Traveller Campaign Notes

Realms & Factions of the Known Galaxy

# Introduction

The setting for this Traveller campaign is based largely on the real-world history of Venice, circa AD 1600. The locations, histories, and characteristics of nearby systems are based on Venice’s real-world neighbors, but re-interpreted into a science fiction setting.

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| Campaign Name | Real World Equivalent |
| [Novo Venizians](#_Novo_Venizia) | Venetian |
| [Allemani](#_Allemani) | German/Germanic |
| [Angleterrans](#_Angleterrans) | English/British |
| [Atlanteans](#_Atlanteans) | Moslem (especially Turkish) |
| [Cyclopeans](#_Cyclopeans) | Ancient Egyptians |
| [Dacians](#_Dacians) | Slavs, Bulgars, Hungarians – eastern Europeans in general |
| [Gaullans](#_Gaullans) | French |
| [Helenic](#_Helenics) | Greek |
| [Hispanians](#_Hispanians) | Spanish/Portugese |
| [Langobardians](#_Langobardians) | Lombards/Italians |
| [Lupanian Imperium](#_Lupanian_Imperium) | Roman Empire |
| [New Imperial League](#_New_Imperial_League) | Holy Roman Empire |
| [Novine Empire](#_Novine_Empire) | Byzantine Empire |
| [Universal Gaiaist Society](#_Universal_Gaiaist_Society) | Roman Catholic Church |

Technology in this campaign will be somewhat low compared to other published Traveller settings. Jump-1 ships are the norm, and energy weapons are mostly impractical. Human-level artificial intelligence is unknown, as are post-human enhancements.

# Novo Venizia

## Description and Historical Outline

The primary star of Novo Venizia is an orange dwarf smaller and cooler than Sol. It has one class-M planet, also known as Novo Venizia, Venizia Prime, or simply Venizia. Venizia was apparently terraformed from a barren class-K world in ancient, unrecorded history by an unknown civilization using unknown technology. (This is a common state of affairs in known space. Warfare before the rise of the Imperium wiped out most worlds’ ancient histories, and no one can now say who terraformed these worlds or when.)

In the year 1174 since the founding of Lupo, during the final decline of the Lupanian Imperium, Allemani and other barbarian raiders were striking at all the Lupanian core systems. A group of refugees from these systems colonized Venizia, taking control from the tiny native population. Novo Venizia managed to avoid the invasion and sacking that ravaged nearly every other system in the area and slowly built its population base and economy.

By allying itself with the growing Novine Empire, the successor state to the Imperium, Novo Venizia grew into a local power, ruling several nearby systems. Venizia itself, being 85% covered in shallow seas, would never support a high population, but a few major cities grew: Rialto (the capital), Cannaregio, Dorsuduro, Santa Croce, San Marco, and Castello.

During this time, Novo Venizia engaged in major terraforming and colonizing efforts within its own system. The Venizian moons (both class-D rocky planetoids) of Burano and Murano were extensively settled with domes and underground cities. These would later become the hubs of Novo Venizian export industries. The gas giant world of Marghera had several moons that were modified to be more inhabitable. The greatest success was with the moon named Mestre, which achieved class-M status. In later years, Mestre would be the population hub of Novo Venizia, supporting five times the population of Venizia itself. The moons Lido, Pellestrina, Favaro, and Carpenado were all brought to class-L status, and domed cities were established on all these.

The red dwarf companion star of the Novo Venizian primary had a double planet, each circling each other around a common center of gravity. These were terraformed into the class-H worlds of Chirignago and Zelarino, both covered in inhospitable deserts, but also featuring extensive valuable mineral deposits, which are mined by the Novo Venizians.

In the year 2323 *[the year the Traveller campaign begins]*, Novo Venizia is a rich, long-settled system, with a high technology and cultural level. It is the foremost mercantile state in known space, and its merchants and military forces travel far and wide.

## Noble Houses of Novo Venizia

Barbaro – Noble house of Novo Venizia. Descended from Lupanian nobility. Owners of large estates, there have been numerous doges, bishops, and other high officials of Novo Venizio from this family, as well as several military heroes. Antonio Barbaro is current governor of Crete.

