

# THE THIRD IMPERIUM

## Alien Module 4: Zhodani

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Sample file

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# INTRODUCTION

In the *Original Traveller Universe*, the Zhodani are one of several races to have independently discovered jump drive technology. These races are commonly referred to as the Six Major Races and some groups define these races as the most powerful and dominant species within Charted Space. The Six Major Races are generally considered to be the Aslan, the Droyne, the Hivers, the K'kree, the Vargr and Humaniti (if the reader merges the Vilani, Solomani and Zhodani branches of the human race into one).

But the Solomani and the Vilani branches would prefer to forget their Zhodani brethren exist – because they have built their empire on the science of the mind. In a universe where science has finally given all the ability to seek their maximum potential – to know what pursuit can allow a person to unlock all he can be – the Vilani and Solomani would prefer to not know.

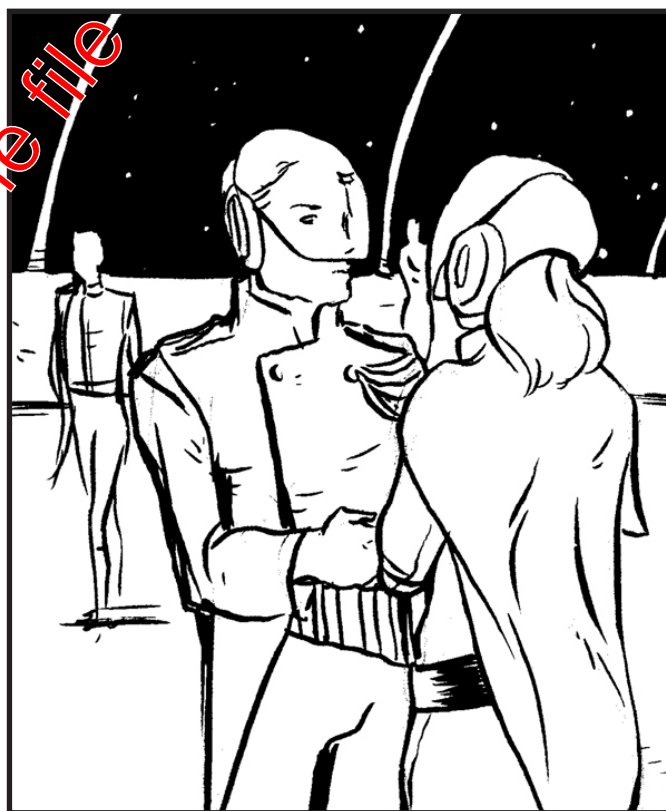
The Zhodani, the third major race of Humaniti, are the subject of this *Traveller* supplement. With this book, the Zhodani can be incorporated into any and all aspects of *Traveller*. Whether the Zhodani are to be used as Player Characters, Non-Player Characters, patrons, opponents or just as a backdrop against which adventures may take place, this supplement provides Referees and Players with sufficient information to deal with the Zhodani, both as individual characters and as a complete society.

The *Traveller Core Rulebook* deals with characters as humans within an Imperial society, which is fairly comprehensible to most players. Outside that society, aliens are different in culture as well as physiology and a careful presentation of what shapes an alien's character is necessary if players are to interact with, or role-play, those aliens.

*Traveller* players can find any number of activities that include or deal with the Zhodani, whether inside the Consulate or beyond its borders. The Zhodani Consulate (the area of space dominated by the Zhodani) is located

spinward and coreward of the Imperium. This supplement also details Ziafrplians sector, a Zhodani and Vargr controlled sector located spinward and coreward of the Spinward Marches.

The Zhodani found themselves on a world they did not come from and experienced repeated disasters to forge an interstellar empire. Along the way they have explored a path 5,000 parsecs coreward from their homeworld, drawn by an Ancient artefact to seek what lies at the end. But because of the fear the Vilani and Solomani have of psionics, the Zhodani and the Imperium have fought four wars and observers see little chance for peace ahead.



# ZHODANI CHARACTERS

Zhodani character generation follows the same procedures and concepts as for regular human characters in the *Traveller Core Rulebook*. However, several changes take into account the cultural differences between Zhodani characters and other humans.

For Player Characters, new players should focus on Nobles and Intendants; Zhodani Proles should be reserved for players with more experience in role-playing Zhodani characters.

