

DUNE

GAUCHOMUN XV



Crisis

GAUCHOMUN XV

UCSB Model UN



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A Word From Secretariat

Gauchomun XV has a conference wide zero-tolerance policy for any forms of bigotry, including but not limited to homophobia, sexism, racism, and xenophobia. Be mindful of this as you research, speak, and write. It is our duty as global citizens and students of diplomacy to ensure our views are unbiased, fair, and equitable.

Land Acknowledgement

Gauchomun XV and UCSB Model United Nations would like to acknowledge the land that we currently occupy as students of University of California, Santa Barbara is the homeland of the Barbareño Band of Chumash Native Americans. We recognize that the Barbareño Band of Chumash Native Americans, as well as many others, were forcibly removed from their rightful land and that the consequences of this forced removal still continue to affect Indigenous communities.

Gauchomun XV and UCSB Model United Nations honor the resilience, strength, and enduring presence of Indigenous people across the country and around the world. As students of UCSB, we continue to reflect on our University's ties with colonial occupation, and strive to educate ourselves and uplift Indigenous cultures, issues, and histories. During Gauchomun XV, we ask that everyone reflect on the repercussions of global colonial development and forcible occupation and strive to support Indigenous and other affected communities throughout their actions in committee this weekend. For more information, please visit their website:

www.bbc-indians.com.



Chair Letter

Dear Delegates,

My name is Jacob Pike and I am thrilled to be your chair in the “To Tame a Land: Dune” committee! First, a bit about myself. I am a first-year Hydrologic Sciences and Policy major. I want to eventually work in water resources management, possibly for the state government. Feel free to ask questions about the major, and I will do my best to answer them beyond telling you it is “part of Environmental Studies”, which I tell everyone. My other interests include politics, history and particularly that pertaining to social justice/decolonial struggles. All of these, and certainly water, feature prominently in Frank Herbert’s *Dune*, as they will in our committee.

As discussed below, Frank Herbert was inspired to write *Dune* during a trip to Oregon, where he saw the government had planted native plants to hold the sand dunes in place and prevent erosion. He also interacted with Indigenous people in the area. It is safe to assume that this got him thinking about long-term environmental planning. In the novel, this translates to the “dream” of a green world held by the Fremen, the indigenous people of “Dune” or Arrakis, which depends on careful management of water resources. In addition, Herbert likely thought about the power relationships that govern and often impede such environmental planning.

In committee, delegates will build their crisis arcs by establishing or confronting power on the desert planet of Arrakis. To do this, they will have to consider the sources of power itself. These include “hard” sources of power such as access to resources and military strength. Or, it might refer to the “soft” yet no less potent power of legitimacy through law, tradition, and religion. By the wind-swept bluffs of sunny Santa Barbara, California, it is my hope that delegates learn to think critically about themes of environment, conflict and narrative that affect both science fiction and reality. And as always, watch out for the giant sandworms!

Yours Truly,

Jacob Pike

Committee Chair



Co-Chair Letter

Delegates,

My name is Matthew Tede, and I am excited to be the Co-Chair for the “To Tame a Land: Dune” committee! A lot of work has gone into this committee in order to make sure that all of you are able to enjoy your time as the High Council of the Landsraad. A bit about myself, I am a third-year political science major with a focus on international relations, and have been doing Model UN for around a year. I am an avid reader, and would love to talk to any of you about life on campus, collegiate MUN, or a couple good books if you have any questions.

Jacob, Byron, and I have been working to bring this Dune committee into reality over the last few months, and we are all interested to see the paths that you take with the story in committee. As Co-Chair, I am also looking forward to how all of you handle the front room, as our characters offer some interesting positions in the committee. Whichever direction you decide to take it, we will work with you to make sure that things run as smoothly as possible.

Arrakis sits glittering like a desert jewel, waiting for each of you to fulfill your desires. Will you answer its call?

Best of luck delegates!

Matthew Tede

Committee Co-Chair



Crisis Director Letter

Delegates,

Welcome to “To Tame a Land: Dune!” My name is Byron Chan and I am a second year political science and economics double major. I am the current Director of Training for Crisis for UCSB MUN. On campus I am heavily involved in voter registration and I encourage you all to pre-register or register to vote if you can. Outside of MUN you can find me cooking in the kitchen or cooking in the library working on my studies.

As your Crisis Director I am extremely excited to see which wacky and wild ways you will take committee. I encourage you all to remember to pay attention to the special committee mechanics, as these will be extremely important. I also encourage you all to take notes of the boundaries of the world of Dune, as we will be following the rules of Dune in the backroom. My hope is that this committee will capture the complex and ever-shifting power dynamics that pervade Dune. Delegates will get the opportunity to engage in political machinations and deceit, form and break alliances, and potentially fight over the Known Universe.

As always, I encourage you all to reach out to me with any questions, comments or concerns!

See you in committee!

