

PORTFOLIO OF RULING HOUSES
WITHIN THE GALACTIC COUNCIL



Companion for House Xrion
Jerry J. K. Rogers

PORTFOLIO OF RULING HOUSES WITHIN THE GALACTIC COUNCIL

Companion for House Xrion Novel

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INTRODUCTION

Generations ago, humanity stretched out across the galaxy colonizing habitable or terraformed planets. Many began to seek wealth with the expanding supply of natural resources. As each new colonized planetary system grew and thrived, many of the mining and agricultural outposts and centers developed into towns, towns into cities, cities into city states, and city states into national and planetary entities. Independent governments and regimes formed to administer and govern the local populaces. Each arose differently establishing monarchies, oligarchies derived from native ruling families, or the semblances of democratic republic governments. Over time, these families and governments transformed into ruling Houses governing multiple planetary systems. The fledgling houses would trade and ally with one another for necessary resources, stability, and security.

This portfolio journals the houses with the current Governing Council of Ruling Houses. The planets chronicled under each house are developed and industrialized above Tier 3 (See Appendix A.). Named asteroids, Tier 4 and below planets, and colonies in the pre-habitable/occupational stages of terraforming are not recorded. Also, the planetary developmental tier categories do not incorporate resource extraction capabilities. Exploitation of a celestial body may still occur independent of its surface environment, and despite the developmental level of colonization to support human life. A house may decide to provide 100% external sustainment in harsh environments to support their extraction and exploitation efforts.

GALACTIC RULING HOUSES

HOUSE ASTORIA

Government

Federated Parliament

Star System(s)

Baweil F5G1

Iota-Tryanguli

Zeta Minimum

Allies

House Maelstrom

House Reston (Weak)

House Valdez

Status Category

Minor House

Planet(s)

Gage 1

Gage 2 (Capital Planet)

Muon 2

Ionius

Military/Civilian Tier

Tier 3



Gage 2

Background

The former houses of York and Weirshlock, both early members of the Governing Council merged to become House Astoria. The collapse of the former two houses was due to mismanagement, in-fighting, and corruption, with both blaming external influences of the opposing house for the instability. This led to a short-term war depleting the two houses' military capability and resources. During cessation negotiations by House Xrion, House York and Weirshlock discovered House Carthania had exploited the internal instability of the two houses and engineered the animosity as a precursor to absorb both. The two houses merged to prevent further influence and dissuade the annexation/hostile takeover.

After the newly formed House Astoria government stabilized, it focused on resource exploitation of planetary and asteroid bodies within newly explored star systems to manufacture smaller commercial passenger and freight starships for internal use. The house also increased production of military starships for planetary defenses. To boost their economy, they exported a small percentage of their crafts, and also focused on agriculture to support their expanding colonies.

The recent growth of the house could see it transition from a Military/Civilian Tier 3 to Tier 4.

HOUSE CARTHANIA

Government

Oligarchy – Federated

Star System(s)

Velicurium

Strattus-Burns

Cyranae

Mu Lambda

Allies

House Urian

House Wolfe (Weak)

Status Category

Major House

Planet(s)

Velius One (Capital)

Ross 128b

Kepler 186F

Buxor (Moon of Cyran 5)

Lambda P2

Military/Civilian Tier

Tier 1



Velius 1

Background

The precedent to House Carthania, called the Carthania Corporation, was one of the first non-government entities to expand from the Sol mother system after the development of interstellar travel. The Carthania Corporation was one of the two sole manufacturers of early starships. They also established early claim rights and terraformed several planets successfully extracting resources enabling future expansion. This led to early conflicts with the Maelstrom Dominion, the precursor to House Maelstrom.

Over time, the conglomeration of corporate organizations and subsidiaries transformed to a class/caste based federated oligarchy. Due to the house's early industrial capabilities, they were able to develop one of the largest commercial and military fleets. As the realm of other houses grew with the gradual increase of more planets moving to Tier 1, individual planets and governments began to independently build and supplement their fleet(s), soon becoming less dependent on House Carthania.

Many think the current premier, Vlad Barniff, oversees House Carthania, but he's part of an oligarchy that has ruled for the last 550 years. To be rich in House Carthania, you must have deep contacts within the government. As such, a limited few families consisting of the ones descended from the "212 First Colonists," control the wealth. They manage most of the House-owned corporations, collaborate on business deals, and even intermarry. Most of the trade and industry activities are centrally controlled.

To maintain their prominence in the council, House Carthania will instigate animosity between houses, directly becoming involved in a confrontation if it will be to their advantage.

