

politics

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The Allied Worlds Political Spectrum

The Allied Worlds is like a combination of NATO and the European Union. The individual planets within the alliance have their own militaries and legal systems, but the central government on Yih can and does oblige members to contribute to mutual defense, as with the Peacekeepers. Economically the alliance is heavily integrated, with a single currency and free trade agreements between members.

The basic divide in Allied Worlds politics concerns how much power the central government on Yih should be given. Centralists favor more concentrated authority while autonomists favor a looser alliance of more independent states. This divide trickles down to smaller divisions of power as well, between planetary governments and the administrative regions that are the remnants of past sovereign nations.

The pull for autonomy is strongest on Yih and Sweetwater. In Yih's case the provinces that were once independent countries dating back to before the space age agitate for independence. Sweetwater is better thought of as two states, with the wealthy benthic cities being the real beneficiaries of the alliance. Most of the surface, except some of the larger fixed islands, is a de facto no man's land of isolated atavist tribes and roving seafarers both piratical and peaceful. You can divide the surface dwellers into those that willfully ignore the AW government and those that don't even know what the AW is in the first place.

Besides the debate over centralized authority, the big issue dividing AW citizens is the Partisans. The AW's original raison d'etre was to protect the member planets in the event the Partisans tried taking over the system. One side favors deeper economic ties with the Partisans, while another wants to treat them as a threat. Both sides acknowledge that the Partisans are problematic, but differ on whether deepening economic ties would make them less authoritarian or just feed the status quo. There are also a pawful of tankies who insist that Partisan Territory is a paradise and Firefly did nothing wrong.

The Moonlitter Political Spectrum

There are three major factions in Moonlitter politics: Pro-AW, who seek anything from closer ties to outright formal union with the Allied Worlds, Pro-Partisan, who are the same but for the Partisans, and Nationalists, who want both the AW and the Partisans off Moonlitter's tail.

The AW has mostly won the soft power game through its ubiquitous media presence. It's so pervasive that Commonthroat is starting to threaten Outlander as the most relevant language. The Partisans prefer the stick rather than the carrot, and border skirmishes are common. When Welkinstead tried graduating from soft power to hard power by signing a deal to establish a military outpost on one of Moonlitter's moons, the Partisans were less than pleased and started threatening to "retake" territory they claimed was rightfully theirs. This eventually led to the glassing of Pilgrim's Rest.

Pilgrims' Rest was a stronghold of Nationalism. After the Partisan attack on their home, they decided that if they couldn't have an independent Moonlitter, they'd have an independent Pilgrims' Rest, which is why they founded Wayfarers' Haven as a city-state within the Spacer Confederacy.

Space Tree Doggo Fascists

Image

The Unionists are a manifest destiny movement within the Allied Worlds that seeks to unite all of Focus under the AW government. Their slogan is *<rd r scrg, r dr rmLg, r dr rJhg, r dr rgHHGg> One star, one species, one throat, one rule.*

Their symbol is a filleted hexagon containing six circles representing the six major planets of Focus (Hearthside, Sweetwater, Yih, Newhome, Welkinstead, and Moonlitter)*.

They were always a controversial movement, and only become more controversial after First Contact and the arrival of humans to Focus. They are aggressively anti-partisan. Thanks to the horseshoe effect they don't appear much different from their enemies from an outside perspective. This essentially makes them a "fascist" counterpart to the "communist" Partisans.

*The number six is highly symbolic in most cynoid cultures, representing the yinrih species (six digits on each paw) and Focus (six major planets).

Unionist and Allied Worlds Symbols

Image

Logo of the Unionists, which is a reference to the standard Allied Worlds symbol. It's six circles inside a hexagon instead of four circles inside a diamond.

Image

The AW symbol done in the same style.

Moonlitter Symbol

Image

Here's a symbol for Moonlitter, a large circle with six smaller circles orbiting around it, symbolizing the planet Moonlitter itself and its many many moons and outlying dwarf planets.

The planet itself isn't very economically important other than being the big lump of mass that keeps all the moons together. There are a few sky cities in the planet's atmosphere, but it doesn't have the exploitable gasses that Welkinstead has.

Since I've been thinking of Moonlitter as the Taiwan of focus, I think they need something like the [Silicon Shield](#)

How Borders Work

A polity claims a concentric ring around Focus. The ring is normally centered on a planetary orbit, but may differ in the case of non-planetary polities (the Spacer Confederacy and Partisan Territory). The polity has exclusive economic rights within this border, and is the only entity allowed to set up permanent or semi-permanent structures (orbital colonies, unmanned research stations, etc).

However, areas outside a body's Hill sphere are considered neutral with respect to travel. As long as you don't enter a body's gravity well and don't plan to loiter, you can pass through without having to go through any red tape.

This is how Welkinstead is able to ferry troops and supplies between itself and its base at Moonlitter without having to set anything up with the Spacer Confederacy.

Minor update to Hearthside's political system

Minor update to Hearthside's political system: the werenoot is the only house that can propose legislation, but all legislation must be approved by the wifemoot. Further, the two houses aren't considered higher or lower, just as the US house and senate aren't generally considered as such (at least I never do).

This arrangement was set up to reflect the primordial role of shaman as advisors to the sheriffs. And yes I'm aware that the pious dissolutionists happily living under an ecclesiocracy is a circle I have to square. For now the explanation is that Hearthside was set up as the Bright Way acknowledging their hitherto tacit control of the government, saying the quiet part out loud, and simply being open and honest about it went a long way to making it work, since now the clergy were actually accountable.

Hearthside was intended to be an exercise in ecclesiastical utopianism, and while hardly a utopia, it functions as well as a government can be expected to.