## INITIAL CHARACTER GENERATION

For Zhodani characters, seven characteristics are generated randomly. The first six – Strength (Str), Dexterity (Dex), Endurance (End), Intelligence (Int), Education (Edu) and Social Standing (Soc) – are identical to the standard human attributes and are determined in the normal manner. The seventh, Psionic Strength (or Psi), is addressed in the Psionics rules (starting on page 152 of the *Traveller Core Rulebook*). Psionic Strength is recorded in the same way as a skill, so a character might have listed Psi-6 or Psi-11.

Characteristics initially will range from 2 to 12; they may rise as high as 15, or may be reduced to 1 during character generation. Note that there is no reduction in Psionic Strength by terms of service (as indicated in the *Traveller Core Rulebook*) for Zhodani characters, as they are tested before they enter a career.

Because Nobles (Zhobrdievl) and Intendants (Dlenchiepr) are more interesting as Player Characters than Proles (Zhant'ad), the Referee may institute (before character creation) rule changes to help make characters Intendants or Nobles. One way is to make Psi 1d6+6 instead of 2d6, to increase the chance of becoming an Intendant or Noble.

## Characteristic Adjustment

Zhodani society has certain customs and restraints that will affect some characters through changes in their Characteristics.

In the Zhodani Consulate, all children are tested for psionic potential. The result is that Proles with high Psionic Strength are elevated to Intendant rank. If the

character has Psi 9+ and Soc 9-, the character's Social Standing is raised to 10.

On the other hand, children of Nobles and Intendants receive better educations than Proles do. In this case, the effect is that initial Education cannot be higher than initial Social Standing. If Education is higher than Social Standing initially, lower Education to be equal to Social Standing. If Soc 10+ and Edu 7-, increase Education to 8.

These adjustments apply only at the start of character generation. They do not apply if a character's Social Standing changes because of career events, or if a character's Psionic Strength changes due to aging effects.

## Social Classification

Zhodani society has three broad social classes. Social Standing determines to which of these classes an individual belongs: Nobles have Soc 11+, Intendants have Soc 10 and Proles have Soc 9-. The player should determine and note the character's social class (Prole, Intendant or Noble) after making the Characteristic adjustments.

## Starting Age

Zhodani characters begin their careers at 18 standard years of age (about 24 Zhodani years). At this point, as untrained and inexperienced Zhodani, they embark on a career to gain skills and experience. Careers are resolved by terms of service, which are four standard years (a little over five Zhodani years) each.

## Gender

Women are as likely as men to possess psionic talents. As psionics became more prevalent, any cultural bias regarding gender disappeared. Those careers that regard physical ability as more important (Army and Guards) tend to attract more men than women but women can easily enter those careers and excel. Zhodani society would regard gender bias as a mental illness to be treated rather than a perspective to be tolerated.

## Naming and Titles

Proles take a family name from either their mother or father. Some families follow different traditions and so



### Zhodani Noble Titles

Zhodani Intendants and Nobles are identified by a suffix to their names. A new name suffix replaces the previous one when an individual rises in Social Standing.

Social Standing	Title Suffix	Zhodani Origin	Anglic Translation
10	-iepr	Dlenchiepr	'intendant'
11	-atI	Pranatl	'aspirant'
12	-stebr	Jdistebr	'wellborn'
13	-tlas	Viestlas	'highborn'
14	-tlasche'	Zhobrtlasche'	'noble born'
15	-iashav	Preblshienchiashav	'princely born'

While these do not directly correlate to Imperial noble titles, Zhodani characters visiting the Imperium are generally accorded status and honours based on their Social Standing.

Talent	Learning DM
Awareness	+1
Blocking*	-2
Clairvoyance	+3
Empathic Healing*	-1
Healing*	-2
Machine Symbiosis*	-1
Mimic*	-2
Psychic Transfer*	-1
Telekinesis	+2
Telepathy	+4
Teleportation	+0
Teleprojection*	-3
Per previous talent acquisition check	-1

\*New psionic talent detailed in the Zhodani Psionics chapter.

except the character does not make survival or advancement checks, or gain skills from the career skill tables. Characters should be permitted

to apply to compete in the Thequzdievl only during character generation.

