaking point. With major oil reserves dwindling rapidly, on 23rd November 2030, the World Bank declares bankruptcy. Global Economy collapses, leading to civil unrest around the world. Rioting and looting breaks out in major cities across the globe.

2031: NUCLEAR FUSION

The Tokomak fusion reactor at Cardarache in France is demonstrated to be safe, economically competitive and infinitely upscaleable. The breakthrough pulls the world back from the brink of global anarchy and social meltdown. The advent of cheap, safe and virtually limitless energy significantly shifts the balance of power on Earth.

During the next decade there is a transitional period, as global economies and infrastructures change. By 2043, most of the world's energy needs will be met by fusion power. Regional wars are fought over the planet's depleted oil reserves. The UN places a

ban on the burning of fossil fuels and starts a compulsory recycling scheme of ALL plastic waste, as remaining reserves are designated for use in manufacturing of plastics, PVCs and UPVCs.

2033: FORMATION OF THE ISLAMIC HOLY REPUBLIC

Unification of Iraq/Iran sees formation of the Islamic Holy Republic, with it's capital in Tehran.

2034: LUNAR LANDINGS REDUX

Humanity returns to the Moon after an absence of almost 65 years. The Capricorn V landing is the first of a series of missions that are part of a commercially-backed project by the newly established United Nations Space Administration (UNSA) to prepare the way for a permanent Lunar colony. The main functions of the colony will be scientific research and to conduct a geological survey of the Lunar Regolith with a view to finding the best site to begin mining Helium-3. The first generation of fusion reactors run on Deuterium-Tritium fuel, but a new wave of Helium-3 fuelled reactors are seen as the way forward to secure Earth's growing power needs.

2057: LUNAR COLONY ESTABLISHED

Armstrong, the first permanent Lunar colony is established at the Copernicus Crater. The colony is nominally under UN Mandate, but it is primarily a joint American, European (UK and France) and Japanese venture. Initial population is 150. In the absence of any legally binding agreement governing the mineral exploitation of the moon, the megacorporations who financed the colony stake claims to large regions of the lunar nearside which selenologists believe harbour commercially viable ore deposits.

2059: COMMERCE ARRIVES IN OUTER SPACE

The powerful Japanese corporation Motokatsu-Kyono Combine begins successfully mining helium-3 from the Mare Imbrium. It sparks a wave of commercial interest in the Moon. Within 10 years, at least a dozen corporate concerns are involved in mining substances abundant on the lunar crust but scarce on Earth. These include helium-3, which is the ideal fuel for fusion reactors, gallium, which has replaced silicon in the making of chips, chromium, aluminium, iron, oxygen, gravidium and super-hard titanium.

2061: THE MARS LANDINGS

4 July: UNSA spacecraft Ares 3 lands on Mars with a multi-national crew of 4 (American and Chinese). Utilising an advanced fusion drive

the journey to Mars take little more than 2 months.

2071:

Ares station on Mars is now manned by 51 personnel. Stickney Base, a waystation for supply missions from the Earth-Moon system, is constructed on Phobos, larger of Mars' two moons. The Armstrong Luna Colony now has a population approaching 400. With up to a dozen commercial mining bases scattered across the moon, the total Lunar population is close to 1000.

John Ossoway celebrates his 100th birthday in the south of Spain, with his family.

2074: THE LUNA CRISIS

A dispute over water mining rights at the Clavius Crater between rival corporations Motokatsu-Kyono and the recently formed Lunar Development Corporation (LDC inc) escalates to the brink of the first armed conflict in space. Water ice provides the Lunar Colony with drinking water, oxygen and hydrogen for use as rocket fuel.

Motokatsu-Kyono blame LDC for the "software bomb" that wreaked havoc at it's Tokyo headquarters. The corporation threatens "retaliation" if its suspicions are confirmed. Both corporations begin evacuating non-essential personnel from their mining operations, while shipping security personnel from Earth. Reacting to the possibility of armed conflict on the Moon, Helium-3 prices on Earth begin to rise. Helium-3 is rare on Earth but relatively common on the lunar surface.

Before events can escalate out of control, the UNSA manages to negotiate a peaceful settlement to the Lunar Crisis. As a direct result of the Lunar Crisis, the UNSA is given the mandate by the UNSC to establish the Lunar Security Force (LSF), a small detachment of soldiers and security specialists, tasked with keeping the peace and mediating any disagreements. In addition the Outer Space Treaty is revised, preventing any one organisation restricting the supply of a vital resource like water to other organisations.

