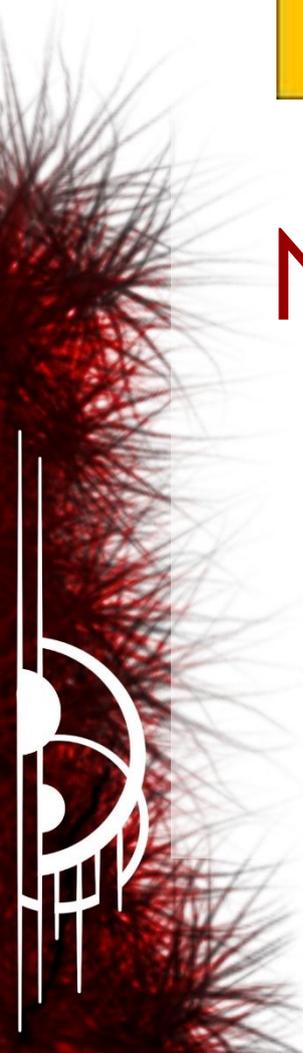


The Vatican League



Nation Gazetteer



The purpose of this book

This source book is a guide for players who are playing TRIAC operatives from the Vatican League. It contains a number of sections detailing social structure, outlook to other nations and also a costume and roleplaying guide as well as a brief history of the nation.

This may seem a slightly restrictive way of defining your character but the Age of Aether is made up of many distinctive and defining cultures and outlooks and it is this way for a reason. If you find after reading the book that the League is not for you then we invite you to look at the gazetteers that detail the eight other nations to see if these suit you better.

Each of the playable nations are all very different and have their own unique style and quirks. After this first section that explains the reason behind the documents the rest of the gazetteer is an in character (IC) document, written by a foremost scholar of the day and can be downloaded, printed and used as a prop and reminder to help with information in game.

In any case please read through the book and choose your concept carefully. You will enjoy your experience so much more if you choose the right archetype to immerse yourself in and we hope you find your niche in one of the nine.

Happy reading

Macifaria Games

A note on the world as it is

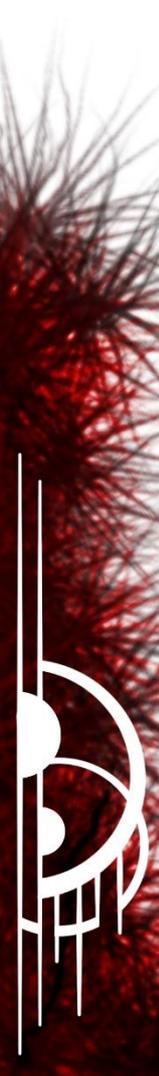
The nations of this world are very different from the ones you know. This world is like ours in many ways and has a lot of the same history. In our version however, certain events happened, or possibly didn't, which have shaped the planet in very different ways.

In this world invaders from Mars landed on earth in the early part of the 19th century. As a result of this, history changed and we see the series of events we have laid out in front of us in these books.

Another huge difference is the change in technological advancement that resulted from the Martian invasion. Science moved down different paths leaving no room for technology as we know it to advance. Frankly, in a world with a tech derived from advanced alien thinking and new alien elements and resources, why would you continue to use the mere mundane in the wake of such wonders? Who needs cannons when you could have heat rays?

Ultimately, this world is different. Time scales have altered; things happened or didn't happen according to the forces that affected them. It is this world you need to embrace to fully experience this alternate reality, a world inspired, but not copied from the writings of H G Wells and other great literary minds.

And with that in mind please read on...



THE THEOCRATIC CONGLOMERATE OF RELIGIOUS STATES THAT IS

THE VATICAN LEAGUE

A GAZETTE BY RENOWNED HISTORIAN
DR HERBERT MAITLAND

With the destabilisation of international religion in the wake of the first Martian war, the faithful of the world looked to a number of places for comfort and Succour in the years after the alien devastation of the planet. The rise of the Doctrine in Russia and the breakdown of Europe and other Christian strongholds meant there was, for many years, a paradigm shift in the focus of world religion. With the destruction of Italy's major cities, most notably the Vatican in 1811, the faith of the world plummeted to a new low. With believers left with no leadership, and the papacy ended with the death of the entire council of cardinals and the pontiff himself, things looked very dark.