HOUSE COVINGTON

Government

Democratic Parliament

Star System(s)

Edrilles

Lystra L41

Flynn-Bogostra

Allies

House Sedona

House Urian (Weak)

House Valdez

House Reston (Weak)

Status Category

Major House

Planet(s)

Shoner 4 (Capital)

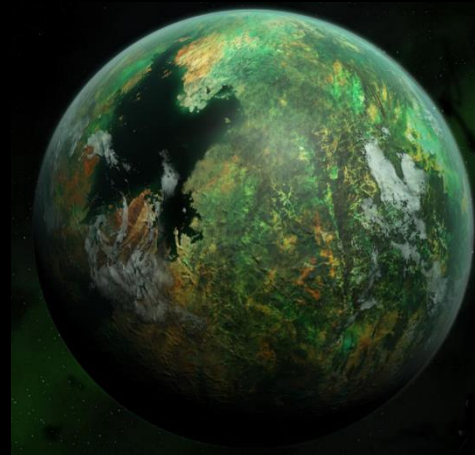
Valirturn

Lars Prime

Pyrus Minor

Military/Civilian Tier

Tier 2



Shoner 4

Background

House Covington, newest of the major houses, is heavily focused on exploration and resource exploitation. The house discovered extremely rare metals capable of producing new exotic alloys. One of the new alloys reportedly is capable of refinement and manufacture as an external armor skin for starships capable of shattering most hyper velocity weapons, and shielding that diffuses the effects from directed energy weapons. Most of the houses began to vie for Covington's attention, wanting to establish independent or sole partnership trade agreements.

Heavy exports of its rare metals and exported technology produced most of the growth for House Covington's wealth. Also, over the generations, the development of the house's civilian and military space fleet grew at a slow and proportional rate, where as not to cause concern for the other houses. As a result, theirs became one of the largest matching near that of House Wolfe. At the current rate of growth, the Governing Council estimates the Covington fleet could become as large as House Urian's.

House Covington is the first to develop the concept of daughter houses. These are sub-houses responsible for governance similar to the Governing Council.

HOUSE MAELSTROM

Government

Parliamentary – Monarchy

Star System(s)

Yovonian

Ceupra

Socarro

Chara L71D

Allies

House Astoria

House Reston

House Sedona (Weak)

House Valdez

Status Category

Major House

Planet(s)

Yovon 5 (Capital)

Koinus Minor

Calisto (Moon of Koinus Major)

Eggeron

Charos 2

Military/Civilian Tier

Tier 1



Yovon 5

Background

The Maelstrom Dominion, the precursor to House Maelstrom, was one of the first entities to expand beyond the Sol mother system after effective manufacture of fuels, building materials, water, and oxygen just from resources found in the star system. They effectively incorporated the technologies into the new developments of interstellar travel.

After the early export and exploitation of newly extracted natural resources and ores, and working with the precursor to House Reston, they began to focus on early starship production to counter the Carthania Corporations (pre-House Carthania) which were beginning to establish a monopoly in the industry.

The early Maelstrom Dominion was one of the first to establish rights claims of celestial bodies, and then the initial bio-seeding and terraforming of planets and resource harvesting of asteroids. Their exploratory teams also established numerous claims for “Goldilocks Zone Planets.” The early corporations, mother planet nations, and Sol planetary colonies also expanding in the galaxy considered the Dominion’s activities an overreach by their frivolous claiming of star systems. The pre-house’s rapid growth caused early conflicts that later led to the Planetary Expansion Wars.

HOUSE RESTON

Government

Federated Monarchy

Star System(s)

7645 Tauri

Syranea-Leeds

11 Cygni C

Maathe-Shrish

Allies

House Astoria

House Covington (Weak)

House Stanchon (Weak)

House Maelstrom

House Valdez

Status Category

Major House

Planet(s)

Straeta (Capital Planet)

Isade

Lesser Bonedes

Dyrian 2

Ricarro B1

Military/Civilian Tier

Tier 1



Straeta

Background

The planets associated with House Reston contain an abundance of semi-rare natural resources. This provides a long-term revenue stream for the house.

For generations, the house maintained a close affiliation with House Maelstrom, more so prior to the forming of the Governing Council. House Reston provided Maelstrom with an abundance of raw ores and metals to support its star ship production, allowing it to match that of House Carthania. House Maelstrom was then able to prevent the monopolization of House Carthania's starship production. In return, Maelstrom provided House Reston with discounts on premium starships.

House Reston continues to focus on exploration and resource exploitation. With the unique soil compositions of their inhabitable planets and colonies, they increased their agricultural output, expanding into trade with other houses focusing on unique and exotic teas, spices, vegetables, and grains.