2084: FORMATION OF THE UNITED AMERICAS

United Americas formed. It initially encompasses the USA, Canada, Central America and parts of South America.

2085: THE UNITED EARTH SUMMIT

Geneva, 1st January 2085: The United Earth Summit is attended by Australia, China, the European Federation, Japan, New Zealand,

the Russian Republic, South Africa, and the United Americas. The nations attending the summit propose that the United Nations Constitution be radically ratified. These proposals in effect dissolve the current UN, replacing it with the United Earth Federation (UEF). The nations who become signatories to the United Earth Constitution of 2085 become member-states of the first unified global government, an economic and political conglomerate committed to uniting the nations of Earth in preparation for the continued colonisation of Luna, and the planned colonisation of the planet Mars and the rest of the solar system.

This move sparks several conflicts (the Unification Wars 2085-2102), primarily fuelled by nations who refuse to be a part of the global super-state. The newly formed United Earth Federation ratifies a treaty of United Earth Armed Forces (UEAF), a cohesive fighting force to stop these and future wars, with troops and equipment supplied by all member states, under one general command staff comprising of highranking officers of all nations. The biggest armies in the UEAF include EuroCorps, AmeriCorps, ChinaCorps, AsiaCorps and troops from India and Latin America.

2086: FORMATION OF THE CHINESE CONSORTIUM

Formation of the The Chinese Consortium from China, the Indonesian Consortium, Vietnam, Cambodia and (with some reluctance) North Korea. Many believe it's formation is in response to the formation of the United Americas two years earlier.

2087: SOUTH AMERICAN WAR

A frighteningly potent alliance between the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC), and the National Liberation Army (ELN) threatens to tip the balance of power irretrievably towards the drug barons. At the request from the Colombian government, the United Americas increases it's military aid package to the country.

When Marxist guerrillas attack the UA Embassy in Bogotá, killing the American ambassador and 33 of his staff, the United Americas is drawn into a messy war, sending troops to fight alongside the Columbian troops against the guerrillas, who control much of the country's cocaine and heroin-producing regions.

2091: ANTARCTIC-GATE

When a United Americas company is found to

be secretly drilling for oil in the Antarctic Nature Reserve, it leads to a major scandal in Washington, later to be dubbed 'Antarctic-Gate'. A UEF inquiry unearths evidence of corruption at the highest levels of the United Americas government. The Anderson Presidency is left in ruins, as many of his senior staff are implicated.

2094: THE SHACKLETON DISASTER

Disaster strikes the Lunar colony when a transport loaded with water-ice mined from the Shackleton Crater crashes on take-off fracturing the main dome of the Shackleton Mining Base. Before the ruptured sections can be sealed off, 23 people die from exposure to vacuum and a further 44 suffer serious injuries. During the subsequent investigation into the accident it is discovered that the transport suffered a catastrophic systems failure due to a history of poor maintenance. The United Earth Federation in conjunction with Lloyds Space Shipping pushes through new legislation designed to ground any ships that do not meet basic safety standards.

2098: THE LUNAR EXPRESS

Construction starts on the Trans-Lunar Express, a high-speed monorail system connecting the major colony sites.

THE 22ND CENTURY

The 22nd Century saw the start of the true Space Age, with the invention first of the reactionless displacement drive, then the F-Drive. By the end of this century, humanity had made amazing achievements, including the colonization of the solar system, but had also continued it's warmongering ways, notably in the nuclear Russian Civil War, and the Tau Ceti War.

2101: THE FOSCOLO DISCONTINUITY

European physicist Hugo Foscolo discovers what will come to be known as the 'Foscolo Discontinuity'. The theory radically rewrites Einstein's theory of relativity and the physics of gravity. It postulates that there are at least nine dimensions above the five we know, and that spatial physics work differently in these higher dimensions. Possibilities include interstellar travel in a vastly shorter time and manipulation of the Zero Point Field, both longtime goals of scientists.

2102: ZERO POINT FIELD THEORY

Hugo Foscolo's groundbreaking discoveries concerning Zero Point Field Theory result in the development of the reactionless displacement

drive, which allows quick and cheap space travel within the Solar System. The first mission to Mars on a ship powered by the Foscolo RD drive takes a mere 17 days.

2106: MARS TERRAFORMING BEGINS

UNSA issues major contracts for corporate investment in the colonisation of Mars. Earth's largest megacorporations rush to get involved.

The melting of the southern polar icecap using orbital mass drivers releases large quantities of carbon dioxide, causing an increased greenhouse effect, raising the average surface temperature of the planet. In addition dark microbial life forms and lichens specifically engineered for the Mars Terraforming project are spread across the surface, increasing the albedo of the red planet and consequently upping the amount of solar radiation captured by Mars as heat.