Byron Chan (he/him)

byronchan@ucsb.edu

Crisis Director, To Tame a Land: Dune



Textual Background

First published as a novel in 1965¹, Frank Herbert's *Dune* can rightfully be described as the genesis of contemporary science fiction. It is the first of six novels written by the original author: *Dune* (1965), *Dune Messiah* (1969), *Children of Dune* (1976), *God Emperor of Dune* (1981), *Heretics of Dune* (1984), and *Chapterhouse: Dune* (1985). A much larger volume of novels and articles written by Frank Herbert's son Brian, after the death of his father, deal largely with the backstory of the *Dune* universe. Although we will be focusing exclusively on the 1965 novel for this committee, it will be helpful for delegates to understand Frank Herbert's broader intentions in writing his original story. From heavy metal band *Iron Maiden* (listen to "To Tame a Land" released 1983)² to film director David Lynch (with his film adaptation *Dune* 1984)³ to innumerable YouTube memes with MGMT tracks (example linked [here](#)), many responses to *Dune* focus on glorifying its main protagonist, Paul Atreidies. Indeed, the first novel closely tracks what is known in literature as the "hero's journey", a term popularized by Joseph Campbell in 1949. Boiled down to the essentials, this type of story tracks a protagonist and they venture from an "ordinary" world established at the beginning of the novel, to a "special" world where some task must be completed, and back to the "ordinary" world upon completion of the task. Without spoiling too much of the novel, the world Paul grew up in as the son of Duke Leto, head of the most respected, though certainly not the largest or richest, of the feudal families in the *Dune* universe, is obliterated through treachery and greed upon their arrival as the new rulers of Arrakis. Paul then has to venture into the "special" world that is the deserts of the planet, where he must walk the boundary between his noble origins and his new calling as the spiritual

¹ <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Dune-by-Herbert>

² <https://genius.com/Iron-maiden-to-tame-a-land-lyrics>

³ <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0087182/>



savior of the beleaguered yet fierce *Fremen*, the indigenous people of the planet. Eventually, Paul embraces the latter and returns physically to the “ordinary” world in re-establishing House Atreides, yet he and the political structure of the universe are changed beyond recognition. If the first novel tracks the hero’s journey, then *Dune Messiah* is Frank Herbert’s departure from the norm. As the head of a new empire and the sole authority over a Fremen army slaughtering billions across the Known Universe, Paul must contend with the consequences of his actions and decide whether he is truly a “hero”, history’s greatest mass murderer, or something else. This is similar (and, perhaps, the inspiration behind) the major reversal in the hero’s journey in *The Empire Strikes Back*, where Luke Skywalker learns that restoring balance to the cosmos and fulfilling his destiny means confronting, and possibly killing, his own father.⁴ Thus, as delegates strive to fulfill their characters’ destinies’ and debate such topics as space-folding, planetary ecology, and military power, they should remember that, in world of *Dune*, good and evil are not clear-cut, and that oftentimes the fulfillment of one’s destiny may be the downfall of everything they hold dear.

⁴ <https://www.starwars.com/video/i-am-your-father>



The Known Universe

The Spacing Guild

In committee, delegates will assume the roles of the various factions that either rule or are ruled in the millenia-old political structure of the *Dune* universe, henceforth referred to as the Known Universe. The ultimate basis of power is the method of faster-than-light space travel which folds spacetime. At the time of committee, the Spacing Guild, an officially neutral organization, has controlled space travel for exactly 10,191 years. So important is the Guild's monopoly over transportation that the Imperial Calendar is dated from its first year (eg. *Dune*, and committee, take place 10,191 years "After Guild", or 10,191 AG). Immense Heighliners, interstellar spaceships whose scale is captured in [this](#) scene from *Dune* (2021)⁵, are piloted by Guild Navigators, who are able to follow pathways through folded spacetime with their power of prescience, or foresight. The Navigators are not born with these powers, rather, they can only access them by ingesting the mysterious spice found only on Arrakis.

The Imperium: House Corrino

Thus, Arrakis is the key to power in the Known Universe, and since the Battle of Corrin in 88 BG (over 10,000 years before the start of the novel), House Corrino has controlled Arrakis.⁶ For just as long, the members of the Corrino family have ruled the Known Universe as the Padishah Emperors, whose seat is the Golden Lion Throne on the planet of Kaitan. Yet aside

⁵ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iu-cGNWhgTo>

Compare the size of the Heighliners at 0:03 with the tiny specks emerging from its mouth, and then the size of the shadow of one of the Atrides frigates at 0:16 with the crowds on the ground. Each "dot" at 0:03 is one of these massive frigates!

⁶

[https://dune.fandom.com/wiki/Battle_of_Corrin/XD#:~:text=The%20Battle%20of%20Corrin%20\(88,rise%20of%20the%20Corrino%20Empire.](https://dune.fandom.com/wiki/Battle_of_Corrin/XD#:~:text=The%20Battle%20of%20Corrin%20(88,rise%20of%20the%20Corrino%20Empire.)



from their ancestry (discussed briefly below), the Corrinos maintain their power through the ferocious *Sardaukar*, an army of highly skilled fanatics who reside on the Corrino's homeworld of Salusa Secundus. In the original novel, Duke Leto notes that it is the desolate condition of the planet that conditions the Sardaukar to be so ruthless.

The Landsraad

Despite their firm hold on the imperial throne, House Corrino is not unrivaled in its rule over the Known Universe. Rather, a delicate balance of power forged through the centuries exists between the Emperors and the assembly of families who rule the thousands of worlds in the Imperium, known as the Landsraad. Despite their numerical advantage, for millennia the noble houses offered essentially no threat to House Corrino, since each Sardaukar is worth at least five soldiers of the Landsraad in battle. This ratio is only theoretical, since for millenia no House had even come to rival the power of the Padishah Emperors. Rather, the Landsraad forms both a legislature, offering a check on the power of the Imperium, and a forum for the Great Houses.

The Bene Gesserit

Working behind the scenes are the Bene Gesserit, a sisterhood of “spies, nuns, scientists, and theologians” who work to influence the long-term development of humanity, towards what they believe to be some greater good.⁷ The primary tools of the Bene Gesserit are political intrigue, religious engineering and genetic planning. Reverend Mothers, the most respected members of the order, wield considerable influence over planetary rulers and even the Imperial Court. Some serve as Truthsayers, mystics who use The Voice to compel a subject to tell the truth.⁸ All

⁷ https://dune.fandom.com/wiki/Bene_Gesserit

⁸ <https://dune.fandom.com/wiki/Voice>



Reverend Mothers shared the ability to access the memories of their female ancestors, and thus were linked across space and time. The Bene Gesserit have also established the Missionaria Protectiva, a branch of their organization which seeds various cultures with religious prophecies.