Some economic musings

On Hearthside, it is illegal to use terms such as "buy" or "purchase" (rather their Hearthsider equivalents) unless a transfer of ownership is taking place. If you're paying for time-limited access (even if that time limit is measured in centuries) terms such as "hire" or "lease" must be used. Moonlitter has similar laws, but the AW differs depending on jurisdiction.

The Pious Dissolutionists pioneered (or at least championed) what humans would call "open source", thanks to the treaties following the war of dissolution banning the Bright Way from selling their tech. Research monasteries can sell the patent rights to something, but can't monetize access to such products. When the mass router is invented, they can either sell the patent to another entity for a one-time fee or open source it, allowing anyone to manufacture it royalty free. Because the culture of the Pious Dissolutionists tends toward anti-corporatism, they almost always make the tech available to all.

Thoughts on geopolitics

“ [Visions1](#) wrote: 2025-07-23T17:12:17+00:00

Spoiler:

I was going to correct you on Hearthside being geopolitically relevant enough for the Partisans to care by the time of First Contact, but then I realized that's probably your point. The Partisans, or at least certain segments of Partisan society, hold conspiracy theories about Hearthsiders secretly controlling the system. Makes sense. Your average Partisan citizen isn't going to interact with a lot of Hearthsiders, so they're not going to know enough about Hearthsider culture to form the kind of stereotypes that the AW has about them, namely that they're lazy. (They're not lazy, they're just less schedule-driven than most parts of the AW.) So all your average Fourpaws from Partisan Territory knows about Hearthside is that it's where the Bright Way is headquartered, and "Bright Way Bad!" sums up all they know about that.

I originally made the Partisans space commies casually, but the fact that the ideological core of the Partisans formed from people who were enslaved by an entity that was both a capitalist enterprise and (if only nominally at the time) a religious institution makes communism a good parallel for them. I'm not sure how far they would go with it, if they ever even claimed to be founding communes etc, or what exactly their elevator pitch was in the beginning. Perhaps they themselves really didn't know other than the current system had to go, and totalitarianism swooped in to fill the resulting power vacuum.

I'm also trying to flesh out the partisans as a group, make them more 3-dimensional, as can be seen in the 2038 problem with the durian-loving Partisan grunt.

Ironically I've barely touched the Allied Worlds even though their language is the most fleshed-out. I came up with them when I had to give Tod a military to serve under, and I was too lazy to make Sweetwater, Yih, Newhome, and Welkinstead all their own separate polities (to say nothing of having sovereign countries smaller than a planet). This whole time I've thought of them generically as the yinrih equivalent to The Western World, and the AW has consequently accrued some of the positive and negative traits I associate with the Anglosphere along with Europe and its more powerful former colonies, without developing the alliance much beyond that.

I don't think I've touched Newhome at all. I've thought of it sort of as a center of Neoshamanism since Sweetwater has Atavists and Hearthside has the Bright Way. Also fits with Newhome's history as being founded by Neoshamanist groups.

Technocracy

Not sure who'll have this system of government, probably Wayfarers' Haven, but anyway. The idea is that there's no one monolithic legislative body. Instead, there are a set of departments that govern different areas of life like education, agriculture, economy, energy, etc, and they and they alone can enact legislation governing their sphere. They do consult with other departments as necessary though.

In order to become a member of a department, you have to have worked in the corresponding field. Only healers can decide matters of public health, only teachers can shape education policy, and only those who have put their lives on the line in military and law enforcement and seen the effects of violence first hand can say whether war is justified.

Wars and Such

This post may not be canon pending a good night's sleep. I'm le tired.

It was fairly natural that shires would evolve into cities, and then city-states, and then into states proper. The first polity to be recognized as such was probably the jungles around Newman's Dale where the Shamanists dwelt. From almost the beginning of the Bright Way they refused almost all contact with the emigrants south of the jungle. Mostly due to superstitions about the rapidly evolving society and its technology.

Pre-space-age Yih was probably divided into twelve large states and likely numerous smaller de jure independent but de facto client states. I like the number 12 :)

The jungle was effectively a protectorate of the Claravian state immediately to the south, who, after skirmishes with the now technologically outstripped shamanists, forbade all entry into the jungle in the vein of India's prohibition surrounding North Sentinel Island. Alternatively, curious antiquarians venturing into the jungle to investigate the last stone-age yinrih society unwittingly brought novel diseases with them that decimated the jungle population, and their southern neighbor wanted to make sure that didn't happen again.

Regarding the Shakeoff, Neoshamanism was likely most popular in these minor states, who sought to differentiate themselves from their larger Claravian neighbors. The movement romanticizing the old Shamanists coincided with nationalist movements.

Importantly, these minor states where Neoshamanism took hold were far from Newman's Dale. Once Neoshamanism became established, groups of Neoshamanists demanded that the state bordering the jungle grant them entry into the jungle, perhaps because they alleged the state was concealing proof that the Theophany was other than the Bright Way claimed, or perhaps because secular interests in these smaller states knew the Shamanists were no match for a modern military and wanted to claim the jungle for themselves. Most likely it was a bit of both, with the patriarchs of these smaller states using the new religion as a convenient excuse to drum up support for a war of conquest.

Regarding the state bordering the jungle, they saw the saber rattling of these smaller states (likely an alliance thereof) as a threat, and stoked the flames of sectarian tension to expel the pockets of Neoshamanism that were present, forcing them to migrate to the lands ruled by their coreligionists. This in turn caused a migrant crisis (possibly intentional) in these smaller states, which led to all-out war.

Clergy on both sides were divided between those that saw these political moves for what they were and those that took the bait.