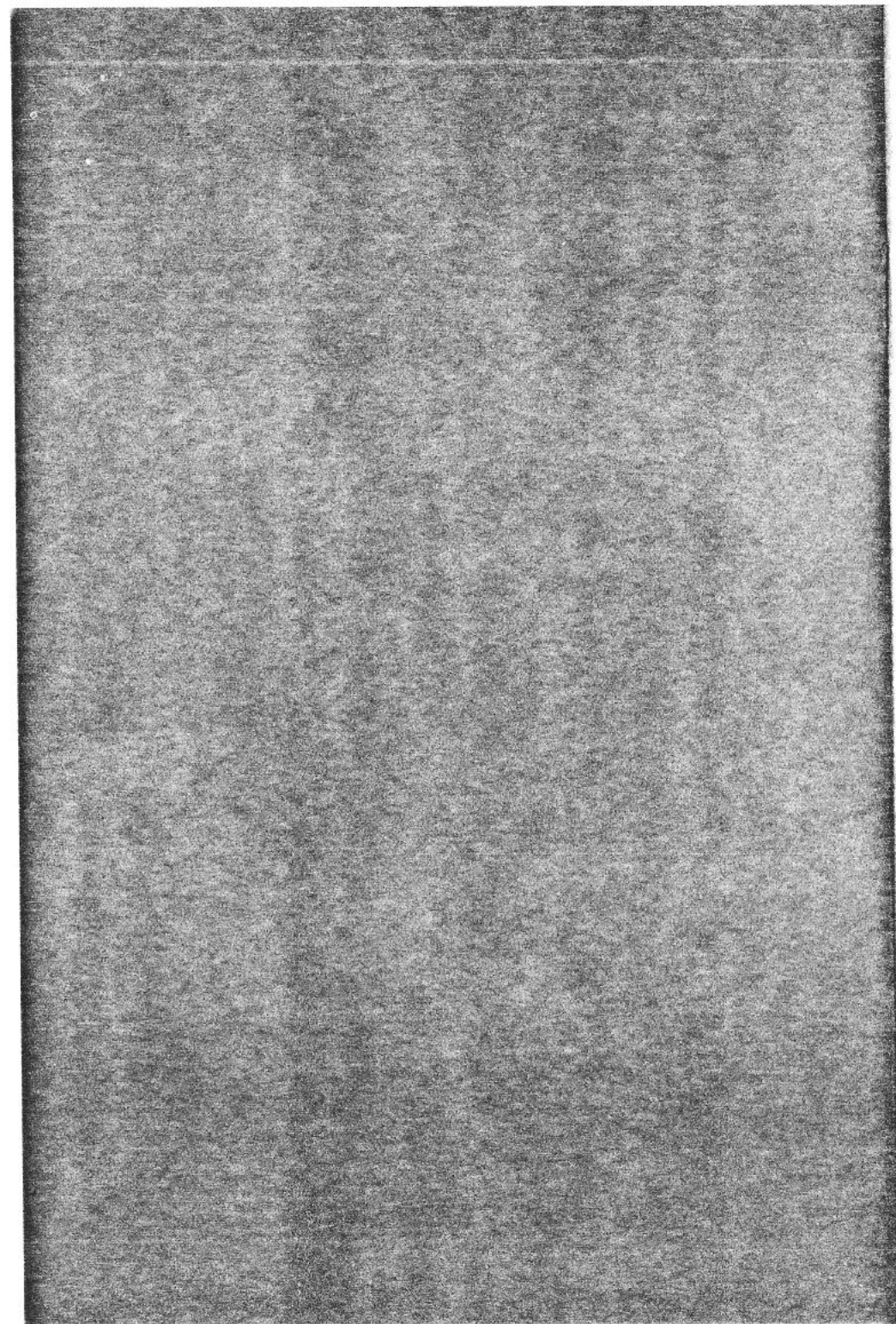




# The Memoirs of Yoram Lazur

IF 012-AP2-M11



**The Memoirs of Yoram Lazur**

**Excerpts from the Personal, Sociological, Historical  
Documents Recorded By  
the Twelfth Empress of Our Great Empire  
and All Planets, Colonies, and Holdings Within Its Dominion**

**As Addressed to Her Daughter,  
the Thirteenth Empress, Heiress to the Apex**

**Level A-3 Clearance Required**

Library of Imperial Literature 1393 A.E. IF042

[The following excerpts have been derived from a larger work generated by Empress Yoram Lazur during the period between Lune Navem 1185 A.E. and Lune Navem 1186 A.E., in accordance with established Imperial policies and directives regarding the transfer of certain classified informations from one dynastic seat to the next. The informations contained within this document have been deemed acceptable for scanning and recollection by Inner Triangle personnel of status levels A-3 and above. — ARCHIVISTS]

*"I am one with these women; the great leaders who lived on the cusp of their time and knew it. They have taught me what it is to follow the Directives of our Empire."*

*Eisen-Hwa Lazur  
Empress (300-400 A.E.)*

#### 4 Lune Navem 1185 A.E.

How to begin?