The Prophecy

Lastly, and perhaps most controversially, the Bene Gesserit orchestrated marriages among the various noble houses, oftentimes with the insertion of their all-female members as wives or concubines, based on a plan of genetic perfection that spanned dozens if not hundreds of generations. This they did in pursuit of their most sacred and ancient goal: to bring about a male Bene Gesserit who could access the full breadth of their genetic memory as well as visions of the future. This ability of foresight, or “prescience”, is the same as that which befits the Guild Navigators, similarly reliant on spice though incomparably more far-reaching once activated. This individual would be the Kwisatz Haderach, “The Shortening of the Way” between space and time, and would have more power and knowledge than any human yet born. Though his identity is known only to the inner circle of the Reverend Mothers, it is believed that the Bene Gesserit were within a generation of producing the Kwisatz Haderach, only to be duped by one of their sisters just over a decade before the start of the committee. It is now the year 10,191 AG: Paul Atreides is fifteen years old, and he has just reached the spice-laden surface of Arrakis...



Religion

The Orange Catholic Bible

Religion continues to play an important role in human life well nigh twenty-thousand years after humans left Earth. Indeed, it is the strongest force that binds the Known Universe together, in part due to its accessibility to most people. All Imperial subjects will recognize the passages of the Orange Catholic Bible, the primary religious text, which contains the sum of human religious beliefs. These were not exclusively or even primarily Catholic beliefs but incorporated knowledge from a range of faiths that had evolved over many millennia from their original religions on Earth.⁹

The Missionaria Protectiva

Several centuries after the Missionaria Protectiva completed its original work on a particular world, instilling rumors of prophecy in the local religion, a Bene Gesserit could perform a “miracle” that would instantly inspire fear and awe in a host population. This would rally them, unwittingly, to the aid of an imperiled sister or the goals of the sisterhood. One of the significant target populations were the Fremen of Arrakis, who look to the coming of the Kwisatz Haderach, although they know him in their religion as the Muad'Dib, or the Desert Mouse.

The Butlerian Jihad

The most famous of the commandments of the Orange Catholic Bible, “*Thou shalt not make a machine in the likeness of the human mind*”, stems from a historical event known as the

⁹ https://dune.fandom.com/wiki/Orange_Catholic_Bible



Butlerian Jihad.¹⁰ Prior to this event, humans fell into reliance on artificial intelligence, or “thinking machines”. This led to the decay of human mental prowess and the collapse of the old spacefaring civilization, followed by a thousand years of slavery to computers. With the rebellion of Serena Butler in 201 BG, the surviving worlds launched a brutal hundred-year-war to liberate humanity from AI. With their eventual victory at the Battle of Corrino in 88 BG, these worlds formed the Landsraad under the auspices of the Butler family, which became House Corrino. By the rise of the Spacing Guild in 1 AG, religious fanatics had wiped out all forms of computers.

¹⁰ https://dune.fandom.com/wiki/Butlerian_Jihad



Technology

Mentats

Following the Butlerian Jihad and the formation of the new Imperium, construction of “thinking machines” carried the penalty of death. In their stead, humans embraced their own mental processes to perform complex functions. For instance, many nobles employ *mentats*, human calculators trained from birth, to perform complex calculations and predict the outcomes of their decisions. Mentats are nearly ubiquitous in the various houses of the Landsraad, most often found in advising positions. They are a valuable, though expensive, part of any house. Delegates looking to employ mentats should note that they require ample, accurate information.

The Holtzman Effect

One scientific discovery that survived the Butlerian Jihad and continues to have a profound effect on the Known Universe is the Holtzman Effect.¹¹ Introduced in the original *Dune* novel, this refers to the repulsion of subatomic particles, and in practice has led to four technological innovations. First, Holtzmann Waves allow for near instantaneous communication across the stars with relative security from unwanted listeners. Secondly, the Holtzman Shield can block fast-moving projectiles and produces a subatomic explosion when hit with a laser, rendering both bullets and laser weapons useless in the Known Universe. Thirdly, suspenders use the Holtzman Effect to create anti-gravity fields, allowing objects, people and even buildings to float. Lastly, and most importantly, the Holtzman Engine allows Guild Heighliners to bend spacetime so that they may travel the vast distances of the universe incredibly quickly.

¹¹ <https://dune.fandom.com/wiki/Holtzman>



Warfare

As a result of the restrictions both of the Bulterian Jihad and the mutually destructive effect of shooting a laser at a Holtzman Shield, warfare in the Known Universe is primarily ground-based with soldiers wielding swords, knives and particle shields rather than projectiles. Great Houses such as House Atreidies who command unwavering loyalty on their homeworlds can raise considerable armies on a limited budget, whereas the better-financed Great Houses, such as House Harkonnen, can hire legions of mercenaries. To effectively exert military power, a House must possess a suitable navy of warships and troop transports; favor from the Guild to transport these ships across interstellar space; and a number of loyal advisors and generals who can produce an effective fighting force. Atomic weapons have also outlived the Buterlian Jihad, as has the doctrine of Mutually Assured Destruction which prevents any of the Great Houses from executing surgical strikes on their adversaries. Each House's "family atomics" are hidden on secret bases and are virtually impossible to detect or eliminate. Though only the Great Houses can own atomics, any faction can use a stone burner, a device which emits blinding radiation or explosions, if they can illegally acquire the atomic fuel. Stone burners can act as anti-personnel devices, blinding enemy troops, or as weapons of mass destruction whose rays cut to a planet's core and destroy it from the inside out. Aside from being highly illegal per the millenia-old Great Convention, planetary destruction of this kind requires that the stone burner be physically present on the surface, making it often unappealing, even to insurgents. And as always, any faction, Great House or not, must bear in mind the overwhelming skill and resources of the Imperial Sardaukar, which are ready to mobilize should any threat present itself to House Corrino.