HOUSE SEDONA

Government

Dictatorship - President

Star System(s)

Cides 329b

Lacille 8760

Allies

House Stanchon (Weak)
House Maelstrom (Weak)
House Reston
House Valdez

Status Category

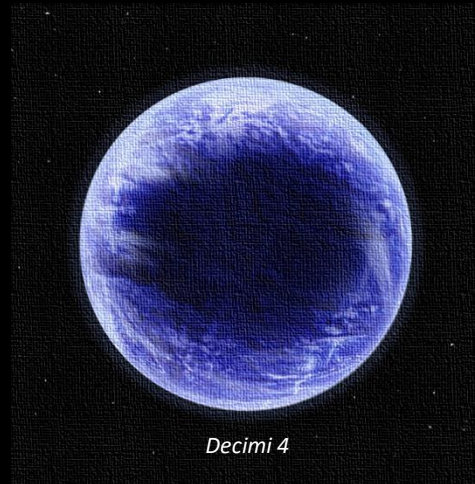
Minor House

Planet(s)

Decimi 4 (Capital)
Tagon (Moon of Decimi 5)
Elion Plains (Vacation Planet)

Military/Civilian Tier

Tier 3



Background

Limited military capabilities. A major source of revenue is agriculture and tourism, with the biggest attraction being the crystal mountain ranges on Elion Plains.

Thought to have an abundance of natural resources, the planets are predominately pre-industrial, (planetary developmental Tier 2), with the city-state territories focused on agriculture and minimalist technology. They've developed restrictions on the number of persons able to immigrate to the planets to prevent over-development. They also limit the population growth using varying techniques, several at the consternation of representative religions centered on Sanctos.

Tagon has become known as the bread-basket for 2/5 of the emerging colonies expanding out from the Galactic Houses. The House's alliances are primarily for curtailing incursion and potential imperialism from other houses wishing to exploit their natural resources.

The Governing Council unofficially protects the house with the same protected status as House Nephtal and House Xrion.

HOUSE STANCHON

Government

Dictatorship - Military

Star System(s)

Parulux

Rhopheus 5GL

Allies

House Reston (Weak)

House Sedona (Weak)

House Warren

Status Category

Minor House

Planet(s)

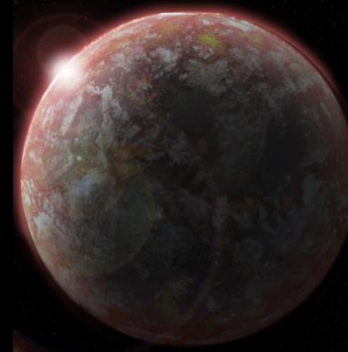
Anderes (Capital)

Drippers 6

Streater Onx

Military/Civilian Tier

Tier 2



Anderes

Background

After a military coup, leadership renamed House De'Berry to House Stanchon. The previous government focused on the status quo, maintaining order and attempting to quell excessive terrorist and insurrection attempts, with the population believing the government was more focused on external growth than the welfare of its citizens. The new vision is for the reduction of dependence from other Houses and establish independent trade agreements, believing the Governing Council does not look after their best interests.

The house is currently in stagnation. Over three successive generations, they dispatched a limited number of exploration teams. They are now dependent on imports for more than half of their necessary agriculture and natural resources as they attempt to develop their internal infrastructure.

There are rumors that the House is wanting to separate from the Governing Council. There are those in the government aware that leaving the Council will open the way for a stronger house, such as Carthania, to occupy and establish the planets as satellite colonies.

HOUSE URIAN

Government

Federated – Monarchy

Star System(s)

Uron

Van Lysere

Thorii 313

Allies

House Carthania

House Warren (Weak)

House Wolfe

Status Category

Major House

Planet(s)

Uron Major (Capital Planet)

Gilese 452c

Gilese 452e

Braxen 3

Thora 1

Stryllon Present

Military/Civilian Tier

Tier 1



Uron Major

Background

The early house formed after a historical legendary figure called Anton the Great consolidated many of their independent planetary governments under a monarchy. He also established an effective federalized government consisting of planetary and local governors who managed the house's economic, social, and religious interests. For generations, the house experienced economic stability due to the effective oversight of the appointed governors ensuring the gains from the house's resource exploitation of explored celestial bodies benefitted their local populaces.

Increasing on-going political intrigue within the house monarchy threatens the government's long-term stability. The rulership is quickly becoming isolated from the house's federated administration and local populations, looking out for its own self-interests and not those for the best interests of its people. A handful of the recently appointed federated governors operating with more autonomy and minimal oversight from Uron Prime, are furtively beginning to exploit political opportunities to exercise greater local control.