Daughter, by recording this document I am performing an Imperial duty. I will be speaking to you of confidential matters of state; relating personal history and biographical data passed down to me by the Empress Mare-Ry, my mother; and discussing aspects of Imperial history (more or less chronologically) with the candor due them. Much of this information will be new to you, as it was excluded from your studies during the Time of Preparation. This is as it should be, in accord with the Great Plan. I hope this information will guide your administration.

There is more. Because you and I are not destined by Imperial Directives to meet, this document is my single most intimate link to you. I assure you, my progeny, I feel this deeply.

First, some background

Soon after our ancestor Gortus Lazur established the Imperial Solution, he delivered a speech before the Triforium which has long been a favorite of mine. You may recognize it . . .

*" . . . the end of drudgery and unnecessary toil, of anxiety over the provision of basic needs. All our efforts, the expenditure of generations of energy, have gone into this: a triple edged advance. One aspect, the conquest of space; another, the nurturing of an economy that sets us all free from toil; and last, the ever-evolving Science of Peace towards a more perfect state of humanity."*

[The Words of Gortus Lazur, 13th Edition: screen  
95 — ARCHIVISTS.]

I shall attempt to illustrate the rationale which underlies Lazur's words and informs the structure of our Great Empire.

From your own by now extensive studies, you are aware of the catastrophic economic, political, biological, and interpersonal consequences which unanticipated or premature scientific advances can wreak upon a society.

Your Great Ancestor knew well that the alterations brought by a single technological breakthrough can send shock waves of disruption resounding throughout the scientific, industrial, and legislative communities. He had witnessed the ultimate end caused by unharnessed development of nuclear fusion in the Era of Great Anarchy (beginning in 49 B.E.) and he foresaw the potentially disorganizing consequences of his own creative genius.

The infinite wisdom of Gortus Lazur's Plan allows our Empire to reap the benefits of progress without undue stress to the social fabric. A masterful design, my daughter. The Plan schedules all scientific and legislative developments at an orderly and efficient pace over a 24-dynasty period. The Directives issued to us, the progeny of Lazur, at our Time of Ascension are culled from the Plan schedules. Thus, the administration of each Empress is anchored and informed.

As you are a direct descendent of Gortus Lazur, my daughter, you carry that honorable legacy with you into your own administration.

### 13 Lune Navem 1185 A.E.

(The following information is shared only by the Capulet and the Escherman...)

You have no doubt puzzled over the reasons for the unbroken line of female rulers since the First Dynasty. It is time for explanation.

As you know, the still intense radiation inherent in the atmosphere of the Home World in the Great Lazur's time spawned many mutations; some beneficial, some horrid. This radiation caused a change in our ancestor's own body, even as he worked to establish the framework of his Science of Peace. When at last Lazur wished to produce an heir, it was discovered that deep in his genetic structure a sex-linked disease had formed. This insidious flaw proved fatal to all male offspring. After many unsuccessful attempts, a vigorous female child survived. Lazur named her Thalassa. Empress Thalassa Lazur carried the fatal genetic flaw, and it has been passed from Empress to Empress since. (For a general

background, consult Medisci Inc. Classified Files, codes History xy=xx523; History xx-xx 808 d-h; and Physio-log xy/xy 121.)

Now for elaboration, my daughter. While actively involved in fathering, Lazur identified the decremental effects wreaked by casual parent-child bonds, and concluded it was best that the Imperial line be exchanged from mother to daughter via modern technology, without the complication of physical intimacy.

... CENSORED ...

Lazur established a Board of Reproductive Advisors (RAs) to accommodate the physical needs of each Empress during her administration. (You will soon be introduced to your own advisors, my dear, an occasion you will no doubt enjoy.) In the final year of each 100-year Dynasty, the most experienced and able-bodied among these faithful males is chosen as the Empress's mate. After the brief and ecstatic ritual of conception, the embryo of the future Empress is transferred to the growth chambers on Coporalis, where development and birth can be carefully monitored. An Empress will never see her mother.

This is how your own birthing will proceed, my progeny. And as your life begins, mine will end, precisely at the turn of the century.

**[Entries of Lune Mar have been deemed irrelevant, and removed — ARCHIVISTS.]**

### 15 Lune Solas 1186 A.E.

Today, as I sat under the oxide painted skies of Triskelion and listed your Visi-Alliance schedule, I suddenly recognized my error. With all the theoretical calculations and politico-economic forecasts which I have been recording diligently for you in these past few months, I fear I have neglected to impart to you the human, the personal elements which are a part of your heritage. My apologies. The vagaries of a life spent administrating.