Assassins

In lieu of traditional warfare, the Great Houses and the Imperial House have often resorted to assassination to secure thrones and eliminate rivals. This is one of the dark points of the feudal system known as the *Faufreluches*. Assassins use *Chaumurky*, liquid poison, to eliminate targets, which can be detected with expensive poison snoopers. Another tool is the hunter-seeker, a needle that flies to a target using suspensors, which can be remotely guided at close range. In cases of extreme rivalry, Great Houses may declare a “War of Assassins”, in which civilians are not to be harmed, and rather assassins, either loyal court members or mercenaries, are employed against the members of the dueling families.



House Atreides

House Atreides is a major house of the Landsraad, one which has been accumulating favor and influence, ultimately culminating in the transfer of stewardship of Arrakis from the Harkonnens to them. Members of House Atreides follow a strict code of self-discipline, which has allowed the house to create one of the most loyal and skilled military forces in the entire universe. The legions of House Atreides have even drawn comparisons to the widely feared Sardaukar, a fact which has drawn ire from the emperor. House Atreides has historically been based on the world of Caladan, however following the transfer of Arrakis into their stewardship, they have relocated to the desert planet. The leader of the Atreides is known as the duke, with the current head being Duke Leto Atreides. In accordance with their strong sense of morality and self-discipline, House Atreides goes to great lengths to govern planets under their control in a just manner.

On Caladan, which House Atreides oversaw for over 20 generations, the House was able to create a strong and stable society while minimizing the need for industrial production, allowing them to keep the planet clean and their people happy. While this style of governance worked effectively on the planet of Caladan, it remains to be seen whether or not it will work under the harsh conditions present on Arrakis.



House Harkonnen

House Harkonnen, led by the infamous Baron Vladimir Harkonnen, were the stewards of Arrakis before House Corrino instructed it be given to House Atreides. Due to this period of solitary control over the invaluable planet, House Harkonnen has become one of the most wealthy and influential houses in all of the Landsraad. This power, directed by the twisted mind of the Baron, has been used to prepare a trap for the sworn enemies of the Harkonnens—House Atreides. This trap, in conjunction with the Emperor Shaddam IV, is the reason Atreides has come into control of Arrakis.

House Harkonnen has a history of pursuing victory at any cost, and their governance follows a similar path; economic quotas must be met at any cost, and insurrection is something to be stamped down ruthlessly. This is how they governed Arrakis for years, allowing them to exploit the planet's resources almost completely. Not only has this plan made the House incredibly wealthy, but it has caused the inhabitants of Arrakis to form a deep distrust of any individual who comes from offworld, and especially any who might come from a house of the Landsraad. This mentality, cultivated by the Harkonnens, means that if another group wishes to control Arrakis, they must contend with heavy resistance and rebellion from the local population unless they can quickly prove themselves as just leaders.

The machinations of House Harkonnen run deep, and their history of control over Arrakis is what has shaped the planet's people and culture into what they are today. Uninhibited by moral obligations, House Harkonnen will do whatever it needs to in order to return to its position above Arrakis, and further cement their position within the Landsraad.



Arrakis

“Body water is your life

And without it you would die

On the desert, the planet Dune” - “To Tame a Land” (1983), Iron Maiden

Geography and Ecology

Frank Herbert’s concept of *Dune* started with a trip to the Oregon Dunes in 1957, where the US Department of Agriculture had planted foreign grasses to secure the “moving sands”. Herbert gained from these efforts an environmental perspective that led him to create the planet Arrakis, a world covered by an ocean of sand. Only in the extreme north of the planet do rocky outcroppings appear, culminating in the Shield Wall, a mountain range which surrounds the Imperial settlements and mining operations. Beyond is the Deep Desert, unobservable from space due to the tight blockade the Spacing Guild has placed on the middle and southern latitudes of the planet. During the Harkonnen semi-fief, Imperial Paleontologist Pardot Kynes¹² constructed ecological laboratories around the Shield Wall to understand what was required to terraform Arrakis, yet with Kynes’ death and the intensification of spice mining, these efforts were abandoned. It should be noted that Kynes’ vision greatly affected the Fremen.

Unbeknownst to the Imperium, they maintain refuges around the south pole where they have cultivated significant plant life (more on the Fremen way of life and ecology below). Even further from Imperial knowledge, deep beneath the surface sands where predatory birds hunt desert mice, the complex life cycle of the giant sandworm unfolds. One of the best-kept Fremen secrets is that this cycle, from the embryonic sandtrout to the desert leviathans that prowl the

¹²

<https://dune.fandom.com/wiki/Arrakis#:~:text=The%20production%20method%20of%20atmospheric,well%20as%20within%20countless%20sandtrout.>



sand ocean, is the source of all spice production on Arrakis, and will vanish if the planet is terraformed to allow for captive water.

