

Universalism

A major religion in the [Abwehran Star Empire](#)

Introduction

Developed long ago in the Great Conflict Era, Universalism was a the concept of the first Astronomers of [Abwehr](#). They began to ask questions at what they saw through their telescopes. Through their eyes, everything they witnessed was a living, breathing thing. Jaspis Prime burned at the heart of their system, providing warmth and energy for all under its gaze. Jaspis IV was the great protector, keeping the dangers of the system away from its young charges. Witnessing the wonders of their system, how could early Astronomers not think of it as pieces of a living thing. Universalism didn't truly become a religion however until one hundred years after the development of the first telescope. An astronomer calling herself, Gertrude, began to speak of the Universe as a creature of consciousness. How else could life exist on Abwehr? The first church of Universalism was created in GC 63 in the small subterranean town of Stowbeck Springs (now known as Gertrudberg). It has since evolved into one of the largest religions on the planet with a variety of different sects and ways of thinking.

Ideology

Dogma and practices of Universalism.

Aether Technology

With the basic premise of Aether Technology being pulling energy from a different universe and using it to power technology in this universe, Universalists of Abwehr have garnered a strong disdain for such devices. The act of introducing energy from another universe into this one is considered to be like introducing a foreign chemical into ones body: a dangerous and even fatal affair. Because of this¹⁾, Aether technology is banned from the territorial space of the [Abwehran Star Empire](#).

Cycle of Reincarnation

In Universalism, it is believed that all life and sources of energy are connected in this cycle of death and reincarnation. This ideology was developed during the first witnessed supernovae. Just as the supernova was the death of a star and creation of others, so too was the death of living beings. With the death of each body, the soul would return to the Universe while the body would stay to aid in fertilizing the world.

But the Universe couldn't keep using the same souls for the same beings. Instead, it is believed that a person's deeds enabled a soul to be 'promoted' higher. A sentient being who had a good life, could in fact

jump up in ranking to be the living energy of a celestial body. In this, the highest form in the reincarnation cycle is a star, the source of life-giving or life-destroying energy in a system. The lowest observable level in the Abwehran's mind is a creature known as the Charec worm, an insect that only seems to destroy and no considerable contribution to life other than destruction.

Holy Scriptures and Documents

In Universalism, there are very few holy scriptures. The vast majority of holy documents are ancient star charts that have been created since the religion's creation. Each year, new star charts are created by the Star Readers to better understand the changes and evolutions of the mighty Universe. In ancient times, these star charts were used to divine any commands or desires the Universe willed upon the followers of Universalism. Now a days, the tradition carries on in the form of exploring the Body of the Universe. It is the hope of Star Readers to find the source of the Universe's consciousness in the future, since some sects believe that finding the Consciousness will lead the Abwehran people to enlightenment or to take their rightful place as Custodians of the Universe.

Living Universe and Sects

While all sects of Universalism agree that the Great Universe is a living consciousness, they all differ in their interpretation of what the living consciousness is and/or the role of sentient creatures in the Universe. Does the Universe observe its creations? Does the Universe even know sentient beings exist within it? It's hard to know and because of this difficulty, many sects of Universalism have developed.

Notable Sects

- Kyr'zan: The Kyr'zan Sect of Universalism is actually the second largest sect. Ideologically, the Kyr'zani believe that the Universe is a child-like entity with no knowledge of the beings it carries or the dangers of those from outside. Many believe that it is Abwehr's responsibility (and possibly the other species of the universe) to protect the Universe from invaders from outside its body. Many Kyr'zani have been known to join the Imperial [Weltraumflotte](#).
- Mek'sharn: The Mek'sharn sect is the smallest the least popular of Universalism sects. This is mainly because of the cynical view taken with the relations between Universe and Sentients. The Mek'sharn believe all sentient creatures are parasites inhabiting the body of the Universe with some being symbiotic and others being harmful. The judges are still out on whether Abwehrans are harmful or symbiotic.
- Jan'trun: The traditional and largest sect, the Jan'trun believe that the Universe actively created sentient species as a matter of self-exploration. Using the souls of reincarnation, the Universe creates a variety of species to observe their actions in an effort to better understand itself. Jan'trun often calls for more self-reflection than active worship of the Universe as a method of aiding their creator. After all, if a soul learns to better understand itself, they could pass on their experience as they pass to their next life.

Offices of Universalism

While Universalism followers rarely commune with one another to worship, they are unified in purpose and celebration. Because of this, Universalism has developed several Official Positions to organize records and lead services.

Archivist

Keepers of the Star Charts, Archivists are essentially librarians for the Great Observatory located upon the peak of Heiligberg. They can also be found in Branch Libraries across the Jaspis System and Imperial Territory.

Star Readers

Ministry leaders and the first Astronomers in Abwehran History, Star Readers follow the call of the Universe drawing their gaze to its brilliance. They are responsible for creating new star charts every year and leading the few communal celebrations and ceremonies of Universalism. Ironically for a religious leader, Star Readers must be well versed in Astrophysics.

Star Wanderers

A relatively new position to the religion, Star Wanderers are Star Readers who have elected to go out into the Universe to commune with its great wonders. Often traveling by public transportation or purchasing their own tramp freighters, Star Wanderers are often a mix of Astronomers and another trade to sustain their travels. It is not uncommon to find a Star Wanderer working for their transit as Cooks, Mechanics, Navigators, or even Merchants.

Holy Places and Events

Locations and times of religious importance.

Celebrations

Events of Religious significance.

Day of Returning

It is the day when the Universe reincarnates a soul into a new form. While Universalists cannot celebrate

this for everything (such as stars and creatures), they can celebrate the rebirth of Abwehrans. In essence, the Day of Returning is a Universalist celebration for birthdays. But it is only celebrated during the years of infancy and childhood when the soul is still fresh from reincarnation. Adult Universalists do not celebrate their Return.

Passage to Reincarnation

Universalists tend to celebrate death as much as they do life. The death of the body isn't to be feared, but rejoiced since a soul is returning to the Universe. Many Universalists tend to relinquish their bodies to fire so that their ashes can be spread from the mountain peaks of Abwehr, but some sects actually have their bodies turned to fertilizer which is used to create Family Gardens. These gardens are used to grow a variety of plants and symbolizes the process of reincarnation (death leading into a new life).

Days

Times of religious significance.

Coming of Gefahr

In ancient times, Gefahr was seen as an omen of doom and famine that would rise in the Abwehr sky. Many Universalists would gather into safe havens every year on the 10th day of the fourth month during the year's Second Quarter. During this time, Universalists do a variety of things to celebrate life and ward off misfortune. Some more spiritualistic Universalists will pray while many others may spend their time living their lives to the fullest.

Day of Nightly Paradise

Once every ten Abwehran years, Abwehr passes behind the gas giant Jaspis IV where all light from Jaspis Prime is eclipsed. With only the light of the stars, Nightwalkers are actually able to remove their goggles and walk upon the Surface without fear of blindness. Lasting only for a full day, the Day of Nightly Paradise was considered to be an unholy day for many Surfacers religions during the Great Conflict Era.

Places of Worship

Locations of religious significance.

The Great Observatory

The first mountain top Observatory on [Abwehr](#), the Great Observatory is home to the Star Chart Library and is often visited by followers on pilgrimage. It is still an active Observatory, but also functions as a Library and a Museum on the History of Astronomy/Cosmology. Many Star Readers reside here during the times they are recreating star charts.

OOO Notes

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¹⁾
along with other reasons

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