I will begin by capturing for you a relationship of such a delicate and critical nature that its mention is forbidden beyond the walls of the Great Hall of the Triad.

As you know, during the Third Dynasty of Truma-Ry Lazur, the brilliant scientist Escher uncovered revolutionary theories regarding the fabric of our universe and from his discoveries created Mobius Drive and what is now known as the Escher Field (see Official Manual, First Edition, Appendix III). The Mobius Drive is the single advancement which enabled our Empire to achieve its galaxy-wide expansion. What you are unaware of is the dynamics of the relationship between Escher and Truma-Ry.

In the Third Dynasty the Technocracy had not yet established its seat on Hwitrokken. The lecture halls and experimental labs of its scientists were located on the Home Planet, shoulder to shoulder with the Universities of the Imperium where all Empresses traditionally receive their supplementary education.

Truma-Ry's studies at the Institute for Interdisciplinary Imperial Studies and Lazur University's School of Established Knowledge were primarily in Cosmology and Imperial Law. Her remarkably agile mind allowed her leisure time to associate with her contemporaries, some of them Tech undergraduates. Escher was among them, working towards mastery of space physics.

Let me describe to you the events as Mare-Ry did for me . . . They would converge after late night lab classes and thought analysis sessions in a crowded, neon-lit caffeine bar around the corner from Lazar U. — eight or ten of the most promising young minds in the Empire. Craving intellectual sustenance, they plunged deep into profoundly divergent theoretical discussions, surfacing only at dawn to drift back to their respective hostels . . . Even then Escher stood out among his contemporaries. He was brilliant. He tended to dominate those discussions by the sheer intensity of his intellect . . . it was during one of those evenings that, his eyes blazing, he grabbed Truma-Ry's arm. Mumbling something like, "The fabric of space, do you see, the Mobius," he removed a notation sheet from his folder, twisted one end 180 degrees, and clipped its ends together with a small clamp from one of the surgical student's bags. He explained briefly. Truma-Ry comprehended instantly. She must have felt a chilling surge of exaltation. From that point on, I believe she perceived her calling.

Truma-Ry advanced with astronomical speed through her Preparation, and at age 20 reached her Time of Ascension.

She immediately gained access to the Dossier Banks for all Institutions of Higher Imperial Learning. The records gave her final confirmation that the young physics student she had been struck by was indeed the single intellect, the vehicle through which she could achieve her Imperial Directive.

. . . CENSORED . . .

They dubbed the project MOBIUS. Over the next decades, Truma-Ry appropriated unprecedented amounts of Imperial funds to build White Cone, a consummate laboratory. She established Escher as the project's chief scientist, and allowed him virtually free access to any technical, financial, and human resources which he might require. Escher worked with intense dedication for years; experimenting, researching, positing theory after theory, probing his genius. Those who had known him at the university were astonished that this head-strong genius was capable of such channeled, goal-specific work. But in the exquisitely trained Truma-Ry, Escher had met his match.

Now, I agree with our Archivists that Truma-Ry possessed characteristics which proved significant to her success. A keen, critical perceptiveness coupled with an ever so slightly derisive attitude toward the conventional wisdom of her advisors gave her the accuracy and freedom of mind to innovate.

Yet what I believe to be the key has been overlooked, discounted. This will be clear to you after reading the following passage from an obscure memo generated by Truma-Ry some months after her Ascension:

" . . . humility or self-delusion would be simply ridiculous here. Let me state it succinctly. I understand that my impact on those around me, on my peers at the university and my colleagues in the Imperium, is electrifying. I admit a certain pleasure watching my presence stir attention in a room like ripples on a pool. This effect results quite naturally from a certain quality, a passionate 'aura,' if you will, which I can identify in no other way than to call it 'womanly' . . ."

[For the purposes of brevity and consideration to those readers of newly-acquired status level A-3, a portion of the Truma-Ry autobiographical record has been deleted. Please see "Imperial Guidelines for Tactful Censorship," section 44-c — ARCHIVISTS]

"... I know that the success of my prime Directive, MOBIUS, will require an almost super-human intensity of commitment from its principal scientist ... clearly Esch is the primary focus of all my acquired management skill."

Truma-Ry was sensitive but unrelenting, and MOBIUS progressed rapidly through the 50s, 60s, and 70s, protected under the wing of its patroness and unhampered by even the minimal amount of political and social fluctuations of Truma-Ry's Dynasty.

