

# The Leung Empire

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The Leung Empire is what remains of the former Empire of Chung Kuo, one of the factions that first opened, and colonized many of the stars in this cluster. After the War of Dissolution, several rebellions, and a few skirmishes with the remaining forces of their post-war enemies (The Sultanate, and the Consolidated Mining Company), the Empire was dramatically reduced in power and size. Emperor Leung has managed to retain control of four of the original Empire's systems, and kept his industrial and economic machine going despite the devastating losses of ships during the war. A series of huge domed cities and industrial complexes in Tau Tsun, the sub sector capitol, have kept the Empire going, though it has cost its citizens dearly. Tau Tsun uses the cheap material and Human resources of Kronholm and Li Po for the basis of its manufacturing industry. Harsh taxes kept the industries producing ships, and the shipyards in Kronholm, then later more shipyards built in Xu Xuan continued to supply ships for the Imperial fleet.

But skilled crew have been harder to find. Consequently, the Imperial fleet usually has the advantage of numbers, but its officers are trained in cookie-cutter academies. They display little innovation, and follow by-the-book strategies in combat. The ships of the Emperor's fleet are manufactured by an embittered and poorly paid workforce, using mass-produced parts from low-grade materials, and so the quality of the Imperial fleet reflects that quantity-over-quality approach. Ships tend to break down frequently. They are also less well shielded, underpowered, and less well armed than others in the cluster. They rely on older designs such as the original Dreadnaught-class Corvette and the Tariq-class PatCom. Even though these vessels are relatively poorly armed compared to today's Heavy Corvette, or Advanced PatCom, the sight of dozens of Dreadnaught-class Corvettes slowing out of LDS together for an attack run has been the last sight of many a foe. Capital ships tend to be named after Chinese provinces back on Earth, with other ships named after cities, rivers and other geographical features in Asia's regions. Unfortunately, naming schemes seem to have been a low priority, and so the limited names are recycled and often use numerical suffixes to distinguish them from others with the same name. Many of the newer ships in the Emperor's fleet simply bear numbers. Despite the weaknesses displayed by the individual ships and crews, do not assume that this fleet is weak. The vast numbers of vessels, and the tried and true formations and attack plans have proven successful in many an engagement, and have kept the Empire at its current strength for almost a hundred years.

Imperial research laboratories hidden in asteroid bases in Xu Xuan are working on new power sources and new containment materials for the Imperial fleet, as part of the Emperor's plan to be free of his dependency on neutronium from the Sultanate. Freedom from dependency on the Sultan's neutronium would change the economy of the entire cluster dramatically, and free the Empire to produce ships at an even greater rate. Another of the Emperor's pet projects has to do with genetics and longevity research. These frightening laboratories can also be found (though not easily) in that system. Into these biogenetic research labs have disappeared many a shipment of criminals, political undesirables, or refugees whose only crime was poverty.

The Emperor is an unnaturally old man, more than one hundred and sixty years old. He has maintained his grip on life through genetic and pharmaceutical innovations to keep his biochemistry functional. Emperor Leung may be physically weak, but he remains a clever leader, a strong politician, and a wise strategist. He does not allow emotions, passions or ego to influence his battle plans. He remains cool, calculating and patient in all of his plans. He has trained a number of very loyal governors to run the systems of his Empire in a similarly draconian style. He relies heavily on his right hand man and advisor, Magistrate Radicz. The Magistrate is feared throughout the sector as one of the most ruthless and cunning men in political power. Like the Emperor himself, this ambitious man would like to restore the empire to its former strength. In fact, he and his war council are secretly following a long-range plan devised by the Emperor to gain control of the entire Middle States cluster. He works closely with the Emperor on all the efforts of the Empire, but Radicz continues to harbour a strong hatred toward those systems that broke away from the Empire after the War of Dissolution. His current objective is to bring Emerald back under the control of the Empire. What they don't know is that Kronholm is growing increasingly unhappy under the Empire's rule. The people of Kronholm have always felt that they bore the brunt of the Empire's rebuilding efforts, and they are close to revolting. Put simply, if the CMC were to attack Kronholm to "liberate" it from the Empire, it is unlikely that the forces native to the system would put up much resistance.

Although they are not currently at war with anyone, they are manufacturing warships at an accelerated rate in preparation for an assault on the Emerald Alliance. They are openly hostile to most ships of the Dead Reaches, and have a large bounty on, and will instantly attack any vessels belonging to or associated with Golliger's Privateers. Any pirates or mercenaries preying on commercial shipping in the Empire will immediately earn the hostility of the Imperial fleet. The Empire and the Sultanate are currently not involved in open hostilities, but an unofficial state of war; a

'cold war' of sorts exists between these two factions. Proxy armies, mercenaries, spies using the disguise of corporate traders, and independent scouts all fight a continuous low grade war just below the threshold of open full-scale conflict. If a vessel of the Sultan's fleet were to encounter an Imperial vessel in otherwise unoccupied, neutral space, hostilities would most likely ensue, as these two powers have maintained a very uneasy truce over the years.