One major resource for the House is an abundance of mineral salts mined on Braxen 3 and Stryllon Present used for multiple applications (water and air purification systems for starships, terraform processors, fertilizers, etc.) House controlled planets also contain numerous veins of traditional ores and other natural resources.

HOUSE VALDEZ

Government

Federal Republic

Star System(s)

Tau Seti

Pi Seti

Dray-Anson

Allies

House Astoria

House Maelstrom

House Reston

House Sedona

Status Category

Minor House

Planet(s)

Althea Prime (Capital Planet)

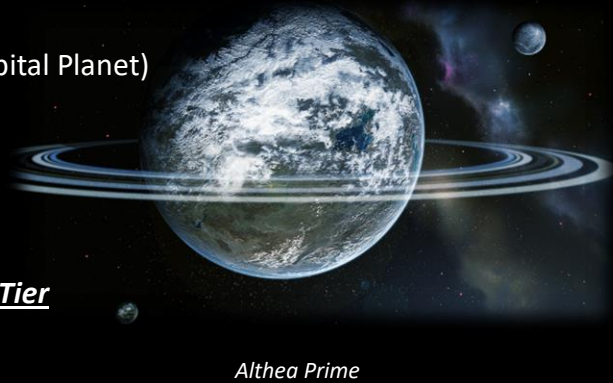
Phobeus

Jakes 5

Dina 2UN3

Military/Civilian Tier

Tier 1



Background

Although considered Military/Civilian Tier 1, its economic stagnation has prevented it from developing into a major house. Focused heavily on military and commercial fleet build up, the resource caches on two of its colonized planets and associated moons were not as abundant as once believed. The house's economic stagnation has impacted the house's overall ability to remain self-sufficient. Its military is also in decline, leading to one fleet recently disavowing their affiliation with the house, defecting to become a mercenary militia.

The planet Dina 2UN3, as it transitioned from mining and refinery colonies to industrialized population centers, encountered a catastrophe when its sun (star Dray-Anson) began to eject increasing amounts of solar and cosmic radiation, threatening to cause much of the terraformed atmosphere to be stripped away. More interested in extracting copious amounts of raw resources, the house ignored earlier exploratory geologists' warnings of the possibility that Dina 2UN3 magnetic fields would experience cycles of dramatic weakening, making it susceptible to adverse solar phenomena. Aided by the Governing Council and allied houses, they installed a massive satellite array at the L1 Lagrange point between the planet and its sun to produce a makeshift large-scale Tesla magnetic field.

House Valdez maintains one of the strongest affiliations with Governing Council, sometimes at the dissatisfaction of its allies.

HOUSE WARREN

Government

Military Dictatorship

Star System(s)

Ganymede 45

Omri

Allies

House Carthania

House Stanchon

House Urian (Weak)

House Wolfe (Weak)

Status Category

Minor House

Planet(s)

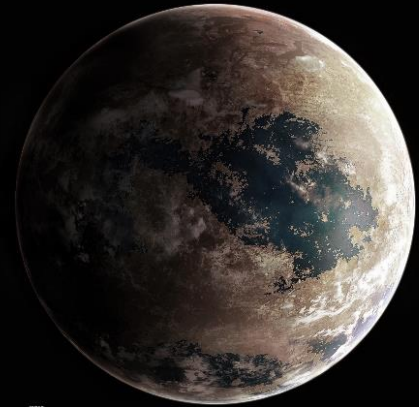
Bendel 1 (Capital Planet)

Tyco (Moon Bendel 4)

Solla 1C

Military/Civilian Tier

Tier 3



Bendel 1

Background

A dictatorship form of government took over during the previous generation due to alleged influence in the house by a collaboration of House Carthania and House Xrion constituents. This induced the change in the house's government, and leading to a weak association with the Governing Council. House Warren also never fully accepted came to terms after accepting a major defeat during earlier planetary expansion wars and later skirmishes with House Maelstrom, even though accepting the signing the Xrion Convention peace agreement. This put a strain on the alliance with House Wolfe.

House Warren also had been threatening to secede due to perceived favoritism over the last three to four generations during recent planetary claim and trade disputes. None the less, the current leadership is attempting to stabilize the government and focus on the export of agricultural products and newly developed technologies derived from their natural resources. Also, the recent exploration of a newly claimed uninhabited planet provides a potential economic boom for the house. Unique perchlorates discovered in the soil has the potential to produce enhanced thruster fuels for smaller and mid-range transports and freighters.