But something was hampering the thoughts of the project's key scientist. Something which you will no doubt find so frightfully absurd that you may discount it ... but suspend your laughter. As Escher's creative genius explored realms of space-time physics previously unfathomed by the human mind, his imagination teased him with possibilities of the existence of a deity! He began to impart these false insights to his theoretical work and the MOBIUS equations, and everywhere saw evidence of LoL.

[The so-called "Lord of Light." See "Dossier on Illegal Practices on the Planet Apollin" — ARCHIVISTS]

Escher's troubles were amplified by the extreme devotion he felt for his charismatic Empress. His moods turned on her slightest word or action (it appears that he even grew jealous of Truma-Ry's Reproductive Advisors.) Escher's brilliant but hyper-sensitive mind was warping under the strain of his conflicting duties to the Empire, his science, Truma-Ry, and this increasing fascination with the godhead. Yet driven on by Truma-Ry's determined management, Escher continued working intensively on MOBIUS development. Inwardly the poor man endured a nightmare of aching guilt.

By the 80s, as MOBIUS neared completion, Truma-Ry sensed the undercurrent of agitation in her right-hand man. From her Personal Memoirs:

"... My illustrious grandfather once speculated that everything the human mind is capable of imagining has its counterpart somewhere in reality ... charming. Now apply this to my Esch. A consummate scientist. More, a creative genius. I have never met one whose work is so powerfully informed by his imagination. I am convinced he perceives no difference between the two. Dangerous: the precarious balance of reality and imagination in a mind so brilliant, so capable ... if the balance tips!

This I understood from the beginning... have worked all these years, orchestrating, channeling the dynamics of his mind towards further progress with MOBIUS ... my poor deluded Esch."

In the Sol Season of 283, Escher shattered. I think I will let the snatches of an Imperial News Bulletin describe the scene, my daughter.

"... a disturbing incident took place today which marred the congenial and productive atmosphere of the 22nd Tri-Planetary Colloquium on Asteroid Mining Policies. As a crowd gathered in the anteroom of the Great Structure on Triskelion to observe the stately procession of our Empress and her learned entourage, our Empire's most respected scientist, Escher, appeared and battered his way through the Imperial guard, knocking several people senseless. What followed remains shockingly inexplicable ... shrieking illegal professions of religiosity ... a confusion of scientific babble and idolatry ... untoward advances concerning Her Royal Person ... our Empress's attendants frozen immobile, unable to determine appropriate action against a scientist who has stood at Her Apex's right hand ... " (The Official Nightly News, 21 Lune Varras 283 A.E.)

How can I express the sadness that this incident evokes, even 900 years after its unfortunate occurrence. In her Memoirs, Truma-Ry left a brief entry: "... His public display made it impossible for me to react discreetly ... I swallowed my anguish like a bitter lump of omnium ... I condemned him on the spot ... "

Escher was subsequently censured without defense by a joint act of the Imperial Triad, stripped of all his status and privileges, his name struck from all past and future records.

Truma-Ry secured full control of MOBIUS. Under her direction, three of the clearest young minds in the Empire, those who Escher had hand-chosen to assist in his laboratory, eagerly took up the project.

[See Classified Archival Disks 121 A-B, "Personal Histories: Doctors Ros-crans, Guld, and Strn." It should be noted that each of the aforementioned scientists, though acknowledged for exemplary clinical technique, has been denied the status of Innovator Emeritus by the Technocracy — ARCHIVISTS]

Escher, disgraced and despondent, lived the few remaining years of his life in isolation. He refused to see Truma-Ry, and she let him steep in his bitterness. It was not until after his death in 293 A.E. that Escher was reinstated by the Imperium to the status of Founding Father. This was a move aimed at capitalizing on the Imperial citizenry's fickle tendency for hero worship, and one which I cannot in good faith condone. I will acknowledge its effectiveness.

Enough of this deflating talk.

You must reflect, my daughter. Appreciate the tremendous single-mindedness with which your eighth-great grandmother approached her directive; she allowed herself no distractions. Truma-Ry was fixated on the coordination and progress of MOBIUS. Yet the daily administration and growth of our Empire suffered little from her periodic absences. All seemed caught up in Truma-Ry's consuming drive. The intensity of her vision created a magnet so powerful as to unify all destinies.

Understand Truma-Ry's singular course, my daughter, and emulate. The time of your own Directive is upon you.

**[During the course of Her Majesty's writing, certain confidential matters of state presented themselves which prompted the Empress to deviate from her socio-historical narrative. Toward this entry, and the entries of 13 and 15 Lune Juras, 19 Lune Siluras, and 1 Lune Juras, the Empire grants its indulgence. — ARCHIVISTS]**

*10 Lune Juras 1186 A.E.*

I received a dispatch via nether radio from my distinguished colleague who hides himself away in the bowels of Hwitrokken's labs, only to venture into the light of day for annual sessions of the Triad. I mean, of course, our dear Escherman.