In 1821, a ray of light appeared in the darkness for the faithful. Pope Leo XII was invested by a new Council of Cardinals, gathered from all corners of the world by a new driving force known only as the League. This nameless group of faithful philanthropists used any and all funds they had at their disposal to rebuild the Vatican and restore it as the centre of Faith that it was before the war.

The difference now being the faiths of the world were fractured and broken, and the new Vatican welcomed faith in general, throwing out much of the old Dogma and creating a new view of hope and charity based on the teachings of the old. They embraced the need for all peoples to work towards a new world where religion was not a reason to fight each other, but rather a way to galvanise the faith of humanity as a weapon against the aliens.

The new teachings viewed all religions as equal and tried to instil a sense of humanity in the populace. As always, there were those who hated the new idea, but there was enough of a following for the new Vatican League to become the new religious power in the world.

The new Pope recognised all religions and declared through Papal Edict that all faiths were equal and justified. It existed this way until the rise of the Doctrine in the Russian Collective. This religion was seen as separatist and damaging to the world order as it preached the superiority of "The Absolute" above all others. This prompted the re-emergence of the Order of the Chalice. This order militant of the papacy had historically defended the Vatican and its strongholds. Answering to the Pontiff directly and a defence against its enemies, the Order was first raised to defend against the so

called Brotherhood and its forces and to work alongside the Knights Templar as defenders of the Faith.

This gazette is an attempt by myself to place the facts about this great nation into terms that are easy to read and understand. It is a fact of life in this time of war that knowledge is power and the world as a whole must rally together under the flag of humanity if we are to prevail against the invaders. By better understanding our neighbours we will surely have a better understanding of each other and in so doing increase our chances of victory.

The State of the Nation

The Vatican, as it stands as a power on the international scene, is currently rather weak. It only reappeared as a city state in 1821. As such has had a mere 50 years to rise from utter devastation, to a stable seat of religious power and influence once again. The League of philanthropists that are credited with the revivification of the state still remains anonymous and it seems will remain so. They are the silent benefactors of a state that now stands for hope and a new future in the world to so many.

The new Pope, Leo XII, still remains the head of the League and has the power that he once had but now with a new set of values that encompass all creeds and religions as important for the future of a post-war Earth. The Council of Cardinals is now pulled from all major nations and representation from all nations is a thing that is encouraged greatly to maintain a status Quo within the council. They recognise the authority of TRIAC to work in a neutral capacity but do not subscribe to the TRIAC accords as the very neutrality they work under would mean that the Papacy would also be under the same rules and unable to issue its own edicts.

As such the Vatican League works under a different treaty known as "The Cardinal Agreement". This single, most important Papal decree was issued upon the re-forming of the Council of Cardinals to state that all major nations would have equal representation in the ruling body of the League and as such the League itself would remain a neutral target defended by all for the good of all. To date this agreement has held strong.

This has not stopped the Vatican making sure that its own borders and lands are defended however. In the wake of the rise of the Doctrine in the Russian Collective, the Vatican decided to raise its own defences. This new religion refused to align with the ideals of a new Vatican and continued to define itself as the superior creed, holding itself above the rest. As a result the old order militant was

raised once more and the Sacred Chalice was seen once again guarding the Vatican and its holding across the world. These religious warriors were a sacred order of knights steeped in as much history as such orders as the Knights Templar but under the direct control of the Pontiff. Their sacred charge was to protect the holdings and people of the church, and now, the League and fight their enemies.

The so called Brotherhood and their militant orders were long the sworn enemies of an order who keep their own secrets and with the apparent rise again of this insidious organisation, these Papal knights will once again answer the call and pit themselves against their sworn enemies to keep their secrets and the Vatican League safe against attack.