HOUSE WOLFE

Government

Parliamentary Republic

Star System(s)

Seon K5U8

Cyrus 49c

Allies

House Carthania (Weak)
House Maelstrom (Weak)
House Warren

Status Category

Major House

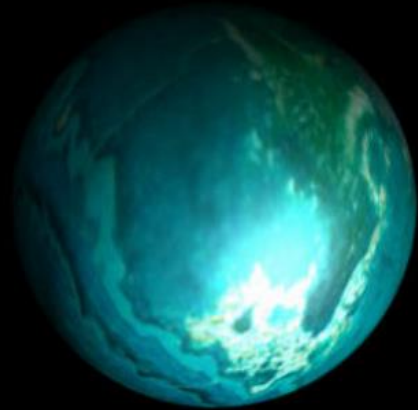
Planet(s)

Outer Seonus (Capital Planet)
Talismede (Moon of Seon 4)

Pheron
Dadus Y89

Military/Civilian Tier

Tier 2



Outer Seonus

Background

The house is composed of a dispersed confederation of planets loosely managed and close to civil war due to risky and unsuccessful social and economic policies. The House Wolfe régime is composed of a dual-head parliamentary government. One is governed by a Prime Minister who oversees the various ministries responsible for the administration of internal issues. The other is the President who is responsible for external governance and diplomatic affairs. The legislature runs into consistent roadblocks between supporting the Prime Minister, running into odds with the President, especially in the areas of trade, economics, and defense.

Since the inception of the house, its government continually has had difficulty maintaining political stability. Anarchy arose on one of the older outer colonized planets after the house extracted most of the valuable raw resources. The government decided to abandon the planetary system, which led to it becoming the predecessor of the marauder clans.

NON-RULING HOUSES/ENTITIES

GOVERNING COUNCIL

Government

Ruling Council for the Houses

Star System(s)

Pegasi 11a

Allies

Not Applicable

Status Category

Independent

Planet(s)

Regulus 3

Military/Civilian Tier

Tier 5



Regulus 3

Background

The Governing Council acts as the oversight governing body for managing inter-House issues for the Ruling Houses. This includes governance to promote peace, establish a unified economic and monetary system to support trade amongst the houses (each house maintains the ability to establish their own currency system), encourage the development and sharing of technological and scientific developments, accommodate religious harmony, and encourage goodwill among the houses establishing approved inter-house cultural standards, norms, and morays. The Governing Council also owns and administers the slipstream quantum relay networks, with each house responsible for managing local data streams within their planetary systems.

The Council will also attempt to consolidate aid in support of a house experiencing a major disaster or catastrophic event, such as the planet Dina 2UN3 incident within House Valdez. Immense interplanetary solar flare radiation spewed out from the planet's star, Dray-Anson. It began to strip the planet's fragile terraformed atmosphere after the unanticipated reduction of its magnetic field.

By tradition, the voting members of the Governing Council consist of a senior heir or appointed member for each House. House Nephtal and House Xrion have non-voting member seats, and sit on the council in an advisory manner. Also, a magistrate appointed by each House acts as the legal liaison between their house and its sitting council member to administer and validate contracts, agreements, and negotiations.

HOUSE NEPHTAL

Government

Religious Oligarchy

Star System(s)

Sephora

Allies

None

Status Category

Independent

Planet(s)

Sanctos

Military/Civilian Tier

Tier 5



Background

Ruling group of priests and clerics, with oversight by one cleric only for the purpose of administration and liaison between the House and the Governing Council. Nephtal is autonomous with the understanding none of the sanctioned religions will attempt to convert or influence a house's population under religious law or a theocratic government. As a result, each house must accommodate the religious sects desire to establish temples, churches, mosques, or other institutions of worship on their associated planets.

The house (planet surface of Sanctos) is considered neutral ground for the Governing Council and all the Ruling Houses. This includes occupational restrictions for certain families in House Xrion. The Governing Council also prohibits the landing or occupation by the military assets from any house, including those armed from the Hammer Fleet. The house does welcome individuals seeking sanctuary as a conscientious objector or religious accommodation.

Upper ruling echelons of House Nephtal have the same legal and ceremonial status as other Ruling House leadership families. Even though the house maintains a non-voting seat in the council, half of the ruling houses hold the provost honor and privileges Nephtal in disdain. Antagonist houses present recurring motions in the Council for the marginalization of Nephtal down to a royal protectorate.