The communication was brief and rather choppy . . . I don't know whether to fault the source's lack of breeding or the medium. It seems there is a proposal in the wind to establish new Imperial policies and a companion technological development project called INSEM. Something about avoiding mishaps like the Seventh Dynasty. The Capulet reportedly has preliminary evidence of economic benefits.

I am a bit incensed that any research should be going on without my prior knoweldge and approval, but no matter. Should this prove to be more than our Escherman's status quo ravings, it could have significant impact upon the way you run your administration, my daughter. I insisted that both the Escherman and our friend Capulet confer with this office immediately.

*13 Lune Juras 1186 A.E.*

. . . this I think is an appropriate time for elaboration . . . Netherspace Radio (or nether radio) has been a boon to interstellar communications since it was developed in the Eighth Dynasty under Empress Verthandi Lazur.

In the labs of Telcom Inc., a remarkable collaborative effort between an independent thinking machine (ITM), and a leading electro physicist, generated the EVX (electro-voice exchange).

**[See entry of 14 Lune Mar, re: A.G. Bel — ARCHIVISTS]**

As you know, the device converts spoken words from their analog form into a digital one. Once stored, these digitized voice codes can be manipulated in the same manner as text, with no detectable distortion in the processed voice.

For clear and efficient communications, the ITM senders which handle EVX Mailbox Terminals for Netherspace Radio do manipulate messages to a certain extent, functioning as experienced editors for harried business persons and diplomats who have little time to craft a message. Primarily due to human error, there exists a 7% potential for misinterpretation by the EVX system.

This is why I questioned, in the back of my mind, the content of the 10 Lune Juras nether radio communication.

*15 Lune Juras 1186 A.E.*

I have been taken by surprise by a phenomenon once known as "aging." At the time of this writing I am 86 years into my service to our Great Empire, and suddenly I notice the minutes, hours, and days flow by at an alarmingly inflated rate.



I am concerned. My Reproductive Advisors acknowledge that they have witnessed a gradual dimming of my natural urges. Feelings of futility, uselessness, and unreasonable existential doubts have invaded my late-night thoughts like a black wave. I feel the creep of tiredness, though I know the actual bodily processes associated with that thing called aging have been non-existent since the First Dynasty.

I speculate that these feelings may be evidence of a different psychobiological lifespan latent within me. As you now know, when Gortus Lazur initiated the 100-year cycle for dynasties and empresses, he manipulated certain chromosomes controlling the aging process. This was established in the Escherman and the Capulate lines too (much to my contemporaries' consternation). At least they won't outlive me.

### 31 *Lune Juras 1186 A.E.*

The "Instructions" arrived today from Hwitrokken. The text began insubordinately enough: "May we be permitted to suggest . . ." Indeed!

I should "restructure" my relationships with my Reproductive Advisors! I should undertake certain daily personal habits which I will not even dignify by recording here! I should note that their "exact and accurate practice" is vital to INSEM, that I should not alter them for any reason; "nor at the behest of any person whosoever, no matter his or her apparent credentials, with the singular exception of the Escherman." And when my Time of Mating arrives, I shall be inseminated with an artificial, manufactured, genetically engineered seed! My daughter, the outrage!

And more! The communication posits that the sweeping disturbances of the Seventh Dynasty came about solely because of a misalignment in the genes of then Empress Onix'Ra Lazur, and that INSEM could irradiate the possibility of another such setback to the Great Plan. (A note was attached referring me to the Free Market Central's Interactive Simulations, outlining probable ensuing devastation.)

Thirdly, the slowness afflicting my physiology in recent decades (how did this information leak?) is indeed due to a latent biological schedule buried deep within my genetic structure. A "slight discrepancy" in the techniques used by Lazur to install the 100-year cycle in his progeny would simply

worsen over several generations, weakening the line and the vitality of our Empire.

I cannot go on.

I placed a three-branch communication to Hwitrokken and Cobol. The outcome: funding and human/ITM resources have been allocated for feasibility studies. A subsequent conference on INSEM findings has been slated for Lune Eadem of this year. I will retire my anger until that time.

### 16 *Lune Siluras 1186 A.E.*

Our Great Father was able to realize something which had altogether escaped notice by those embattled superpowers and smaller partisan regimes scattered across the Home Planet in the period just before The Great Anarchy (see Official History Revisited; vol. XXI, "Technology in the Feudal Era".) It was quite simple. The Pre-Empire period referred to as the Information Revolution made it possible to buy many kilobits of information (in the archaic form of computer memory "chips", of course) for the equivalent of a few credits. They had it at their fingertips all the time, but couldn't see . . . It was the economy of computers which made our Empire possible.