Currently, the League has only just started to move into the political theatre and has tried as much as possible to stay within the tenets laid down in the Cardinal Agreement. The Order Militant has grown over the last fifty years and has kept as much as possible to the core values of the order. Firearms are not unknown within the order but the specialisation in melee weapons and the subsequent scientific breakthroughs in aether melee weaponry have made the Vatican League and the Order of the Chalice second to none in the field of close combat Aether weaponry.

National outlook

The outlook of the Vatican League is generally one of tolerance and positivity. They are aware that they are a small fish in a big pond politically but with the need for hope in the world increasing, they see the need for something that is building for the future growing and it is here where they know the power of the League is grounded.

With the old city rebuilt and the lands around it absorbed the need for the Order Militant grows and the safety of the small nation is secured by the skill of its warriors and the advances of its boffins who work tirelessly to make sure that the Order of the Chalice have the weapons they need to defend the citizens and property of the League.

Names and Personalities of Note

Pope Leo XIII, Current Pope and Leader of the Vatican League

The current Pope and leader of the Vatican League, Leo is a just and forward thinking individual who has guided the League through its early stages of life and now, in his 65th year stands atop a minor nation ready to spread its wings and fly in the political skies of a new world.

High Cardinal Vincenzo Franco, Leader of the Council of Cardinals

Cardinal Franco is a stern and taciturn man who has held his position as the head of the council for over 10 years. His guidance has been invaluable in the growth of the League and he is looked upon fondly by all who know him. He has been a strong proponent in the more outward looking views of the League over the last few years and is seen as somewhat of a paragon by his peers.

High Justicar Angelina Rossano, Master of the Order of the Chalice

Mistress Rossano has been High Justicar for five years now and under her eye, the order has grown exponentially in skill and zeal. The brothers and sisters of the order look upon her with an almost saintly vision and her skill with paired blade, the chosen style of the Order is second to none. Her paired aether swords created by Mother Constance herself glow with righteous energy and are said to be the most powerful examples of the technology in the world.

Mother Superior Maria Constance, Head of the College of Aetheric Study

Mother Constance is one of the most talented Aetheric Boffins alive today. Initially a member of the Arctic Concord before hearing the call of the church, she studied under both Dr Hans Werner and Henry Lancing before leaving for the Vatican and her true calling. Before leaving she had surpassed the skill of both Werner and Lancing in the field of Aetheric Weaponry. RHI tried to tempt her with the promise of wealth and unlimited resources but Maria decided that there was only one place that she could be...

Cardinal Arturo Spinoza, Head of the Vatican Intelligence Service

Cardinal Arturo is a cunning and sharp individual that has spent his entire league career safeguarding the Vatican and making sure that its property and secrets remain safe and sound within their walls. He heads up a group of intelligence operatives whose only duty is to safeguard the halls of the Vatican and stop the intrusion and interference of the outside world. He is dedicated and unflinching in his task and will stop at nothing to protect his nation and his Pontiff.

General Faustus Grenado, Head of the Vatican Guard

General Grenado heads up the elite guard, whose only job is to protect and safeguard the lives of the Pope and the council of Cardinals. These elite individuals are taken from the ranks of the Order of the Chalice and are charged solely to give their lives in service and defence. They are the only armed warriors who are allowed within the council chambers and pontiffs' residence and are armed with the most deadly weapons the college of aetheric studies

can provide. The General is as fanatical as a man can be in the defence of his charges and will stop at nothing to defend them in the name of his nation.

A note on current weaponry and defences

The Vatican League has a specific specialisation in Aetheric Melee weaponry after the inclusion into the Aetheric College of Mother Superior Maria Constance from the Arctic Concord. Her injection of knowledge and drive into the Aetheric Weapon program was next to miraculous and the leaps she made in the augmentation of current melee crafting techniques was years ahead of the curve.

With the weapons she devised the Order of the Chalice became a force to be reckoned with in the League and the defence of the nation was assured.

