

Novus Ordum Mundi

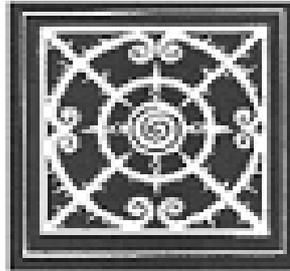
The Masters of the Great Game

eBOOK PREVIEW

Introduction

The villainous organisation known as Novus Ordum Mundi dates from the Old Republic of the Numan Empire, like many of the secret societies that it has watched and manipulated for centuries. In AUC 385, thirteen Senators of the Numan Senate met to discuss the corruption that they observed in the government. Over a period of years, they slowly gained influence and control, for instance by having friends appointed to key positions in the government, priesthood and military. Even in almost full control of the Senate, they often were unable to stop the shifting of power back to a particular capable Emperor. This alternating state of affairs continued for centuries, with members of the group becoming more and more arrogant in their right to rule. Before the population reached breaking point something else occurred, General Gaius Philippus Macer staged a brilliantly successful coup and took control of the entire Empire as one of the greatest Emperors in Numan history. His obvious first act was to reduce the power of the Senate down to an almost advisory body. The leader of NOM at the time was the devious Commodus Flavius, who railed against Macer and plotted countless assassination attempts. For nearly thirty years, the group opposed Macer, but the shrewd Emperor deflected all their challenges. That is until a single action changed the balance of power and altered Theah in a way that reverberates to modern day. The Bargain for the sorcerous arts.

The Bargain made by Senator Octavus Montanus and the others not only overthrew the control of the Emperor, but it also turned the balance against the other Senators that did not enter into their pact with Legion. Montanus used his new found abilities to destroy any who opposed their new rule, one of the first of these being his long time nemesis Commodus Flavius who was thrown screaming into a rift on the very floor of the Senate. The surviving members



withdrew to assess the situation and plot how they could regain their favoured positions of power. They knew from Flavius' example that it was almost impossible to go against the sorcerors directly, so they fell back on their considerable guile and intelligence. The Council of Thirteen was formed out of this to mark the thirteen Senators, and their positions

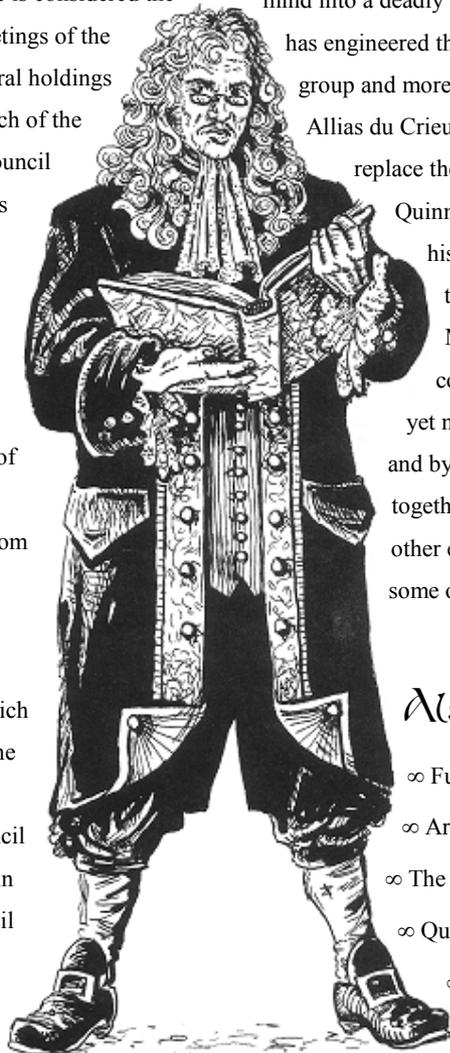
have carried on down to the present day, although their exact tactics and drives have changed as new members came to the fore. Of course, the fall of Numa destroyed all chance of retaking control of the Empire, so the Council members moved further out into Theah and sought to control the entire continent in its new constituent parts. As one fell to age or the plots of an adversary, another member was selected by the group from a list that had usually been groomed for years for such a role.

Organisation

While NOM consists of a vast network of informants, contacts, killers and petty villains, its true core is the Council of Thirteen. These men would be power-brokers of Theah in their own right, without the resources and opportunities presented to them by the organisation. No doubt because of this fact, while other secretive groups may have internal squabbles, the Machiavellian plots of the Council members against each other can lay waste to entire regions and leave trails of bodies in their wake. The Espectro Acero, the 'Steel Spectors', act as a balance to the powers of the Council by preventing the members acting directly against each other and securing meetings between these dangerous men. Although they are meant to be impartial, a particular powerful Council leader has often used the Espectro Acero to their own ends, cowling the other Council members and even on occasion carrying out assassinations. Each Council member usually has a particular region of control from which they are based, although these regions often overlap

and those involving the other societies of Theah can be wide ranging indeed. The Council members that survive the longest are those that know which fights to pick and with the expertise that makes them more useful to the other members alive, rather than floating facedown in one of Dionna's many canals. Strictly speaking each Council member has equal voice in the organisation, although one is considered the leader in order to chair the annual meetings of the entire Council and maintain their neutral holdings in Numa. If an issue comes to vote, each of the thirteen carries one vote. Since any Council member worth their seat usually knows exactly how each other member will vote, ties are very rare but when they happen the leader decides on the outcome.

The structure underneath the Council of Thirteen depends very much on the particular Council member, as apart from the Espectro there is no other formal members or groups. Most Council members retain their own selection of agents and informants, very few of which are usually aware of the existence of the group. A handful of incredibly skilled men have served a succession of Council members, such as the infamous assassin Quinn who served the previous Council leader before Alvara Archiniega. This secrecy has allowed such as powerful and manipulative group to survive so long, with very few outside of the circle ever aware of its existence. After centuries, the shadowy operations that saved the Senators from the sorcerers have become the very identity of the group. Thousands of people across Theah are involved in the activities of NOM in any month, almost all of them with no knowledge that their small actions have contributed to a wider event.



The Council of Thirteen

The current Council is lead by the charismatic and powerful Alvara Soldano de Archiniega, who was selected for the group by the previous leader, Iselo Arciniega de Aldana. The lessons of his former mentor sharpened an already brilliant mind into a deadly instrument. Over the last few years he has engineered the destruction of many of his rivals in the group and more recently has his own daughter, Monica Allias du Crieux, appointed as a Council member to replace the disgraced Jean Pierre du Lac. With Quinn and many of the Espectro Acero under his control, he exercise more control over the group than any one man in centuries. Many of the other members are very concerned about this shift in power, but as yet none of them have been able to counter it and by their very nature are unlikely to work together enough to succeed in such a task. The other eleven members of the group represent some of the most powerful people in Theah.

Also Included

- ∞ Full descriptions for all 13 members
- ∞ Arciniega's mountain fortress
- ∞ The secret library of the Vatacine Church
- ∞ Quinn and his NOM swordschool
- ∞ Plot hooks for all Council Members and the organisation
- ∞ History of NOM involvement in major Thean events
- ∞ Overview of NOM developments for the next five years
- ∞ The fate of Cardinal Verdugo and his Inquisition

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