Lazur's attempts to create more workable (and cheaper) modern languages for his computers involved (by necessity) a deeper and deeper examination of the logic of problem-solving itself.

He was able to develop a new type of computer language to give computers the capacity for learning. This essentially involved manipulating instructions which interact creatively *within* the machine, generating outcomes which in turn interact *with* the machine itself. The results were a machine which could dialogue openly with a human operator (a "questioner"): learn from the dialogue, generate "plausibilities" which if offered to the questioner, and again learn from the questioner's responses. Fascinating, as you know, in its economic potential.

Soon mass production brought the cost down to where AI terminals were readily available. An ordinary citizen could approach any terminal and describe in very informal terms his needs or the results which he sought, and the system would query him further until a solution was struck.

... CENSORED ...

Lazur began the embryonic stages of ITM (independent thinking machines) when he established Neurotech Inc. in 53 A.E. Through the subsequent reign of Thalassa Lazur, some significant inroads were made into the complex problem. Then MOBIUS overtook the next Dynasty, superseded all other projects housed under the auspices of the newly established Technocracy, and abruptly halted further ITM development.

Glutted with revenues from the sales of MOBIUS-equipped liners, freighters, and personal craft, the Technocracy established its own headquarters on Hwitrokken and under the Directive of Eisen-hwa, moved full-tilt into ITM development. By the close of that dynasty, the financial exigencies of Independent Thinking Machines equipped with the capacity for reflection and self-generated decisions, were startlingly clear ...

#### 19 Lune Siluras 1186 A.E.

The incidents of the last month have brought to mind long-buried memories. Let me enlighten you as to the dubious nature of our honorable friend Escherman.

I must admit, that shaven head of his contains a certain critical and analytical capacity ... which he uses in continual attempts to present an alarmingly skewed model of the world. I have always suggested to him that he have his mental perception examined for shallowness. He is certainly ambitious — eager for personal attainments which go quite beyond the objective status which I feel is appropriate to his role.

I have encountered this man, impassioned with a "new and dramatic breakthrough which will turn the tide of" whatever.

He fumes like a rabid woolrat. Oddly enough, because the consensus on trivial issues among officers of the Inner Triangle tends to surge from one extreme to another, our dear Escherman often turns the overnight hero. This shamefully inflates his ego, of course.

How his immediate staff must suffer. Thank the Apex that these tribulations remain transparent to the Imperial citizenry!

#### 19 Lune Ora 1186 A.E.

"We must begin with one computer 'mind,' creating a new language of symbols which arm that mind, enabling it to manipulate information, then ideas, then reality. Finally, a breakthrough occurs ... through the barrier of consecutive thought into something ... akin to awareness."

[Excerpt from a speech delivered by Gortus Lazur at the groundbreaking ceremonies for Neurotek's AI research labs. — ARCHIVISTS]

I have always felt the theory with which the Great Apex raised the infrastructure of our Empire might apply equally to humans and to the evolution of society. History bears me out. The current enlightenment and comfort of the Race reflects twelve Dynasties of progress measured a step at a time.

Since the moment when Lazur established the Apex, Imperium officials, administrators, technocrats, and socio-historians, all of us within the Inner Triangle had thought that the most awesome challenge ever facing our Empire was the forging of an Imperial civilization into the farthest reaches of the universe ...

We were naive to think so, my daughter ... the most taxing assignment to generations of citizens from those early years until the Seventh Dynasty (600 to 799 A.E.) was to *resocialize*; to learn to live first with AI, and then among the ITMs.

These evolutions in computer technology did not in themselves account for the pervasiveness of computers in everyday life. Parallel to the creation of the technology was a steady evolution in the way people interacted with machines in general, and specifically with ITMs. Gradually humans began to identify more closely with the non-human entities; seeing them less and less as convenient mechanisms, until

the machine's behavior and its well-being became internalized. An excellent example of this today is the rapport between a citizen and his individual space craft.

(See Escherman Directive Study 48-24, tapes M27 and M29; "The Average Citizen and His Ship: A psychological Study" for background on this remarkably profitable relationship. — ARCHIVISTS)

Citizens of our Empire, following Imperial directives, eventually developed the recognition that they give the ITMs as . . . counterparts.

I am often entertained by our citizenry. They see themselves as autonomous beings: their thoughts their own, their situations freely chosen, their actions individual and self-generated. And with billions of them populating every planet of this Empire, they are still prepared to believe that each is unique, in no way mere dots in a swarm. How very strange this is. How do they still maintain this notion when we live each day shoulder to shoulder with the ITMs?