The Fremen

In addition to his trip to the Oregon Dunes, Herbert drew from his interactions with Indigenous people of the Pacific Northwest to complete his vision for Arrakis and the *Dune* story. At the time of committee, the Fremen have inhabited Arrakis long beyond Imperial memory, though in their tales they were once driven from a lush world to the desert planet. They have devised a number of technologies unknown to the Imperium, such as “thumpers” and “hooks” which allow them to call and ride the giant sandworms, whose image they worship as *Shai-Hulud*, “The Maker”. Yet their primary success has been through a masterful understanding of hydrology and ecology. Each Fremen “sietch”, which houses around 10,000 individuals, has wind traps that catch the little water in the desert atmosphere and transport it to underground caverns. The Fremen also possess vastly superior stillsuits, contraptions made to recycle the body’s water for days upon end, to those used in the mining colonies of the north. The long-term vision of the Fremen, spanning hundreds of generations, is to transform Arrakis into the paradise they were once forced out of. Evidence of this exists not only in the south, but in the small communities of plants that conserve water around the entrances to sietches in the north. This intergenerational effort is the byproduct, and the driving force behind, the highly disciplined Fremen culture. Much as the Sardaukar were made into the most feared fighting force in the Known Universe due to their exile on Salusa Secundus, the Fremen’s long quest for survival has honed their fighting capabilities beyond measure, unbeknownst to everyone in the Imperium save a few in the Atreidies inner circle. One last point about the Fremen—their stories tell of an individual who will come to them from beyond the planet and bring about their final liberation, and whose gift



of prescience will allow them to attain their long vision of paradise. The Missionaria Protectiva may have worked here...

Recent History

For the past eighty years, Arrakis has been governed by House Harkonnen with the official support of the Imperium. From Giedi Prime, the Harkonnens oversaw the rapid development of Dune's spice-mining capabilities, at the cost of increased conflict with the Fremen. This has led to the Harkonnens amassing immense wealth, rivaling even that of the Emperor, yet has also pushed the rest of the Great Houses to rally behind Duke Leto Atreides within the Landsraad. In turn, in the past few months the Emperor has decreed that House Atreides will take over Arrakis from the Harkonnens. The ostensible reason for this is to convert the planet into the official fiefdom of a respected Great House, after its long history of direct Imperial control and more recently corporate overlordship. Yet to many members of the Landsraad, the timing is suspicious.

CHOAM

Though the above description of the Known Universe emphasized three institutions—the Landsraad, the Imperium and the Spacing Guild—true power lies in the Combine Honnete Ober Advancer Mercantiles (CHOAM). Characteristic of the feudal system, this corporation oversaw all economic activity in the Known Universe. Even the most wealthy of the Great Houses found their economic destinies tied to their influence over CHOAM. This influence is quantifiable through possession of a CHOAM directorship, which is conferred on a noble House when it attains the status of a Great House, only possible through support in the Landsraad. The technicalities of CHOAM directorships are murky, but delegates should know that political



influence in the Landsraad directly correlates to influence over CHOAM, and oftentimes, vice versa. One of the Emperor's most influential powers is to grant or revoke CHOAM directorships at will.¹³

CHOAM (cont.)

CHOAM's most lucrative commodity is the spice melange required by the Spacing Guild. In turn, all decisions regarding the production of spice on Arrakis are subject to intense scrutiny by CHOAM shareholders—all of the Great Houses of the Landsraad and many minor Houses. This was the basis of the Harkonnen presence on Dune as contracted managers of spice production, whose planetary fief remained Giedi Prime. The Emperor's recent decision to transfer control over Arrakis to House Atreides at the end of this contract brings ideals and reality into conflict. One one had, the Atreidies enjoy legal rights and responsibilities as a Great House. Under the ideals of a feudal government, Duke Leto would be free to govern Arrakis as his fief. Yet all of the Great Houses, especially the Corrinos and Harkonnens, profit from the system of exploitation managed through CHOAM. Thus, in reality the demand for spice and the immense wealth generated from it place the Atreides in a tenuous situation with the rest of the Landsraad.

Judge of the Change

One mediating force in the tense situation between the various parties invested in Arrakis is the Judge of the Change, an Imperial official responsible only to the High Council of the Landsraad and the Emperor himself. This official mediates all disputes and accusations of wrongdoing in the transfer of Arrakis from the Harkonnens to the Atreidies. However, their neutrality is limited

¹³ <https://dune.fandom.com/wiki/CHOAM>



by the overwhelming interest of the Landsraad in upholding spice production. More suspiciously, the Emperor's silence over the Atreides' apparent difficulty in securing a foothold on Dune limits the Judge of the Change's authority and, in turn, their ability to ensure a smooth transition.

Water

From the Fremen to the mining towns to the strongholds of Arrakkeen and Carthag, water is essential to life on Arrakis and is a significant source of political power on the planet. In the Atreides capital of Arrakkeen, Duke Leto retains vast reserves for the maintenance of the ducal palace as well as the city itself. The Harkonnens in turn have their own reserves in Carthag, though since they were less interested in ruling the planet than in exploiting it, their water infrastructure is minimal compared to the perfected windtraps of the Fremen sietchs. Water exists deep in the mountains of the planet and in the embryonic stage of the giant sandworm, the sandtrout, which reside beneath the desert sands.¹⁴ Otherwise, the water available for human life north of the shield wall must come from the aforementioned municipal sources, or through smuggled means.