With many of the houses managed by long standing oligarchies, monarchies, and similar governments, the senior leadership for each is "encouraged" to retire after a pre-determined number of years, though not always observed by all the houses. The reason is to dissuade the potential pursuit of imperialism and development of a dynasty yielding the formation of an empire. House Nephtal maintains confidential information as to a secret planet that acts as a retirement sanctuary for retired House and Governing Council leaders and their families. The Governing Council Ruling Accords mandatorily deters communication with a parent house for those housed in retirement.

HOUSE XRION

Government

Oligarchy - Administrative

Star System(s)

Ges 195b

Allies

None

Status Category

Independent

Planet(s)

Tupper Falls

Military/Civilian Tier

Tier 3



Tupper Falls

Background

House Xrion operates as the primary administrative agency for the Governing Council. The families of the house are responsible for banking, commerce and trade, diplomatic protocol guidelines, and mediation/negotiations to minimize the skirmishes and wars that developed as Houses encroached upon one another's claimed planetary or asteroid systems. One of the premier families in the house is that of the Assassins. Their role is to help remove those who threaten the internal stability within a house, which in turn could have indirect negative consequences that impact the Governing Council.

The house is also responsible for the operation and employment of a super fleet called "The Hammer". The armada, under the direction of the Governing Council of Ruling Houses, is to maintain order and equilibrium amongst the ruling houses if one does not act in good faith during major inter-House negotiations. Also, the Hammer is deployed if a house threatens or attacks a sanctioned independent House (Nephtal, Sedona, or Xrion). The fleet is prohibited from engaging in any intra-house/inter-house conflicts. Over time, the Hammer operated with greater autonomy from the Council.

The successful efforts of the early Xrion family clan facilitated the cessation of hostilities that led to the Galactic Planetary Expansion Wars ending. The family was also prominent in establishing the groundwork for the assortment of corporations, ruling families, governments and other trade and exploratory entities to form into the first Galactic houses. Years later, Xrion was then instrumental in the formation of the Governing Council of Ruling Houses.

Family corps within the house: Administration, Assassin, Finance/Banking, Commerce/Trade, Diplomatic Protocol and House Family Registry, Negotiation, and Science Registration. The twenty third dynasty of family corps members currently rule the house.

MERCENARIES/MARAUDERS

Government Mercenaries – Militia Leaders Marauders – Clan Leaders	Status Category None
Star System(s) Euridian Ganymede	Planet(s) Erodius 1 (Merc) Erodius 3 (Merc) Axeter Nova (Marauder) Mycene (Marauder)
Allies Marauder Bands (None) Mercenaries (Highest Bidder)	Military/Civilian Tier N/A – Independent Fleets

Background

Marauders: After their formation as breakaway planetary systems with limited resources struggling for survival, later bands broke away from Mercenary militias interested in buccaneering and plunder for personal gain. Marauders maintain their fleets and supplies through piracy of trade ships, plunder of isolated and unprotected colonies, and pillaging during the aftermath of battles or catastrophic events.

Mercenaries: Formed from disassociated planets after abandonment by their previous sponsoring families/Houses/Government, the disenfranchised and separated elements later formed into the early mercenary militias. The militias are dependent on the Marauders for supplies and resources to minimize having to become beholden to one or more houses.

Houses will use the mercenaries to minimize the potential loss of limited organic military assets. One early governing protocol established by House Xrion is when the mercenaries are contracted by one or more houses, after the cessation of hostilities, none of the houses are to participate with any form of retribution.

One unique note is that the Assassin family within House Xrion contracts with a trusted mercenary militia to provide specialized training. The training includes advanced combat skills and tactics, hand to hand training, strength and endurance training, SERE - Survival, Evasion, Resistance and Escape, and advanced stealth and infiltration techniques.

APPENDIX – NOTES AND MISCELLANY

A. PLANETARY DEVELOPMENTAL TIERS

Tier 1 – Fully industrialized/independent urban centers and self-sustained agricultural capabilities.

Tier 2 – Independent Colonies transforming to limited urban and industrialized centers. Limited to full employment of self-sustained agricultural capabilities

Tier 3 – Limited Colonization with limited agricultural capabilities (Limited External Sustainment of the population)

Tier 4 – Minimal Colonization; Terraforming sustainment to augment and enhance bio-seeding and environmental engineering efforts; colony development with no agricultural capabilities

Tier 5 – Initial Bio-Seeding/Terraforming Buildout (10 to 40 years of implementation depending on hostility of planet's environment)

B. MILITARY/CIVILIAN FLEET TIERS

Tier 1 – Military (5 or more), Commercial (Freight/Passenger), Scientific, Colonization