Atmospheric processors are set up across the planet. Genetically engineered biomass is seeded across the planet in vast quantities. The aerobraking of captured comets cause outgassing of gasses into the atmosphere.

Consolidated Aerospace founded by Saul Petersen and Alexander Liu.

2107: THE COLONISATION OF MARS

Initial construction is completed at Viking City, the first Martian civilian colony. The city is located in and around the Mie Crater, a large basin formed by asteroid or comet impact in Utopia Planitia. Initial population numbers 936. With a population fast approaching 10 billion, food riots in most countries and a biosphere contaminated by the burning of fossil fuels and use of dirty nuclear power (i.e. fission), the colonisation of the solar system is seen as the key to the eventual regeneration and uniting of Earth.

Advances in solar energy technology results in development in lower latitudes of the world. The Central African Bloc is established.

2108: DEVELOPMENT OF FTL COMMUNICATIONS AND SUSPENSOR FIELD TECHNOLOGY

Scientists in a Taiwan laboratory succeed in transmitting information faster than the speed of light utilising an effect based on the unusual properties associated with quantum entanglement. Calculated at travelling nearly 3.26 light years in one Earth day, near instantaneous communications is now possible with the fledgling Mars colony.

First baby born on Mars.

The first working gravity-field generator is activated in San Francisco. This makes artificial gravity fields possible on the larger starships.

2110: PROJECT CERES

Hallidor Corporation presents Project Ceres to the United Earth Federation Space Agency - a bold plan for the colonisation and mining of the asteroid belt out beyond Mars. The plan is approved. Hallidor launches two prototype deep space mining craft, Rameses I and II, the same year.

2111: COLONISATION OF THE BELT

Project Ceres is a success. Rameses I establishes Ceres Base, a permanent mining colony, from where Hallidor subsidiary Ceres Metals begins surveying other asteroids. Rameses II tows the first nickel-iron asteroid back to Earth L-4 for strip mining. Within another year half a dozen other corporations and at least 20 private investors have staked claims in the asteroid belt and begun mining operations. The development of permanent mining colonies in the Belt is seen as a vital source of raw materials for the fledgling Mars colony.

2112: EVOLUTION OF MAN

An article is published in the New England Journal of Medicine, offering proof of the existence of telepathy. The UEF establishes the Metasensory Administration Agency (MAA) from the Committee on Psychic Phenomenon (CPP), headed by Senator Paul Fox, to oversee the Telepath situation.

Research undertaken verifies the existence of Telepaths. This begins a major panic.

Hugo Foscolo dies ages 82.

2113: DEVELOPMENT OF THE F-DRIVE

Expanding on principles behind the Foscolo Discontinuity, a consortium of scientists from the European Federation and Japan turn the dream of interstellar space travel into an achievable reality with the development of technology capable of punching a hole into the higher dimensions postulated to exist by Hugo Foscolo. Scientists successfully transport living matter from their Kyoto research labs to a facility on the Lunar Far Side. The extra-dimensional region it travels through is dubbed 'F-Space' in honour of Hugo Foscolo. Physics in F-Space work differently than in realspace, allowing matter to travel great distances in a relatively short period of time. Scientists calculate that a spaceship equipped with the ability to enter, traverse and exit F-Space could travel the equivalent of 1 parsec in an Earth week.

2115: FLIGHT OF THE FOSCOLO

Using a Foscolo Star Drive (F-Drive) powered by the rare element Ununpentium (Element 115, later dubbed Foscolium), the UEFSA spaceship Foscolo makes the first interstellar flight to Alpha Centauri by opening a portal into F-Space, traversing this region and emerging at pre-calculated coordinates. At a distance of 4.39 light years from Earth, the Foscolo makes the journey in just over one Earth week. After a week-long communications blackout, the first news from the Foscolo crew reports a successful F-Space journey, which deposited the ship at the edge of the Alpha Centauri A planetary system. After several days of realspace travel inbound to the system, the crew report the discovery of an Earth like planet orbiting Alpha Centauri A. This sparks the first wave of mass interstellar colonial expansion from Sol, now known as the First Exodus (2115 - 2135), as thousands of people seek to escape from the troubles on Earth to the new 'frontier'. Suddenly space exploration becomes a commercial industry, and several of Earth's larger corporations begin to fund space exploration and colonisation efforts. As interstellar distances increase, cryosleep becomes a necessity of interstellar travel. Ununpentium mining becomes almost as big business as Helium-3 mining.

