

Appendix (I)

Technical Note

As touched upon in the Introduction, the challenges presented in writing *Triumph* exceeded considerably, those of *Redemption* and *Quest*, the two previous episodes in the Ska-Rakasian saga.

The first two stories have a relatively simple structure, each following one group of characters through a series of events, to an eventual climax; furthermore, they are set entirely in alien environments and so there can never be any argument as to the accuracy or otherwise, of any statement made in the text. *Triumph* on the other hand, not only contains a number of separate but concurrent plot-lines but much of its action takes place on Earth, in the real world.

Wherever references are made to places or things that actually exist, I have endeavoured as much as possible, to maintain realism and accuracy. For example, all the locations in Korea that I have mentioned may be found where I have placed them and, generally speaking, fulfil the functions I have attributed to them. Yongbyon really is a nuclear research establishment and, in October 2006, North Korea conducted a highly controversial if not particularly successful, atomic bomb test. The reasons for the less-than-satisfactory result have never been revealed but it is quite feasible that the problem is attributable to poor design of the fissile core elements; a difficulty solved within minutes by Dalek Caan.

Taechon is the site of a 200-MW reactor installation designed ostensibly, for electricity generation but capable also, of producing large quantities of weapons-grade Plutonium. Under the terms of the 21 October 1994 Agreed Framework, North Korea agreed to cease development at this site and upon another, 50-MW reactor, to supplement the existing 5-MW unit at Yongbyon. In 2002 it was determined by inspectors of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) that work at the two sites had, in fact ceased but later, in 2005, a Japanese report suggested that construction at Taechon had resumed, possibly covertly, in an alternative, subterranean site.

The countryside around the vicinity of Yongbyon is described as it appears, courtesy of Google Earth. The forest where Khellan made the first shuttle landing may be seen to the west, while to the south lies the open barren plain where Caan first assembled his Dalek Legions after retrieving them from the Void and later, *Sura Kara-Szen* made her touchdown.

Unfortunately the infamous Camp 22, former workplace of the unpleasant Sangkeub, Park Gil-Dong also exists and is to be found in the location stated. If the testimony of escaped North Korean dissidents may be believed, it is a place in the worst traditions of the Stalinist Gulags or the Nazi death-camps of the Second World War, where inmates are routinely beaten, tortured and murdered, as well as being subjected to cruel and

inhuman experiments. Indeed, while researching information for *Triumph*, I found it hard to believe that such horrors remain a contemporary reality in the early 21st Century.

To my knowledge, I have taken only two liberties with realism in North Korea; the Command Bunker beneath Kim Il-Sung Square in Pyongyang is my invention although, in reality, such an installation easily could exist. The other is a minor detail slipped in to add a touch of comedy; I do not know for sure that there are speed-cameras lining the Reunification Highway but there probably are!

The USS *Iwo Jima*, pennant number LHD-7, is a *Wasp*-class amphibious assault ship and she was commissioned on June 30th, 2001. Details of her dimensions, speed, machinery, and armament are true to life. She carries a mix of aircraft dependent upon mission but typically, she would embark the AV-8B Harrier attack aircraft and AH-1W Super Cobra helicopter gun-ships as described. In addition to these she would also carry another eighteen helicopters, made up of Sea Stallions, Sea Knights and Hueys. These are heavy transport aircraft designed to carry Marines into combat but I have not deployed them here as, with the complete breakdown of communications that exists during the Battle of Seoul, co-ordinating a Marine landing to integrate successfully with the US Army and South Korean forces, would be next to impossible.

At the time of writing, USS *Iwo Jima* is commanded by Captain Robert P. Irelan U.S. Navy and, if Captain Irelan should ever read these pages, I hope that he will forgive me for sinking his fine ship!

Other details, such as calculations for journey times at above-light-speeds over distances of light-years, I have also tried to keep accurate, the correlation between Earth and Ska-Rakasian calendars, given that a year on Ska-Rak is eighty-three days longer than on Earth and a Ska-Rakasian day is thirty hours in length rather than twenty-four.

If any eagle-eyed reader spots any glaring errors in any of the factual references alluded to in *Triumph of the Daleks* please let me know and I shall take steps to correct it. Otherwise, enjoy the read!