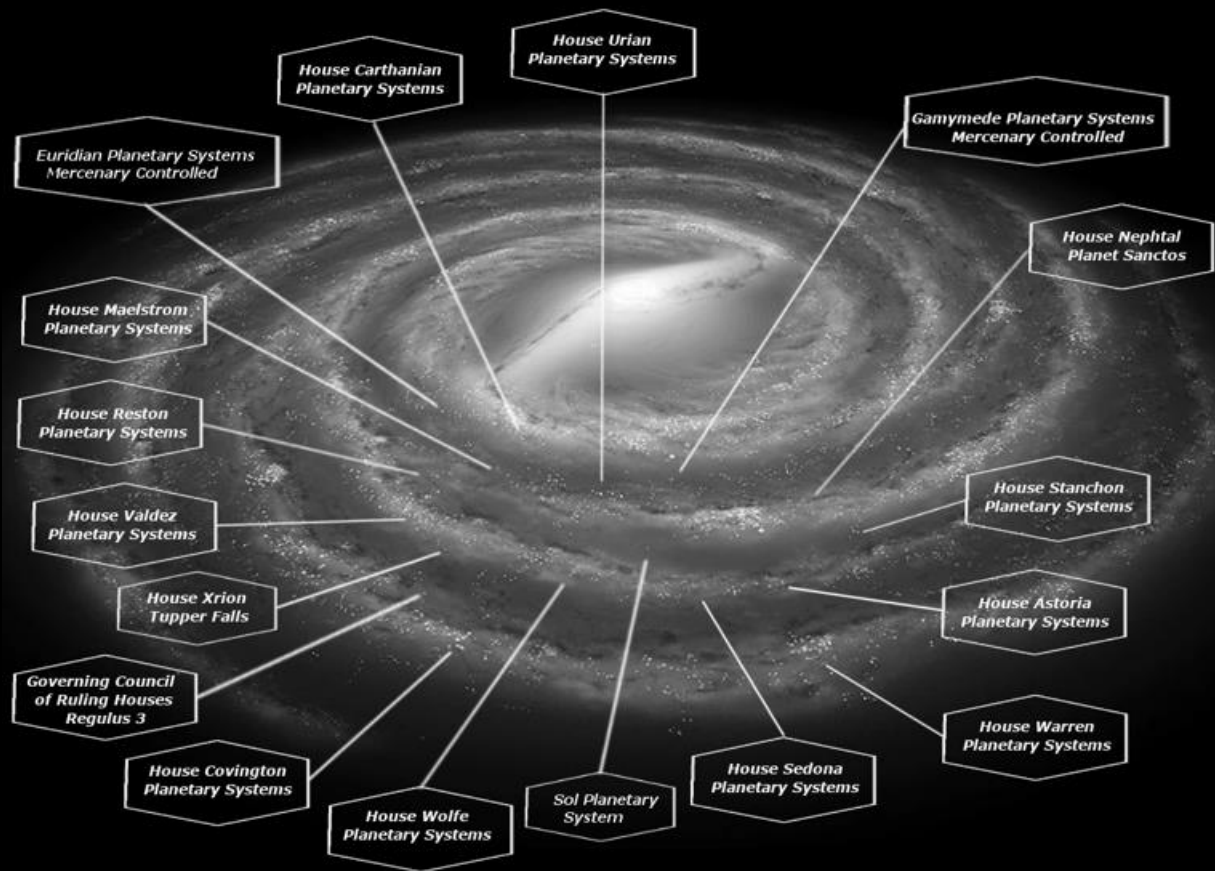
Tier 2 – Military (3-5), Commercial (Freight/Passenger), Scientific, Colonization

Tier 3 – Military (1-2, Commercial (Freight/Passenger), Scientific, Colonization

Tier 4 – Military (0), Commercial (Freight/Passenger), Scientific, Colonization

Tier 5 – Military (0), Scientific, Research/Exploration

C. GALACTIC MAP OF HOUSES



Major Houses

Carthania
Covington
Maelstrom
Reston
Urian
Wolfe

Minor Houses

Astoria
Stanchon (De'Berry)
Sedona
Valdez
Warren

Independent/Standalone

Earth (Mother Planet)
Governing Council of Houses
Nephtal
Xrion

D. HISTORY OF THE HOUSES (BRIEF)

Generations ago, humanity stretched out across the galaxy colonizing habitable or terraformed planets. Many sought wealth with the expanding supply of natural resources. As each new colonized planetary system grew and thrived, many of the mining and agricultural outposts and centers developed into towns, towns into cities, cities into city states, and city states into national and planetary entities. Independent governments and regimes formed to administer and govern the local populaces. Each arose differently, establishing monarchies, oligarchies derived from native ruling families, or the semblances of democratic republic governments. Over time, these ruling families and governments transformed into ruling houses governing multiple planetary systems. The fledgling houses would trade and ally with one another for necessary resources, stability, and security.