2116: THE SATURNIAN PROJECT

A UEFSA colonial mission lands on Titan, largest of Saturn's moons. Images sent back show the shores of a liquid-methane ocean beneath a bright orange photochemical smog. The ocean is a witch's brew of life-creating molecules but at a mind-numbing low of 178C. It is deemed perfect for a long-term terraforming operation. The initial colony base, once established has a population of 246.

2118: THE JOVIAN PROJECT

The UEFSA Jovian Project establishes colony bases on the Jovian moons Callisto, Ganymede, Io and Europa. The primary objective of these bases is to serve as supply bases for a fleet of mobile mining platforms being constructed to mine Jupiter's Helium-rich upper atmosphere.

2120-2146: MAUNDER MINOR

Earth's sun dims, repeating a behaviour first exhibited in the seventeenth century, though this time to a much lesser extent. The economies of those nations who rely heavily on solar power find it hard to adjust, with agriculture and power-generation severely handicapped. The resultant social upheaval forces many to look to find work offworld, as

colonist-workers in the fledgling Jovian and Saturn colonies.

2127:

Early success in the Jovian mining operations and a large influx of migrants from Earth causes the colonies on Ganymede and Europa to expand much quicker than initially projected. Construction begins on what will eventually become the Hanging Cities of Europa.

2128: THE BOLIVIAN H2 ALPHA SUPER-FLU PANDEMIC

Outbreak of the Bolivian H2 Alpha super-flu strain across Central and South America on Earth. Bolivian H2 Alpha, nicknamed the "Sterility Plague", rapidly goes pandemic. Earth is quarantined by the UEF in an effort to stop the plague spreading to the fledgling offworld colonies. By the time Bolivian H2 Alpha is brought under control with a vaccine developed by the Japanese firm Zen Medical, it has claimed 114.3 million victims. Over a billion people become sterile as a side effect of the plague.

2134: DEVELOPMENT OF THE FECUNDITY 5 VACCINE.

A scientific breakthrough by Zen Medical enables the repair of damage done by the Sterility Plague at a genetic level. With fertility restored, Earth suffers a minor population explosion.

2135: CONSOLIDATION

All the star systems within 12 light years of Earth have been explored, and their planet's surveyed. Colonies or terraforming operations have been established in each system. Up until this year Earth's space exploration and colonisation programme has been unified under the flag of the Federal Colonies.

Greed, as ever, brings this delicate alliance to an end, when the United Americas and Chinese Consortium separately begin their own colonisation programmes, out beyond the Core Systems. They are soon followed by the European Federation, Russian Republic and Japan. The majority of colonies are part-financed by powerful multinational corporations, without whom the colonial powers couldn't operate.

2136: TERRITORIAL DISPUTES ON MARS

During the early decades of the 22nd Century, land-grabs by competing megacorps on Mars lead to territorial disputes, the largest and most famous of which is now known as the Tharis Dispute. The Tharsis Dispute is sparked by

an incident on the Tharsis Bulge, when fighting breaks out between corporate security teams from rival megacorps EnerTek Corp and Cheung Corp. Both corporations immediately begin hiring and transporting military assets to the red planet.

Worried that the violence will spread, the UEF sanctions the deployment of peacekeeping troops to Mars to act as a buffer between the two megacorps mining the Tharsis Bulge.

2138: THE TAU CETI WAR

Rival megacorporations EnerTek Corp and Cheung Corp clash on the planet Anjuna in the Tau Ceti star system. Territorial disputes between the two corporations on Mars two years earlier persuaded both to hire mercenaries to help protect colonial assets out beyond Sol. At first the fighting is localised to a handful of contested sites, but tit for tat revenge attacks by both sides quickly causes matters to escalate out of control. Undercover support flows in from Chinese and American factions on Earth, resulting in the conflict spreading and deepening across the system.

2140: THE COLONIAL ACT

The Viking Treaty of 2140, signed at the Mars Colony, brings an end to the fighting at Tau Ceti after almost 18 months of conflict. The breaking point for the UEF came when mercenaries in the employ of Cheung deploy tactical nuclear weapons against opposing EnerTek forces at Kow-Lang, resulting in the deaths of over a thousand civilian colonists unable to escape the war-zone. The security council sanctions the despatch of a UEF taskforce to Tau Ceti, to protect the civilian population and to contain and stop the fighting. The peace accord is brokered by the UEF, and though neither of the protagonists is entirely satisfied with the outcome, prolonging a war that shows no sign of victory for either side is financially unacceptable. Anjuna is policed by a large and permanent UEF garrison.

