

HIDDEN AGENDASTM

IN THE BATTLE FOR HUMANITY'S FATE...

The universe of the 22nd century is vast and dangerous. For each question that intrepid psions answer, two new mysteries emerge. In a time of fear and doubt, there is only one place to turn for the truth – the Aeon Trinity.

KNOWLEDGE IS YOUR GREATEST WEAPON

But has the Trinity told you everything you need to know? What dangers lurk in Antarctica's frigid tundra? How has the rise of psions rekindled humanity's religions? And what new threats await among the stars?

Discover Aeon's hidden agendas. Experience the next chapter in the unfolding story of the Trinity Universe!

HIDDEN AGENDAS INCLUDES:

- A durable Storyteller screen with reference information all in one place
- Expanded full-color information on the 22nd century for players and Storytellers alike
- An introductory adventure set on Luna that kicks off the ongoing **Darkness Revealed** adventure series

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HOPE • SACRIFICE • UNITY

In a universe of dangerous interplanetary travel, first contact with strange, alien races, the emergence of mysterious psionic powers among humanity, and the rediscovered menace of the Aberrant horde that endangers all life, the Æon Trinity is a force for good, dedicated to the protection of Earth. In a time of great uncertainty and apprehension, Æon stands at the forefront of humanity, both protecting and leading the way into a bold future. We lead the way in hopes of unifying all people to face the destiny that lies before us.

GREETINGS, COLLEAGUE

A number of powerful forces are active in the modern universe, forces that have the capacity to change humanity's course forever. The Æon Trinity finds itself in a unique position regarding these various agencies. As you know, an important aspect of the Trinity's actions involves coordinating others' efforts to achieve Æon's goals. The Trinity's role therein is now, in the 22nd century, more vital than ever before. Aberrant attacks grow more concerted; divisiveness escalates between — and within — the psi orders; and suspicion, panic and greed overwhelm human governments.

However, the very factors that call for our intervention likewise make our efforts that much more difficult to accomplish. The road ahead is a difficult one. We members of the Æon Trinity must put our differences aside and commit ourselves to uniting humanity and even our alien friends against the threats arrayed before us. We must be prepared to sacrifice ourselves in this effort if doing so fulfills our goals. We must never give up on our dream of realizing humanity's full potential, for as long as we hope, then we may still triumph.

I speak to you not only as a fellow Trinity member, but as a friend and brother. We must act together, taking advantage of every available resource. This transmission is but a small part of the information that our colleagues in Triton Division have recovered and compiled from various OpNet nodes. Its usefulness will vary with the situations you discover yourself in, but I am confident that you will find these files to be beneficial in your work.

Good luck to you.

Neville Archer
Director, Neptune Division
Æon Trinity

22ND-CENTURY EARTH

>>> Addendum <<<

See previous file: 22nd-Century Earth

Humanity has spent most of its relatively short time on Earth huddled on six of the seven major landmasses that span the globe. Two-thirds of Earth's surface remains relatively untouched by human hands. Economic wealth, scientific enlightenment, energy resources—all of these things lie under Antarctica's frozen tundra and in Earth's oceans. With the skill and technology at humanity's disposal, we have finally made strides in exploring Earth's last great wilderness regions.

Æon and the Psi Orders

The Trinity keeps an eye on polar and aquatic developments, as it does every other area of human involvement. Interestingly, the psi orders show little interest in these remote programs compared to the attention paid to endeavors in more "civilized" regions. The orders' perceptions remain focused outward, on the stars, as do those of humanity in general. It is mainly through Æon's urging that the orders look to Earth's frigid climes and undersea terrain at all.

Of all the orders, the Norça show the greatest inter-

est in these areas. This is not surprising. Of all the psionic aptitudes, their biokinetic talent is the most useful in extreme environments. A Norça may alter his very physiology to survive—even thrive—in frozen arctic wastes and under crushing undersea pressures. For the most part, the shifters leave the other orders to their stellar patrols; the biokinetics guard Earth's poles and oceans against Aberrant incursion.

Satellite networks, re-launched after the Aberrant War, have limited use in scanning Antarctica's icy mantle and the ocean depths. Earth governments, supplemented by Legion patrols and a scattering of Ministry outposts, monitor these areas as best they can. But even with this added assistance, a vast amount of territory remains for the Norça to patrol.

Psion and human patrols have encountered solitary Aberrants in both arctic and undersea environments. Due to our difficulties in monitoring these regions, the monstrosities have used them as landing points on Earth in preparation for staging raids. While Aberrants that have attacked from arctic regions and the sea have all been

defeated decisively, the public is concerned that more of the creatures may be evading patrols.

This concern is partially justified. The Norça have uncovered three undersea Aberrant lairs to date. Our investigations indicate that one of these might well have been maintained since before the Aberrant War. The idea that some Aberrants may have never left Earth in the Exodus is quite disturbing. The Trinity cannot ignore the possibility that there may be other Aberrant hideouts in other isolated spots on Earth—or even on Luna or other bodies in our solar system.

It will take time to root out other possible Aberrant havens. Involved as the Norça are in their South American and extraterrestrial endeavors, and additionally purported to be the smallest group of psions currently operating, the biokinetics must perforce be spread quite thin. The Æon Trinity lends what assistance that Proxy del Fuego will accept, and freelance psions accompany Norça patrols, but defending Earth remains a daunting job. We must rely on the biokinetics to maintain their vigilance in these harsh regions and times.