Preliminary Competitions: For each psionic talent the character is skilled in, make a Psi 8+ check. Record the number of successes and failures.

Final Competition: Make a Psi 12+ check, DM +1 for each successful preliminary competition and -1 for each failed preliminary competition.

Awards: After the final competition, a character receives +1 Psi if more preliminary competitions were successful than failed. A winner of the final competition instead receives +2 Psi and becomes a Noble, raising their Social Standing to 11.

### CAREERS

The following career types are general careers representative of Zhodani society. To simplify things, each term of service is four standard Imperial years, which is slightly more than five Zhodani years.

While Zhodani share most careers with other human cultures, there are some differences. The Agent career has no corporate specialty, as corporations within the Consulate do not conduct trade wars or espionage against each other. There is no specific career for Nobles, although the Government career shares some similarities. There is no Scout career, as that is specific to the Imperium. There is no Rogue career, as that represents behaviour largely considered unhealthy by

inheritance can be traced through either the father or mother. A Prole character has a child's name which is used until adulthood, at which point the individual selects his or her own personal name.

Intendants and Nobles have only one name with a suffix, which indicates Social Standing. The Zhodani Nobles Titles table explains the suffixes.

Ranks (such as military ranks) are stated before a name.

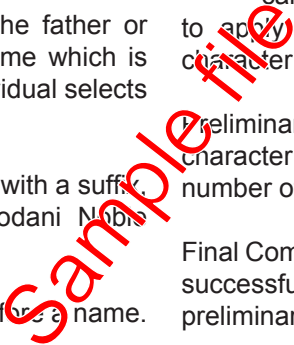
### Psionic Training

Nobles and Intendants undergo standardised Psionic Training at an early age. As part of training, the character may attempt to learn any of the common psionic talents on the Psionic Training table by making a Psionic Strength check. He may attempt the talents in any order but suffers a -1 DM per check attempted. If a character learns a talent, he gains that talent at level 0.

If a Prole gains Psi 9+ during character generation (usually through an event), they are elevated to Intendant (increasing their Social Standing to 10) and immediately undergo this same training.

### The Psionic Games

Any Intendant may apply once during his or her lifetime to compete in the Thequzdievl (Psionic Games) by making a Psionic Strength check. If successful, the individual devotes that term of service to competition in the Thequzdievl instead of to career matters. The term still counts as a term in the character's current career,



### Careers from Other Traveller Books

It is very rare for Zhodani to leave the Consulate and take an active part in other societies and cultures. Zhodani who leave the Consulate permanently are usually considered outlaws and renegades. Many careers (including the Psion career) in the Traveller Core Rulebook are not appropriate for Zhodani characters.

Zhodani society. Finally, the pervasiveness of a psionic society requires some changes across all careers.

### Qualification

Once a career has been selected, the character must attempt to qualify for that career. If this check is failed,

then the character cannot enter their chosen career this term; they must either submit to the Draft or enter play. Remember that Intendants and Nobles may not enter the Proles career.

### DRAFT

1d6	Career (speciality)
1-3	Army (any)
4-5	Merchants (corporate)
6	Navy (any)

Zhodani characters have no penalty for career changes, as Zhodani society recognises that a new perspective on life is mentally healthy and often desirable. Further, characters may return to a career previously left, provided they spent at least one term in a different career or from a Re-education Event.

### CAREER SUMMARY TABLE

Careers	Specialisation	Qualification	Survival	Advancement
Agent		Int 6+		
	Tozjabr		Int 7+	Int 5+
	Tavrchedl'		End 6+	Int 6+
Army		End 5+		
	Cavalry		Dex 7+	Int 5+
	Infantry		Str 6+	Edu 6+
	Support		End 5+	Edu 7+
Entertainer		Int 5+		
	Artist		Soc 6+	Int 6+
	Author		Edu 7+	Int 5+
	Performer		Int 5+	Dex 7+
Government		Int 8+		
	Administration		Int 4+	Edu 8+
	Diplomat		End 6+	Edu 6+
Guards		End 6+		
	Commandos		End 7+	Edu 5+
	Ground Assault		End 6+	Edu 6+
	Support		End 5+	Edu 7+
Merchants		Int 4+		
	Broker		Edu 5+	Int 7+
	Corporate		Edu 5+	Int 7+
	Free Trader		Dex 6+	Int 6+
Navy		Int 6+		
	Crew		Int 5+	Edu 7+
	Flight		Dex 7+	Edu 5+
	Technical		Int 6+	Edu 6+
Proles		Int 4+		
	Colonist		Int 7+	End 5+
	Corporate		Soc 6+	Int 6+
	Worker		End 4+	Edu 8+
Scholar		Int 6+		
	Field Researcher		End 6+	Int 6+
	Lab Scientist		Edu 4+	Int 8+
	Physician		Edu 4+	Int 8+