The end of the Tau Ceti War sees many unemployed mercenaries and mountains of military equipment disappear into the Outer Colonies. The conflict also shows that the UEF is simply not organised or equipped to police and govern the every growing number of colonies and shipping lanes out beyond the Core Systems.

The Colonial Act of 2140 places Earth's extra-solar colonies under the control of the newly formed Interstellar Colonial Authority (ICA). Each colony under UEF control has an ICA

presence. On some of the newer colonies it is little more than a small Settlement Welfare Team office with a handful of representatives. On larger, more established colonies e.g. those at Alpha Centauri, there is a large established ICA administrative presence. Larger colonies also sometimes have regional ICA headquarters.

Interstellar distances have to allow for a necessary devolution of certain powers to local leaders, which allows the elections of local officials by the colonial population. Despite this, the local ICA Administrator is able to dictate policy should he/she see fit. It is common practice for megacorporations with invested interests in a colony start up to have representatives on local councils.

The ICA is backed by the Colonial Security police force (ColSec), a new arm of the Federal Law Enforcement Authority. In addition to this new colonial police force, a new arm of the UEF is created: the Interstellar Colonial Marine Corps (ICM). An Interstellar rapid deployment force, the ICM is designed to be able to mobilise quickly to resolve military disputes and keep the peace in the Colonies.

To regulate interstellar commercial shipping, the WTO is expanded and remodelled to form the Interstellar Trade Commission (ITC). All commercial flight crews must hold an ITC licence.

The Tau Ceti star system is absorbed into the Core Systems, over which the Federation continues to maintain direct control.

2146: INTERNAL SECURITY ACT

The UEF passes the Internal Security Act, establishing two quasi-governmental departments as branches of the MAA: MetaPol and PsiCorps. Attached to the Federal Law Enforcement Authority, MetaPol, or the Metasensory Police, is mainly made up of telepaths and precogs, who use their powers to interrogate those who have committed crimes against the Federation, or to predict the outcome of certain events. A quasi-military branch of the MAA, PsiCorps operatives are usually assigned as 'psychic security' to government officials, or attached to UEF units on missions that might benefit from the availability of psychic powers.

In addition, the Internal Security Act allows for the formation of Psychic Service Providers - private organisations licensed and regulated by the MAA who hire out their talents to block

telepathic snooping and other paranormal dirty tricks. It has become common practice for executives of large corporations and government bodies to employ such agents as 'psychic security'.

A bomb planted by Earth Isolationist terrorists, kills 87 colonists in Viking City on Mars. UEAM garrison established (United Earth Army Mars - MarsCorps).

The three companies operating on Titan and among the moons of Saturn merge to form the Titan Corporate Collective (TCC) or TriCorp, the thirtieth anniversary of Titan's colonization (fuelling a renewal of the rumour that the colonization of Titan was the result of a competition between three wealthy investors).

2147:

Break-up of Microsoft Corp by it's CEO Tabitha Gates. The biggest company formed from the break-up is 'Artificial Life Incorporated'. This company spearheads groundbreaking research into artificial intelligence.

2148: ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

Artificial Life Incorporated unveils 'Adam' - the first ever self-aware computer. The New Confederate Christian Church of the United Americas, one of the fastest growing religions of the 22nd Century, denounces Adam as blasphemy.

2148: LAST STAND OF THE BUTCHER OF KOW-LANG

The UEF succeed in tracking down Tiberius Lee, ex-commanding officer of mercenary unit the Star Tigers. Lee is held responsible for ordering the tactical nuclear strike during the Tau Ceti War that resulted in the deaths of almost 1200 civilian colonists at Kow-Lang on the planet Anjuna.

Lee is arrested after a fierce 10 hour battle with Colonial Marines at his fortified compound on Titleman's Rest in the Ross 780 star system.

2149:

The population on Mars begins to grow very quickly, prompting an increase in terraforming and the construction of new and larger colony pyramids (all large buildings on Mars are pyramid shaped, designed as the best defence against the sometimes harsh Martian weather). Cargo ships transporting ice from the asteroid belt and Jovian system arrive at Mars weekly.

The Martian northern polar icecap is partially melted with the use of orbital mass drivers. Seas appear on Mars.

Consolidated Aerospace relocates to Mars. Construction of the Mars Orbital Shipyard commences.

2164: FIRST COMMERCIAL USE OF ANDROID TECHNOLOGY

AI Inc develops it's first generation of commercially available androids - humanoid machines running the latest in intelligent software design. Androids are always programmed for non-combat roles, such as piloting, driving, tactical assistance, or medical staff. Their capabilities are deliberately limited by behavioural inhibitors based on Asimov's famous 3 laws of robotics. Over the next decade, AI Inc sells licences to several corporations, allowing them to develop and produce their own models.