ANTARCTICA

The last territory on Earth to be opened up to permanent human habitation, Antarctica is still a forbidding, untamed territory. The polar continent is unique on Earth as a romantic alternative to the orbital colonies — a “downside alien world filled with fortune and adventure.” Unfortunately, this common sentiment is disturbingly accurate: just as in the extraterrestrial colonies, hostile environmental factors and the threat of aberrant attack make emigration to Antarctica a risky venture — one that relocation brokers are still reluctant to insure. Antarctica is truly an alien environment, a frontier as wild and exotic as any of the extraterrestrial colonies, despite being as much a part of planet Earth as is Rio or the Maghreb.

The Terrestrial Frontier

Antarctica's very remoteness attracts the elite and re-

clusive from all over human space. The continent's lack of universally recognized regulations for land use has allowed some of the wealthiest corporate heads to carve vast private retreats out of the trackless wilderness, dotting the landscape with fusion-heated ski lodges, and the sky with private orbital facilities. Antarctica's telecommuting class, too poor for such conspicuous displays of aristocratic privilege, band together to form yet another wave of isolationist communities, seeking the good life and entertaining fantasies of finding happiness as rustic prospectors or fishers. Such idealism and social disparity are just two of the many parallels that exist among Antarctica, Luna, Mars and other extraterrestrial settlements.

The simplicity of Antarctic communities make them among the most

enticing of all terrestrial destinations for slummers fleeing North American, European and Chinese arcologies. Even Australia is a secondary choice at times, its romantic allure compromised by centuries of human habitation. In fact, a substantial percentage of the “penguins” (as the Antarcticans are somewhat derisively called by outsiders) were originally first- or second-generation Schism settlers who left Australia when they realized that the Commonwealth was

TRITON ARCHIVE

LIVE THE ADVENTURE...

...without leaving the planet! Want to experience the thrill of living in the outworld colonies, but without the risks? Nervous about the trip up the gravity well and into the unknown? Come to Antarctica!

*Paid for by Sucasa Habitat Brokers,
Montevideo*

not the utopian enclave that brokers had led them to expect.

Still idealistic, the erstwhile "Australians" now seek an idealized relationship with nature and their fellow slummers in the settlements of Victoria's Land.

Earth's Last Treasure-Trove

Antarctica's largely untouched mineral resources are enormously tempting to a world forced to search deep into space for raw materials. Beyond the rich deposits of precious metals such as platinum and gold that are scattered across the continent, Antarctica contains important reserves of structural metals — iron, chromium and copper — not to mention untapped supplies of petroleum organics. Now that environmental technologies and automation have progressed to the point where humanity can finally exploit Antarctic wealth, Earth's leading economic powers are eager to reap rewards from the ice.

The most avid developers and financiers of Antarctic resource strategies are the resource-starved *zaibatsu* and the geocentric Brazilians. Both blocs have pursued policies of radical expansion into the Antarctic economy for over 10 years — the Nihonjin through the intermediaries of Australia and the United Nations, and the Brazilians through their aggressive mercantile establishment. FSA corporate interests, the Argentine military and the UAN hold much smaller stakes in the Antarctic resource market, although these tend to be minor niche operations.

Interests and Conflict

The political allegiances of Antarctica's homesteaders and the disposition of the continent's natural resources are two of the most pressing issues in international corporate law. Since a number of competing national and corporate interests have claimed the right to exploit the frontier, either exclusively or in part, the situation is tense and verges on explosive.

The most convincing claim is made by the Nippon-dominated upper chamber of the United Nations. The UN's history of involvement in the Antarctic territory goes back to the 20th century, when the continent was a UN protectorate. As most of the important Antarctic claims of the period were made by members of the North American-European cultural bloc (which have since abandoned their Antarctic interests, or now lack the political momentum to press their claims, or both), current legal opinion tends to attribute the continent to the UN.

Presumably, this would solidify Nihonjin interests in the area, as the Nippon-subsidized UN would likely seek to protect the *zaibatsu*. Of the other old claims to Antarctica, only the long-established Argentine military presence is still vital enough to present organized, serious competition for the UN's *zaibatsu* and Australian corporate trustees. Newer claims to the continent, such as those laid by China and Brazil, don't pose any immediate threat to the Nihonjin, Argentine nor Australian endeavors, but serve to shake up Antarctica's status quo even further.

Modern Antarctic society takes only a passing interest in these territorial disputes. International politics seem petty compared to the day-to-day struggle to survive. Yet this political indifference has enabled various extra-national forces to establish a strong presence on the frigid continent — often using the locals themselves as pawns. Brazilian corporations are a notable example. They have taken advantage of Antarctica's political disinterest in recent years, working through economic channels and FSA shell companies to challenge UN exploitation of the continent.

Indeed, the Brazilian connection is a particularly telling example of the complexities of Antarctic politics. The Sudamericans, as South Americans have come to be known, initiated their strategy after being invited to co-finance Chinese Ministry of Science installations in Antarctica. It is thought that Beijing was unwilling to give Nippon exclusive access to the platinate resources that made China so useful to the *zaibatsu*, so brought Brazil onto the playing field as a diversion. Brazil quickly proved unwilling to give up access to Antarctic platinum sources, and clashed with the greedy Nippon.

Today, China continues to dole out platinum and other strategic materials from Siberia and Antarctica to Nippon in exchange for proprietary patents. Meanwhile, the Brazilians continue to defend their own fragile platinum supply from not only the United Nations bloc, but also from the already