¹⁴ <https://dune.fandom.com/wiki/Arrakis>



Committee Mandate

In response to anxiety among many Great Houses with regard to the newfound power and peril bestowed upon House Atreides, the High Council of the Landsraad has called a session to uncover the true intentions of the Emperor in transferring control of Arrakis and, more broadly, to decide how the planet and its spice production are to be managed in the long-term. Key members of the Atreides, Harkonnen and Imperial courts are present, as are representatives of the various communities of Arrakis, and a few significant parties from around the universe. Crucially, Emperor Shaddam IV has declined to attend the session, sending instead his eldest daughter, the Princess Irulan. Those members with the connections and resources to afford Guild space-travel are present in-person on the Imperial throne world of Kaitan, whereas the informal delegates from Arrakis are joining via hologram from Arrakeen or Carthag, depending on their allegiance. As the representatives of the Great Houses of the Landsraad argue fervently with each other and with the Imperial trustees over the fluctuations in CHOAM and the directorships, they have sent the below named delegates to a breakout session in an ancillary room to resolve some of the tensions at play. The mandate provided by the High Council is:

- Address difficulties in the transfer of Arrakis from the Harkonnens to the Atreidies, and create a plan to stabilize the situation
- Devise ways to ensure that spice production does not fall nor affect CHOAM profits
- Uncover the truth about the Emperor's intentions behind the planetary transfer and report back to the Council



GAUCHOMUN XV

Dune

The ancillary room is flawlessly sound-proofed, and High Council members have sworn not to intervene until a compromise is reached. It will be up to delegates' sole discretion as to whether

to follow the committee mandate, pursue their own objectives, or walk The Way between both.

As you traverse this difficult diplomatic terrain, the Bene Gesserit implore you to repeat the

Litany Against Fear: *"I have no fear, for fear is the little death that kills me over and over.*

*Without fear, I die but once."*¹⁵

¹⁵ https://dune.fandom.com/wiki/Litany_Against_Fear



Current Situation

The Landsraad is in possession of the following information:

- House Atreides, with Paul Atreidies, has just landed on Dune and has set up HQ in Arrakeen. There are reports of crowds of Fremen standing for hours around the palace just to get a look at the young Atreidies.
- The Harkonnens are complying with the plan they laid out publicly—withdrawing from Arrakis. Baron Vladimir Harkonnen is surprisingly relaxed with the plan.
- The Fremen are in a state of indecision and are mustering under a few faction leaders.
- The Landsraad is simply observing and the Spacing Guild is negotiating with both the Imperium and Atreides about spice access. Mining operations are as of right now not under threat.
- House Corrino has made no further public statements regarding the transfer of Arrakis from House Harkonnen to House Atreides, which is somewhat unusual.



Committee Specifics Mechanics

As discussed above, there are two key resources on Dune that delegates need to be constantly aware of: water and spice. They are deeply interrelated on different levels of secrecy. Everyone on Dune knows that water is necessary to maintain spice mining operations and, vaguely, to the mysterious ecological projects sponsored by the late Pardot Kynes. Everyone in the Imperium knows that spice is necessary for interstellar travel (see “The Spacing Guild”), including to transport limited amounts of water to Arrakis from off-world. The Dias has developed specific mechanics for this committee element as follows:

Spice:

The significance of spice, or melange, will be reflected in a committee exclusive mechanic! Spice will be a resource that delegates can compete for through backroom or frontroom. Spice will be counted on a spreadsheet that only backroom can see. In essence, spice serves as a currency that delegates can obtain and spend through backroom. Control over Dune is extremely helpful with obtaining spice. Delegates can do two things with spice, ask for backroom resources or highly accurate information through Mentats.

Backroom Resource:

Accumulation of resources can be accelerated through the spending of spice. Spice can be used to expedite the acquiring of backroom resources, such as ships, weapons, or soldiers. Spice cannot be used to increase the chance of an action being taken. For example, a delegate could purchase a Heighliner using spice, but a delegate could not spend spice to make the Heighliner



crash into a planet. Each delegate must explicitly ask to use spice in the backroom note that the delegate is wishing to acquire resources. It is advised that delegates ask for the spice price before purchasing.

Mentats:

Each delegate has the option to use their spice to purchase information through Mentats. By spending spice, delegates are able to ask their respective Mentats questions about other delegates in committee or other pressing questions. The price of the answer will be determined by the specificity and accuracy that the delegates want. This mechanic will take place through backroom notes. Delegates should either write their question on another page or below the crisis note. The question must be clearly oriented towards the Mentat.¹⁶

¹⁶ For delegates who are Mentats, the same mechanic applies.



Other Information

This committee will be run on paper, and as such, delegates are expected to bring materials necessary for work within the committee. This includes writing instruments, notecards or sticky notes, and writing paper. Other specific information such as operation of note cycles, policy and implementation of joint personal directives, as well as general committee operation will be provided at the beginning of committee.



Character List

Stilgar - Leader of Sietch Tabr

Stilgar is a decisive, intelligent, though deeply cautious man. He is the Naib (leader) of Sietch Tabr, a large Fremen city. He is naturally wary of off-worlders, just as many other Fremen are, however is a loyal and capable ally to those who befriend him. As a leader of the Fremen, Stilgar uses their knowledge of Arrakis expertly, allowing him to hold his own in negotiations with factions which hold far more conventional resources.

Reverend Mother Gaius Helen Mohiam

The Reverend Mother is the representative of the Bene Gesserit to the meeting of the High Council, and embodies the order's traits in almost every aspect. She is secretive, cunning, and a very capable diplomat who has spent time as the emperor's own truthsayer. The Reverend Mother's intentions are often not immediately clear when she takes action, however when she does, the consequences are always profound. Due to her deep connections with the order, she knows about important events before almost any other.

Corda Hollen - Mentat Representative

Corda Hollen is a teacher at a prominent Mentat school, where he trains new prospective students to become the minds who will help advise the leaders of the universe. Corda exhibits the Mentat's signature lightning fast skills of deduction as well as a near boundless well of experience and knowledge. Although his allegiances are seemingly unknown, any who sides with him will find themselves with an extremely capable ally.

Myel Kahale - Spacing Guild Navigator

Myel Kahale is a Spacing Guild Navigator, and the official representative of the Guild at Council. His body, similar to many other Guild Navigators, has become twisted and altered by



the spice environment in which he is kept. Because of this environment however, his mind has expanded to become one of the few in the entire universe capable of long distance space travel. The Guild has a history of using their monopoly on travel to benefit themselves, and they will continue to do so at the meeting, as anything coming on or off of Arrakis must be done with their approval.