2166-96: THE SECOND EXODUS

With interstellar travel becoming safer and cheaper all the time, and the population of Earth rising, a second wave of colonial expansion begins as people try to escape the resource-drained homeworld of humanity. By the end of this period, all viable worlds in the area of space now called the Outer Colonies have been or are in the process of being colonised by the UEF via the ICA. Beyond the Outer Colonies, megacorporations are already exploring, surveying and staking claims to countless more worlds.

Most starships are almost completely automated by the end of this period, using state of the art computer systems, notably the Matriarch operating system developed by Artificial Life Incorporated. Starships require only a small human crew to perform duties such as orbital insertion and in-flight repairs.

2168-2178: THE PHOBOS PROJECT

In the wake of similar projects on Earth nearing completion, and with the Second Exodus in full swing, the construction of a Martian space tether is seen as essential to the continued economic development of the Mars colony. A space tether would dramatically reduce the cost of moving stuff up and down the planet's gravity well. With the technology already tried and tested on the two Earth space tethers, a consortium of corporations involved in the Mars colonisation programme gain UEF backing to initiate the Phobos Project.

Building the Martian space tether would be a herculean engineering effort and a unique

challenge - primarily because of the choice of the Martian moon Phobos as the tether anchorpoint. Until the construction of the tether Phobos was in a low orbit, intersecting the equator regularly (twice every orbital period of 11 h 6 min). It is decided early on that a collision between the elevator and the 22.2 km diameter moon would have to be avoided by moving the moon itself out of the area, and if they were going to move the moon, why not use it as the anchorpoint?

Within months of the project being greenlit, rockets and mass drivers are attached to Phobos, and begin firing. Slowly the moon's orbit is arrested and its orbital distance increased. Within eighteen months it arrives in a geo-stationary orbit over the Martian equator. Automated manufactories on the surface of the moon begin using the moon-rock to construct the bundles of carbon nanotubes that will become the tether. The caverns created by the tunnelling will later be pressurised and form part of the subterranean portion of the expanded John Carter Space Port.

It will be another eight years before the tether touches down at the base station atop Pavonis Mons on the surface of Mars. Anchorpoint, the town that grows up around the base station, quickly becomes a large transit facility and the second largest colonial settlement on the planet.

2196: ARAL SEA CONFLICT

The dwindling volume of the Central Asian inland Aral Sea sparks a conflict between Russia and neighbours Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan. The sea's decline was caused by the long defunct USSR's diversion of the rivers which fed the sea, leaving areas of arid, salt-laden dust that then polluted large areas of Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan.

2197: RUSSIAN CIVIL WAR

The Aral Sea Conflict, coupled with the failure of the Russian potato and wheat lead to food riots in St. Petersburg. The Russian government declares that because of declining economic fortunes it cannot afford to pay its troops in the Volga-Ural regions and in the outer colonies. As a direct result of this action, General Poborski, leader of the Volga-Ural military, declares himself military governor of the region, with 70% of the armed forces under his command backing him. His first action is to block all tax revenues bound for Moscow, threatening the complete collapse of the fragile Russian economy.

Within days, government troops have clashed with the rebels, and fierce fighting is reported in and around the city of Yekatarinburg. By the end of the first week of fighting, with government forces gaining the upper hand, the civil war turns nuclear when General Poborski orders strikes against aerospace-bases surrounding Moscow. Five bases are destroyed using aerospace launched tactical nuclear missiles. Tens of thousands of people die in and around the bases.

Premier Zakharov immediately orders an escalation to strategic nuclear weapons. 14 STGBMs are fired from an orbiting spacecraft against rebel military targets inside the Volga-Urals. The death toll is estimated in excess of 250,000, with 80,000km² contaminated by radioactive fallout.

UEFSC meet in emergency session. A ceasefire holds, mainly because of the threat of a nuclear strike against Moscow itself by General Leonov, Russia's Far East Region military commander. Elements of the UEFA EuroCorps and ChinaCorps land in Volga-Urals and in Moscow, as part of a stabilisation force to make sure the ceasefire holds.

2199: FORMATION OF THE NEW DEMOCRATIC RUSSIAN REPUBLIC (NDRR)

With the complete disintegration of the Russian Federation after the civil war, Russia's satellite states are all granted membership of the UEF General Assembly as separate states. Russia emerges as the New Democratic Russian Republic (NDRR). Alexei Leonov takes his seat in the General Assembly as the new leader of Russia.