Draftees are not eligible for Advancement during their first term of service; they become eligible during the second or subsequent terms of service.

### **Skills**

For Zhodani characters, skills are determined as normal but there is an additional skill table for all careers but Proles, the Psionic Skills table. Characters may only roll on this table if they have Soc 10+.

**Psionic Skills:** Intendants and Nobles may develop their talents over time just as if they were normal skills. If they receive a talent they were not trained in or failed to gain during their initial psionic training, they may attempt again to gain that talent (all previous DMs apply, including the cumulative -1 DM per previous talent check). If a character receives the Talent skill choice, they may increase any psionic talent they already possess.

**Rare Skills:** The skills Deception, Gambling and Streetwise are generally not permitted to Zhodani characters. Deception and Streetwise can be gained by Tozjabr characters, as they need to deal with non-Zhodani who engage in such unhealthy activities. However, Gambling is unknown in Zhodani society.

### **New Options for Core Skills**

An examination of the core skills and how they apply to a society based on common psionic training and usage reveals additional common checks for those skills which should be applied.

**Carousing:** While Carousing is the art of having fun and socialising, the art can be used by those skilled in it to determine another person's intentions by his posture and bearing alone.

**Determine someone else's general intentions:** Intelligence, 5 minutes, Difficult (-2). This task is one level more difficult if the target is a stranger.

**Social Skills:** Social skills should vary in effect across cultures and species. Such tasks (at the discretion of the Referee) are one level more difficult if the target is a member of a different culture of the same race (such as Zhodani and Imperials) and two levels more difficult if the target is a member of an alien race (such as Zhodani and Vargr).

### **Commission and Advancement**

Nobles and Intendants automatically receive Advancement (Commission if appropriate) in their first

term of service, except for draftees: drafted Nobles and Intendants automatically receive Advancement (Commission if appropriate) in their second term of service. Additionally, Nobles gain a DM +1 to all Advancement rolls.

Proles and Intendants in the Government career may not be advanced higher than rank 3 (Executive).

### **Mustering Out**

Zhodani characters receive mustering out benefits at the end of their career service. Most benefits are identical to those on pages 34 and 35 of the *Traveller Core Rulebook*. The differences are noted here.

**Armour:** Battle Dress may not be selected for this benefit.

**Characteristic Increases:** Social Standing may never be increased if this would raise a Prole character's Social Standing above 9. No Characteristic may be increased beyond 15. Unusable Social Standing increases become bonus Ship Shares.

**Courier:** The character receives five ship shares towards the use of a Yetsasl-class courier, or two ship shares toward the use of any other Zhodani vessel.

**Nenj:** The Nenjchinzhe'driante (in Anglic, the Consular Legion of Merit) is a post-career recognition of valuable service to all Zhodani. Membership in the Nenjchinzhe'driante is egalitarian – Nobles, Intendants and Proles are all eligible for the award. Those who have won enrolment are entitled to wear the distinctive gold sash of honour that marks them as recognised elite of the Consulate.

Though it is largely honorary, members do receive concrete benefits. Zhodani citizens almost invariably grant members a 10% discount on just about everything, from meals to equipment purchases to starship passages. Sums of more than Cr1,000,000 are rarely so discounted but bank loans in these amounts are made without interest. Membership is for life and is not transferable but companions of a member may share in the benefits when he or she does the buying.

**Scout:** The character receives five ship shares towards the use of a Ninz-class scout, or two ship shares toward the use of any other Zhodani vessel. As there is no Scout Service in the Zhodani Consulate, the character covers all costs.

**Ship Shares:** Each ship share reduces the cost of a ship by 1% but applied to Zhodani ships rather than the designs in the *Traveller Core Rulebook*.