The leagues main defence comes from the Vatican Wall, a huge structure that rings the territory around the city for a radius of approximately fifty miles. The Order of the Chalice are stationed for the most part in garrisons on and around the wall and the top is studded with weapon emplacements pointed out into the wastes to protect the league lands from Martian and other more terrestrial threats.

The famous paired swords of the Order Knights are always displayed proudly by every member and are given to them on the completion of their training and full admission into the order.

Politics

TRIAC operatives from the Vatican League have the following views towards the allied nations:

Note: There has only been one TRIAC agent ever offered membership and this is as a favour to his holiness from Lord Grey. This agent has been given associate membership only as under club rules only member nations can be provided full membership of TRIAC.

The Federated American Union

The Americans have taken a more secular approach to their new nation and are more concerned with the creation of a super science than a better understanding of the divine. This does not make them an enemy but a constant vigil on their attempts to play at God through technology is always sensible.

Russian Collective

These are the real enemy of humanity. The Doctrine attempts to set itself above all other creeds and throw them down as false. This is the way of madness and the way the old wars began. We will top

them however we can but within the laws of the Cardinal agreements. We will not be the ones to cause a war.

The Prussian Hegemony

A nation of traditionalists who have persevered through some of the most devastating conditions in the war to date. They are a hardy and faithful people who have lived and survived the war and continue to expand and push the Martians back. A definite ally and one who has already shown inroads of alliance with the League.

The Imperial Eastern Union

A nation steeped in mysticism and tradition from a bygone age. The faith in their leaders the people have is the backbone of their society. It is worrying to think that such a vast power could simply collapse if this backbone of trust is broken. We must watch them from a position of neutrality and act accordingly.

The Arctic Concord

A nation of scientists who have little use for faith. We have them to thank for the training and gift of Mother Constance but their reliance on scientific advancement is almost as dangerous as the FAU. If it was not for the regulatory systems in place in this nation we would consider them a threat. We must be vigilant that this does not change.

The Commonwealth of Britannia

The Commonwealth has forever been a nation that has used religion as a weapon for its own ends. Now, with the rise of the Admiralty, it seems that this has become less of a problem and the nation has taken a more secular route in its post war development. While this is sad, it is also the lesser of two evils and removes the worry that once existed.

Free Scandinavia

This nation is so new it is difficult to make a decision as to its place in the world. They have withstood the advances of Prussia for years and as such show a stubborn resolve to remain unconquered and their pride and observance of tradition shows a respect for life and an understanding of faith and belief. We will watch with interest.

Royal Australian Protectorate

The Australians have determined their own existence in splitting from the Commonwealth. They have little use for religion and faith other than the faith they have in their Queen. This undivided respect they show in their monarch is something to be commended but blind faith is dangerous unless tempered by understanding. Watch with interest but be aware of fanaticism taking hold.

Roleplaying notes

Roleplaying a Vatican League TRIAC Associate

To Role-play a Vatican League TRIAC Associate you need to remember the following things:

- Your faith is your guide and the league is the key to that faith
- The Martians are not the only threat in this world, never trust a thing because it appears trustworthy
- Your pride in your nation is a matter of great importance. The League is the light in the darkness and will show the way to a world beyond war.
- The doctrine is a dangerous and troubling concern. It attempts to place itself and this "Absolute" above all other religions. This is how the old wars began. We must not let it happen again.

To play a League Associate is to know that your lands and home adopted or otherwise are the closest thing to a way out of the darkness of war that has appeared in the last century. You wake up every day knowing that this could be the day that the Martians sweep over the defences and the alien hordes finally overwhelm humanities defences and consume you all. But today is not that day and while you have strength in your bones, a sharp mind or a heart filled with faith you will fight to the bitter end for you faith, your nation and your world.

Costume and Kit Guidelines

A Vatican League citizen can be from any nation initially and may have any type of national style. There are a few specific styles of dress such as Vatican guard or military order regalia, for instance, and if you are interested in these contact the game team who will be happy to explain more.