THE 23RD CENTURY

The 23rd Century sees humanity continue to colonise space. The UEF begins to fracture at its edges, resulting in the Colonial Wars.

2201: STRATEGIC ARMS REDUCTION TREATY

To prevent strategic nuclear weapons being used by colonial powers against colony worlds, the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty of 2201 prohibits armed nuclear warheads larger than 100 kilotons from being carried by starships.

2213:

Pirate activity becomes a more organised threat in the Outer Rim Territories. The two main pirate groups operate in the Herculis Cluster and in the Rimworlds Colonies.

2214: THE AUTON PROJECT

During the initial Alpha Prototype Distribution stage of its 5th Generation Androids, Artificial Life runs into problems. Some of the Fifth Gens are found to be too emotional and uncontrollable. The Auton Project is cancelled shortly thereafter, and all existing Fifth Gen models are recalled.

2238: SPACE PIRATES STRIKE IN THE CORE SYSTEMS

A cargo of gravidium, element 126, is snatched by space pirates while en route to Centauri Prime from Helada. The crime bares the unmistakable hallmark of the renegade Chinese Consortium space pilot Kim Chung Song and his band of disaffected followers. The stolen shipment is valued by Lloyd's Space Shipping at E\$9 billion. Up unto now his activities have been confined to the Outer Rim Territories along with the rest of pirate activity.

2243: CAPTURE OF KIM CHUNG SONG

Space pirate Kim Chung Song is captured after a dramatic 36-hour battle around and on several of the moons of Irsas, a gas giant in the Alpha Centauri system. The final confrontation takes place beneath the surface of the moon Irsas X, in the warren of lava tubes that honeycomb the moon, and involves more than 500 UEF soldiers.

Colonial Marines, fighting for the most part in vacuum conditions, suffer heavy casualties before cornering Kim Chung Song and 34 of his surviving cohorts. They are taken to Centauri Prime to await trial.

2244:

One of Kim Chung Song's surviving followers cracks under interrogation, giving up the location of Song's base of operations in the Core Systems: a converted colonial transport currently in the Sirius Star System. An ICM taskforce is dispatched to neutralise the pirate threat.

Locating the pirate stronghold, the taskforce succeeds in crippling the pirate ship before it can escape. Taking no chances, the marines decompress the vessel before boarding. By the time they have secured the ship there are few survivors amongst the crew.

2246: THE ENERTEK SCANDAL

EnerTek Corp declares bankruptcy, subsequently collapsing in a scandal involving billions of E\$ in losses, corporate power abuse and attempted blackmail of ITC officials. EnerTek Corp is the primary colonial investor in

the Herculis Cluster, a sector of space with a high concentration of habitable and resource rich star systems in close proximity to one another. During the next decade, the Herculis Cluster colonies are allowed a degree of regional autonomy unprecedented by the UEF.

2249: THE MERCENARY WAR

Rival mercenary units clash in the Outer Rim, despite both having being hired by Cenargo Corporation to protect colonial assets against pirate activity. Both force's contracts are promptly revoked, but fighting escalates, forcing the Cenargo corporate forces to become involved.

The Mercenary War is finally brought to an end with the signing of the Mercenary Charter. The Charter, formulated by the ICA, lays out a code to which all mercenary units and their employers are expected to adhere. All signatories to the Charter, which includes most organisations that either supplies or employs foreign mercenary troops, agree not to hire any unit that does not comply with the terms of the code.

2250: OUTBREAK OF THE NGANO PLAGUE

Outbreak of the Ngano Plague. Caused by airborne microbes in the atmosphere of 58 Eridani II ('Ngano', a jungle world in the 58 Eridani star system, in the Chinese Consortium colonised arm), the Ngano Plague is a highly contagious viral disease that causes vivid hallucinations and acute paranoid delusions in those exposed. Infected victims are dubbed 'Crazies' due to the insane psychopathic state induced during the plague's later stages.

The plague quickly cripples the colony (it has an incubation period of over 4 weeks) and carriers soon infect the colonies in neighbouring systems. Ships with infected personnel arriving at star systems further afield are intercepted and quarantined. Approximately half a million colonists fall victim to the Ngano Plague before it's spread is checked by the ICA and ITC.

In the wake of the plague, new laws are brought into effect, making it illegal for any interstellar vessel to enter the Core Systems without first passing through ITC quarantine. It also becomes standard policy for any ITC licensed starship to have an Android Exo on board.