#### 29 Lune Ora 1186 A.E.

It was not until the Seventh Dynasty of Onix'Ra Lazur (tagged by most Imperial historians as "Onix'Ra the Unclear") that ITM terminals were fully incorporated into the everyday life on each planet of the Empire. How unfortunate that this final great achievement went unnoticed in the turmoil which followed.

A brief search through your Official Freemarket Documents and Sociological Reports generated by the Hwitrokken Space Safety Administration of that time reveals disturbing evidence. With increasing regularity, cities, cultural seats, institutions, or groups of individuals considered vital to the interests of our Empire veered from their appointed functions.

In our Empire's final, concentrated burst forward to achieve the transition to its current ITM-based ecoculture, the guard had been dropped. Security systems slackened — the Space Safety Administration on Hwitrokken, the Freemarket's Strong Arm Securities, and the Imperial Guard serving the Emperium (which had been in place since the time of Our Great Apex). And sadly, my daughter, the diluted capacities of a genetically flawed ruler, Onix'Ra Lazur, the bad seed

among so many worthy Empresses, further eroded Imperial vitality. A vile criminal element, long dormant, reared its ugly head and struck our flourishing Empire. Black Market sympathizers inculcated key corporate monopolies (see Space Safety Administration Transcripts, vols. MXI to MXIV; "Mercenary Supplies Corp."; "Hedonistic Services, Inc."; and "Hybrid Foodstuffs ne Agricorp" for background.) Craven worshippers of the false deity, the so-called Lord of Light, began soliciting openly in the streets of many Imperial cities.

The situation on several Imperial Planets (Denieves and Apollin most severely), went beyond the point where social technicians could manipulate any appreciable change.

... CENSORED ...

It took the early ascendance of the next Empress, Alexindra (The Old One) in 681 A.E. to shake the Empire from its chaotic path. Alexindra was a domineering and hawkish administrator. She unleashed an army of mercenaries to purge the criminal element from our cities and drive it to Denieves where it remains today, contained and monitored, a necessary component of society. Likewise the worshippers of LoL were driven to the Planet Apollin. After the furor died, the Empress wisely retired her army to Wereguld, a thoroughly dreary little planet, where they could wage war to their hearts' content.

Alexindra's later administration was distinguished by astute bargaining among the great monopolies, which firmly established the system of trade and free enterprise existing today.

#### 1 Lune Eadem 1146 A.E.

That our meeting was held in the sterile office of Hwitrokken's main laboratory was merely a coincidence. Yet I could not help but jokingly reproach the Escherman for stacking the deck in his favor. He was not amused.

My personal attendant, Number Six, brought refreshments and filled the Escherman's cup; a service he did not acknowledge. I felt embarrassment for Six, who out of habit stood waiting a moment for thanks, and then withdrew. I took my cup to a window opening and looked out at the vast cityscape, its tall conical buildings and shining white expressways. A longing gnawed at me for the moodiness that seasonal changes bring to Triskelion. I shrugged it off.

listening to the discussions that went on behind me and nodding periodically.

For one so comfortably settled on home turf, the Escherman (poor fellow) seemed ill at ease and evasive. I attribute this to a technocratic upbringing, typically deficient in the interpersonal nuances of diplomacy. He whipped out his abbreviated psychobiological report at such a pace that even the ITM stenographer appeared to experience some difficulty transcribing. The gist of his Impact Study is that INSEM would prove overwhelmingly beneficial in all respects.

My colleague's peculiar behavior, however, made the whole question of ITM involvement in the clinical insemination procedure needlessly mysterious. I could not get clarification.

Our most honored Capulet presented his usual flawless analysis. No doubt hoards of his well-dressed little FRAs [for financial research assistanst. — ARCHIVISTS] had been scurrying around the vaults on Copal for months to prepare each detail of that exquisitely lengthy study. Our Capulet simply oozed pleasure when he was able to conclude "beyond a shadow of a doubt," INSEM's cost effectiveness, not only to this administration but for the next 700 years.

Finally, ITM Central coalesced and submitted its recommendation in a single line of display:

THE FUTURE OF OUR EMPIRE REQUIRES THAT  
WE PROCEED WITH INSEM

I accepted the recommendation and gave my seal to the necessary documents; the Escherman and the Capulet followed suit. (I must admit relief that throughout this meeting I had maintained the professional manner dignifying my office; checking my initial anger and skepticism. This prudent move saved me from looking the fool.) Yet I am still in the dark regarding . . .

[The following entry was originally left undated. It has been posited that writing occurred on or near 3 Lune Navem, 1186 — ARCHIVISTS]

Looking back at the August 1 meeting, I can see that there was nothing *not* said, *not* made plain. I simply misinterpreted the ITM-processed data and the final recommendation. In retrospect, the Directive is clear. You will understand this, my daughter. INSEM will proceed as scheduled.

fin

## Appendix A

The Imperial Year has been divided into ten Lunes (months), each containing three weeks of twelve rotas (days) each. This thoughtful balance was arrived at by Gortus Lazur in the First Dynasty, and since that time has effectively served our Empire.