Baron Vladimir Harkonnen

The Baron of House Harkonnen can be described multiple ways, but the first traits most notice when they meet him are his cunning, brutality, and ambition. When the Baron sets his mind to accomplish something, there are few in the universe who can come between him and his goal. Additionally, the methods that he uses to accomplish these goals are not bound by morals, meaning that the Baron was always a notable and frightening figure to any who opposed him. Under the Baron, House Harkonnen has risen through the ranks of the Landsraad, and now stands as one of the most powerful and influential houses in the universe.

Beast Rabban Harkonnen

Glossu 'Beast' Rabban Harkonnen is the nephew of Baron Vladimir Harkonnen. Despite lacking his uncle's ability to create long-term calculated plots, Beast Rabban matches and even surpasses his cruelty and personal drive. Beast Rabban was the de-facto governor of Arrakis in the time leading up to the planets' transfer to House Atreides, where he used brutal tactics to improve efficiency and quell rebellions. Where he lacks in intelligence compared to his uncle, he makes up for it due to his increased knowledge of Arrakis and his experience leading the troops of House Harkonnen.



Duke Leto Atriedes

In a time when just leaders were rare, Duke Leto Atriedes stood out from his peers, adopting a leadership style which was compassionate, fair, and consistent. This, combined with House Atriedes' deep sense of honor has allowed him to create an intensely loyal and cohesive house. In part due to the appeal of Duke Leto's ruling style, he has managed to create a cadre of extremely skilled advisors to serve as his assistants, a source of excellent advice he uses to help maintain his rule.

Baroness Kailea Vernius - Head of House Vernius

House Vernius has cemented their place as a major house of the Landsraad through their technological prowess and skills as merchants. Additionally, House Vernius has secured a monopoly on the manufacture of the all-important Heighliners the Spacing Guild uses for interstellar transport. The Baroness of the house, Kailea Vernius is a driven and quick thinking leader, ready to prove herself as she has just recently risen to the head of her house. If navigated correctly, the confusion in the transfer of Arrakis represents an opportunity for the house to tighten their financial grip on the Spacing Guild even further.

Count Hasimir Fenring - Head of House Fenring

A renowned assassin and Mentat political tactician, Fenring was a genetic eunuch and a failed Kwisatz Haderach. A cousin of House Corrino, all accounts agreed that Fenring was the closest friend Emperor Shaddam IV possessed. The Imperial chores carried out by Count Fenring included that of Imperial Agent on Arrakis during the Harkonnen regime. During the transition of power on Arrakis between House Harkonnen and House Atriedes, Fenring served as interim Governor.



Count Heinrich Ginaz - Head of House Ginaz

Count Heinrich Ginaz is the head of House Ginaz. House Ginaz was renowned throughout the Imperium for its Swordmaster School. It was said that to reach the Ginaz School Tenth Level was to be a superior warrior in every way, even more adept than Imperial Sardaukar. Anyone who graduated from the Ginaz School was awarded the title Swordmaster of the Ginaz. Swordmasters were more than mere soldiers and often functioned as chief tacticians, military advisors, and even tutors to the Houses whom they served. Heinrich Ginaz was the Headmaster of the Swordmaster School.

Essas Paymon - Head of House Nebiro

House Nebiro was a Minor House known as traders of holy artifacts and small manufactured items for decoration. Essas Paymon has received orders from a small number of CHOAM directors to directly report back if ever he thinks the manufacturing process of Spice will be disrupted. To do this, Essas will need to manage the favors of the groups struggling for control over Arrakis itself—without being recognized as an informant for the company.

Lady Redolyn Moritani - Head of House Moritani

Led by the ruthless and cunning Lady Redolyn Moritani, the Moritanis do not hesitate to use terror tactics to conquer their enemies, resorting to assassination, sneak attacks, and sabotage. The tactics of which House Moritani used clashed directly with the honorable swordmasters of House Ginaz, which House Moritani clashed with often. Lady Redolyn Moritani ran an assassin training camp, in which spies from all over the known universe came to train.



Duchess Helena Richese - Head of House Richese

There has been a long time rivalry between House Richese and House Vernius to be at the forefront of technological innovation within the Imperium.¹⁷ However, when House Vernius was able to secure a contract with the Spacing Guild to be the sole manufacturer of Guild Highliners in the universe, House Richese was unable to keep pace. The Duchess of the House, Helena Richese must attempt to bring her house back into competition with their historical rivals. One of the major roadblocks she faces in accomplishing this is an adequate source of revenue, as House Vernius' contract has brought them immense wealth. There are few things in the universe which could provide or even surpass the value of the Vernius' contract, however the planet Arrakis happens to be one of them.

Her Excellency C'tair Pilru - Grand Machinist of Ix

The Ix have made their place in the universe by skirting the boundaries of legality with the technology they develop. As they were spared the worst of the effects of the Butlerian Jihad, many technologies utilized by the Ix are as close to old technology as can still be found in the Imperium. C'tair Pilru is here on behalf of the Ixians in order to analyze the potential benefits the Ix might gain through a close connection with Arrakis. Among these benefits might come the possibility of an artificial alternative to Spice, something so potentially valuable that it cannot be passed up.

Gurney Halleck - House Atreides Warmaster

Gurney Halleck was the Warmaster for House Atreides, a position which he used to help build them one of the most competent and capable forces in the universe. Gurney Halleck is patient, capable, and deeply loyal to his house, much to their benefit. Gurney Halleck uses his

¹⁷ https://dune.fandom.com/wiki/House_Richese?so=search



deep knowledge of military tactics and operational knowledge to accomplish his goals, which are supported by leadership as the Atreides Warmaster.