2254:

Hallidor Corp acquires EnerTek Corps colonial assets. As Hallidor and the ICA move in to take

control of the Herculis colonies, the action sparks a wave of civil unrest. A grassroots independence movement has been growing in the Herculis Cluster ever since the colonies were allowed a degree of regional autonomy by the ICA during the chaotic years following the EnerTek collapse.

2255:

Eli Navarro, a colonial administrator from the fledgling Nuevo Santiago colony in the 18 Scorpii star system leads a delegation of representatives from colonies in the Herculis Cluster to petition the UEF General Assembly for continued regional autonomy. The controlling political party in the General Assembly - the Centralist/Neo-Federalist Alliance - is staunchly anti-separatist and rejects the petition.

2257: COLONIAL SEDITION

Civil unrest in the Herculis Cluster grows, and on the larger colonies the protests turn into riots as separatist-supporting colonists clash with ColSec troops. Separatists led by Eli Navarro take control of the ICA office on Nuevo Santiago, declaring independence from Earth rule. Other colonies in the Herculis Cluster quickly follow suit, rallying to Navarro's cause. Large numbers of the ColSec and corporate garrisons, many with families and some born and raised on worlds light years from Earth, defect to join the separatists.

The UEF Security Council meets in emergency session. Resolution 11702 is passed, and the UEAF begins massing forces at 70 Ophiuchi, taking control of the orbital drydocks. The first target is Aricebo in the 82 Eridani star system. Colonial Marines quickly take control of the starport and neutralise the separatists on the world. Resentment of the military occupation amongst the population remains high and the ICM are drawn into a prolonged and dirty guerrilla war.

2258: THE RIMWORLDS REBELLION

NatSoc, a political movement in the Outer Rim Territories stages a series of swift and bloody coups against local ICA installations. On Pei Pei colony in the Alpha Mensae star system, rebel fighters raid the ICA complex, capturing many hostages. Armed NatSoc-loyal militias, joined by defecting ColSec forces, quickly overpower the local garrisons. The colonies declare themselves the Eurasian Rimworlds Combine (ERC). The leaders of the ERC demand recognition and total independence. At the age of 85, Josef Suslov is named first President of the Eurasian Rimworlds Combine.

A raid by the ICM, on Pei Pei colony, succeeds in rescuing the majority of the ICA hostages held by the rebels. At the same time, a state of emergency in the Outer Rim Territories is declared by the UEF. The ICM, backed by the newly formed United Earth Federation Expeditionary Force (UEFEF) is ordered to stop the insurrection. Martial law is imposed in the Outer Rim Territories and Herculis Cluster.

2258-2260: THE COLONIAL WARS

The Colonial Wars are fought primarily on two fronts: the Herculis Front lies Coreward of Sol and comprises the star systems that would become the Free Worlds Alliance (FWA); the Rimworlds Front lies Rimward of Sol and comprises those star systems that would become the Eurasian Rimworlds Combine (ERC).

The war rages for three years, during which time the UEF wage economic and military warfare against the rebels, and sees fighting on a score of worlds in over a dozen star systems. Some colonies capitulate quickly and with little loss of life. Others turn into protracted and bloody campaigns claiming thousands of lives, such as Vega, Delta Eridani and the disastrous Ixion invasion.

2260: THE CEASEFIRE

Casualties continue to mount, as public support for the war continues to fall. Anti-war protests on Mars turn violent, and the Mars garrison has to be mobilised to quell the riots.

When an ERC suicide mission succeeds in penetrating defences at Omicron² Eridani and cripples a UEAF taskforce orbiting Eridanus with great loss of life, voices inside the General Assembly begin to call for a negotiated ceasefire with both groups of rebels. On 1st May 2260, thanks in part to the negotiating skills of the Chrislamic Church, an uneasy ceasefire is established with both of the remaining pockets of rebellion. No peace treaty is signed with either group.

Blockaded by the UEF, the separatist colonies in the Herculis Cluster declare themselves the Free Worlds Alliance. As promised, Eli Navarro devolves government to individual colony worlds, with all colonies agreeing to help maintain an FWA militia.

A 1 parsec DMZ is established between ERC and UEF space.

2262: UEF ELECTIONS

Social and political fallout from the Colonial Wars is cited as the main factor in the defeat of the centre-right Centralist-Neo Federalist Alliance in UEF elections. A centre-left coalition takes control of the General Assembly.

2264: THE CAPELLAN MANDATE

Documents are leaked to the press revealing that during the Colonial Wars the UEF government covertly hired Capellan pirates to harass ERC shipping. The scandal reverberates through the UEF corridors of power. A commission is set up to investigate the matter and bring those responsible to justice.

2271:

NOW.