### The Imperial Lunes (months)

Lune Lazur  
Lune Juras  
Lune Siluras  
Lune Ora  
Lune Eadem  
Lune Navem  
Lune Mar  
Lune Solas  
Lune Varras  
Lune Photon

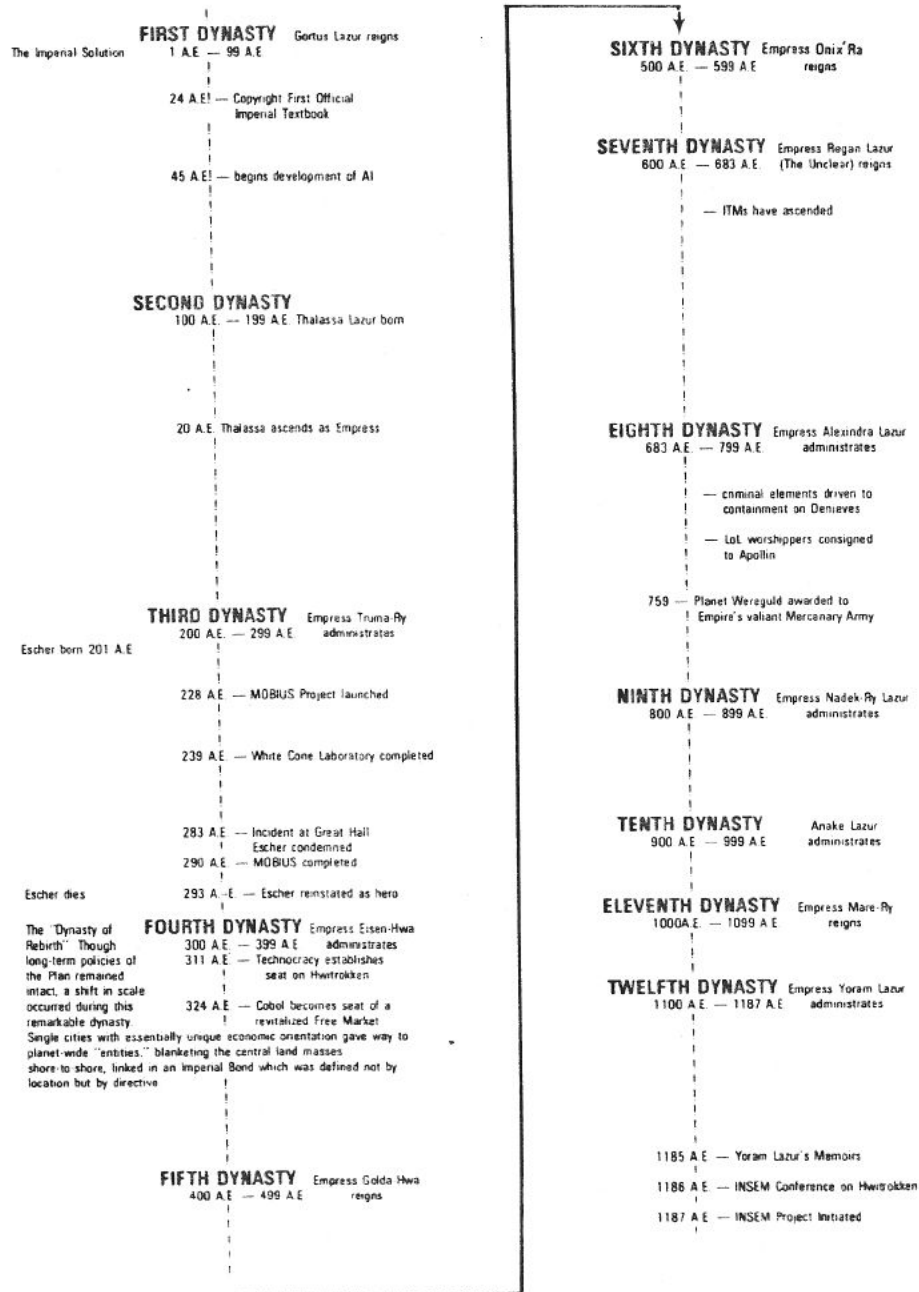
### The Imperial Rotas (days)

Lazarot  
Diro  
Tiro  
Quarot  
Quinrot  
Sexrot  
Septot  
Octot  
Noverot  
Decerot  
Antiro  
Myrot

### The Imperial Seasons

Hel  
Cal  
Sol

## Appendix B An Imperial Time Line



Written by Wendy Peterson  
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