One early independent family called Xrion gained prominence working for both the planetary governments and criminal underworld. They increased their prestige and wealth by negotiating trade disputes, both legitimate and those through the black market. The family had negotiated peace treaties and armistices during the planetary expansion wars and managed much of the legal and illegitimate financial transactions. Another forte of Xrion was the formalization of etiquette and decorum, minimizing protocol misunderstandings and cultural differences between the early houses.

One distinctive enterprise for the family was that the early houses covertly hired it to expire (assassinate) individuals considered detrimental within their own house if one was involved in extreme illicit activities, some form of unacceptable indiscretions, or inept governance that caused political, public relations, or financial damage.

Westcott Stanford Xrion influenced the early ruling houses to meet where he and other Xrion family members petitioned for the establishment of a quorum with representatives from each house. After intensive lobbying, the houses agreed to establish a formal Governing Council located on the independent planet Regulus 3, to act as an oversight for managing inter-house issues. Their charter - manage trade, banking, commerce, diplomatic protocol guidelines, and attempt to minimize the skirmishes and wars that developed as houses encroached upon one another's claimed planetary or asteroid systems, and centralized diplomatic purges (assassination).

By tradition, the voting members of the Governing Council consisted of the senior heir for each house. An appointed magistrate was to act as liaison between the house and its Council member. The primary duty was to act as the legal representative for any contracts or treaties requiring validation by the Council for many of the services rendered by House Xrion. One primary role of the Governing Council was to provide oversight and endorsement of assassination requests to ensure House Xrion carried out intra-house contracts. This was to minimize potential adverse political or diplomatic elimination attempts between two houses.

Since the Xrion family had become trusted and respected, despite the illicit nature of its beginnings, they grew to handle all major disputes and negotiations, banking, protocol, and agreed assassinations between all the houses. As a result, the beginning galactic houses agreed to raise the status of the Xrion family to a full house, allowing it to possess its own home planet – Tupper Falls.

Tupper Falls contained two habitable major continents, one a supercontinent called Altair, and the other a smaller continent called Theasun Plains. Massive rivers and waterfalls spider-webbed the supercontinent Altair. A third continent called Laggos Snowfields was in the inhospitable southern polar region.

The capital city for the planet, located on Altair and called Westcott Landing, became the primary seat of administration for House Xrion. Westcott Landing rested in a valley of towering mountain ranges filled with meandering rivers and lush meadows full of exotic blue-green grasses and wildflowers. The mountains extended across most of the continent, with high plains, rolling hills, and a few forests.

Several generations after its formation, the Governing Council sponsored the building of a specialized super fleet called the Hammer. The independent armada was to maintain order and equilibrium amongst the ruling houses if one did not act in good faith during major inter-house negotiations, or threatened an independent and protectorate house. In later generations, the control of the fleet moved under the direct control of House Xrion. As the years continued to pass, the Hammer operated with greater autonomy with less oversight from the Governing Council.

To balance the activities and enterprises of House Xrion, a conglomeration of religious orders amongst all the houses petitioned the Governing Council to establish House Nephtal on a planet called Sanctos, in the Sephora planetary system. House Nephtal arose as the spiritual center for a universal ecumenical priesthood, with clergy embedded among many of the houses. Sanctos became the holiest and most revered world for all the houses and independent planetary systems as a high place of worship and as a sanctuary planet where a house was not to engage in any political or governmental activities. House aristocracies or government leaders could find asylum there, whereas no military troops, nor designated military warships in any form, including the Hammer, were to set foot or land on the planet's surface. Even the mercenaries and outlaw marauder bands that formed over the centuries understood this. Violation of this rule would incur full retribution by all houses. Several generations prior, greed got the better of a small marauder band. They landed on Sanctos and stole a small cache of gold and silver artifacts from an outlying temple structure for one of the new smaller houses. Days later after the identification of the offending marauder band, every house, except for House Xrion, participated in their search and destruction.

As time passed, many of the greater houses began to marginalize House Nephtal.

Over the next four and a half centuries with the ongoing expansion across the galaxy, the Governing Council inducted a limited number of newly formed houses. Yet, as the individual

houses increased, governance difficulties by the Governing Council amplified. Houses began to form unsanctioned independent agreements sidelining the Council's authority and oversight. At times, they allied with one another for political or security expediency, other times to reduce the influence of another house. Instability arose between several of the legacy houses as the older dynasties endeavored to flaunt and maintain their prominence with the integration of the fledgling houses.