Princess Irulan Corrino

Irulan Corrino was the eldest of the 5 daughters of the Padishah Emperor, Shaddam Corrino IV, and was expected by her father to marry a suitable political rival to continue House Corrino's political hegemony¹⁸. This is due to the laws of the empirium which prevented a woman from ascending to the throne, a fact which Irulan despised. From her position under the gaze of the Padishah Emperor, Irulan must be careful in her plans to ascend to the throne herself, while ensuring that House Corrino maintains their vice-like grip over the universe.

Commodus Thalos - Sardaukar Lieutenant

Commodus Thalos is a Lieutenant in the Emperor's personal military force—the famed and feared Sardaukar. Just as the Sardaukar were famed for their skill, fanaticism, and ruthlessness, Commodus embodies each of these traits in his pursuit of his goals. The Emperor has given Commodus the objective of maintaining House Corrino's authority in the universe, and if given the opportunity, to expand it. In order to accomplish this order, Commodus will need to use his military ties within the Sardaukar as well as his personal experience in espionage and infiltration.

Yandru Noree - Suk Medical School Headmaster

As the representative from the Suk Medical school, Yandru Noree must make sure that his schools' prestigious reputation as the forefront of medical practitioners in the universe can be upheld. In turbulent times such as following the transfer of a planet like Arrakis, the skills of the Suk are always in high demand, something which he knows and has the ability to take advantage

¹⁸ https://dune.fandom.com/wiki/Irulan_Corrino?so=search



of. Although Yandru is a cautious man, the potential opportunities for his school mean that he must take the same risks he is so averse to¹⁹.

Judge of the Change Liet-Kynes

As Judge of the Change, Liet-Kynes holds an important role in administering the shift in control of Arrakis. Due to the authority of a Judge of the Change stemming from the throne of House Corrino, houses of the Landsraad must respect their rulings and have traditionally hesitated to interfere with their business. On Arrakis, Kynes acted as a de-facto representative of the native Fremen people, due to both his knowledge of Arrakis and its people, as well as his knowledge of the wider universe. As Arrakis is shifting hands, Kynes must labor to ensure that the people of his planet are not crushed under the weight of a conflict between houses.

Cal O'Hare - President of Arrakis Spice Mining Guild

Cal O'Hare is the president of the Arrakis Spice Mining Guild, a powerful company based on Arrakis with a near-monopoly on the gathering and processing of the Spice Melange. Under the rule of the Harkonnens, the guild enjoyed being the singular producer of Spice on Arrakis, however due to the Harkonnens' difficult quotas and harsh treatment of labor, the Guild was not able to enjoy the margins they potentially could under another ruler. Due to this, O'Hare must consider who to back in this turbulent time – the Harkonnens, who would surely reward their loyalty, or another house, who might offer an even sweeter deal to the Guild.

Actu Kalihari - CHOAM Press Officer

Of the countless products and services CHOAM is involved in across the universe, none even compare to the value and importance of the Spice Melange. Knowing this, the board of directors has sent Actu Kalihari, the head press representative of the conglomerate. Although

¹⁹ https://dune.fandom.com/wiki/Suk_Medical_School?so=search



Actu's title seems non-threatening, a press officer of CHOAM is a force to be reckoned with, each being masters of propaganda, blackmail, negotiation, and more. Actu has been sent with the understanding that CHOAM's dominant position in the universe must not be disrupted, regardless of the outcome of this meeting.

Moneo Dhuub - Fremen Religious Separatist

As the religion of the Fremen grew and changed over time, and as the Missionaria Protectiva of the Bene Gesserit planted their prophecies into its scripture, a group of isolated Fremen on the edges of the southern mountains retained a form of the original beliefs. This group of Fremen, led by Moneo Dhuub, are solely devoted to the religion they have safeguarded from those they consider to be outsiders, which often even includes other Fremen groups. Their core tenets are based upon three pillars: strength, survival, and fighting. They believe that they are the true inheritors of Arrakis, and want to push all other factions off of the world.

Prince Gar'Na Corrino - Grandson of Shaddam IV

Born under the third daughter of Shaddam IV and a noble from House Ginaz, Gar'Na was subjected to an unique upbringing, as his mother wished for him to spend time learning under the Sardaukar of House Corrino while his father expected him to learn under House Ginaz, leading to tension within the family. As a noble, he was taught the arts of statecraft and literature, although expectations for him to ascend as a leader of either family was nonexistent. As a young adult, Gar'Na is now struggling to find a place for himself in the universe, yet knows one thing—that he wants power of his own.

Thalia Agule - Assassin Mercenary

As a result of the restrictions on conflict enforced on the houses of the Landsraad, assassins are a commonly used tool in the stead of conventional conflict. For Thalia, and many



other mercenary assassins operating under the houses, this presents an opportunity. These mercenaries are not bound by any sense of allegiance for one house or another, but rather drift between whomever will offer the best deal for employment. This is exactly why Thalia is here—to find the next job, which will doubtlessly appear from the conflict brewing around Arrakis.

Pardot Holtzmann - Head of Holtzmann Terraforming Enterprises, a CHOAM Subsidiary

Pardot Holtzmann is a descendant of the original Holtzmann, the scientist and engineer who revolutionized space travel, communication, and defense. Taking after his ancestor, Pardot is an accomplished engineer, although those around him would describe him as ‘eccentric’ at the best of times. Pardot has spent the better part of his career working to revolutionize the way the Imperium terraforms planets, and he has set his eyes on the biggest challenge out there: the planet Arrakis, which has stubbornly refused terraforming up until now.

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