Camondo – Noble house of Novo Venizia. Descended from Hamilcarian refugees expelled from Hispania, the Camondo family gained fame as both as scholars and merchants. The Camondo merchants are skilled smugglers who have been successful at trading rich cargoes in Atlantean space.

Contarini – The oldest continuous noble family in Novo Venizia. Not as large or as wealthy as some of the others major houses, but still in the first rank due to their seniority. Noted for their work to preserve both the military power and the cultural heritage of Novo Venizia. The family has produced several doges, though none in the last two centuries.

Cornaro – Noble house of Novo Venizia. Immensely wealthy noble family, owning large sections of urban land, including eight palaces in the capital city of Rialto. Noted for their patronage of the arts, and for producing talented scientists. More Cornaros have been Doge than any other family.

Crispo – A merchant family with deep ties to the Helenic core systems, with large estates on Crete and other Venizian-held systems. For generations, they have been at the forefront of maintaining the old Imperial trade route through the Helenic region. An offshoot of the Crispo family, the Sommaripa, has itself become a leading noble house.

Dandolo – A smaller and younger noble family, famed for producing three doges, including the famous Andrea Dandolo, whose diplomacy brought a halt to a devastating war against the Langobardians and the Dacians, paving the way for a resurgence in Novo Venizian wealth and influence. The Dandolo family is currently in the forefront of the movement to form closer economic relationships with the Langobardian systems.

Giustiniani – An older noble family that has within the last hundred years also become a leading family in the Gemini system as well. As merchants, they have sent successful trading missions throughout Helenic space and even the barbarian systems beyond Novine. The family has also produced several noted members of the Universalist orders.

Grimani – An older noble family, producing notable industrialists and Universalists. In recent generations, they have been leading patrons of the arts, especially theatre.

Mocenigo – Wealthy noble family, but not notable merchants (which is unusual for Novo Venizio). The family has produced several doges, and many statesmen, soldiers, and scientists.

Morosini – Noble family descended from Dacian immigrants. Several Morosini branches have ruled Dacian worlds at various times. Morosini have been spectacular merchant captains, privateers, and admirals.

Orseolo – One of the oldest noble families, producing several doges over the centuries. Many of the earliest large space construction works in Novo Venizia were led by the Orseolo. Several of the family have been noted Universalists, as well. Related by marriage to the imperial line of the New Imperial League.

Participazio – The leading family in the early centuries of Novo Venizia, they lost most of their power when the Novine Empire fell (and they deeply regretted the part Novo Venizia played in the weakening of Novine). They are noted antiquarians, and they still possess a great deal of behind-the-scenes political power.

Sanudo – Noble house of Novo Venizia. When the Gaullans and the New Imperial League captured the Novine throneworld at the instigation of Novo Venizia, the Sanudo family profited greatly, both by looting and by supplying the attacking powers. They held a virtual trade monopoly in Helenic space for over a hundred years, acquiring vast wealth in the process. As the Atlanteans progressed into the area, their power diminished. During the final siege of Novine by the Atlanteans, Florence Sanudo, the head of the house, spent enormous resources to help the Novines shore up their defenses. This was her way of restoring the honor of her house lost due to its part in the original sack of the throneworld. The Sanudo brought back an enormous wealth of knowledge, artifacts, and trained professionals from the clutches of the Atlanteans, sparking a rebirth of knowledge lost since the end of the original Imperium. This *renaissance* saw Novo Venizia reach new heights of prestige and wealth. The Sanudo currently control the bulk of Novo Venizia’s native education and scientific establishment, that is, the part not run by the Universalists.

Sommaripa – Noble house of Novo Venizia. An offshoot of the Crispo family, the Sommaripa are a purely mercantile house. Their trade ships can be found throughout the old Imperium.

Venier – An old noble house, the Venier have supplied many doges and innumerable lesser office holders to the state. Never one of the wealthiest families, they nevertheless enjoy high prestige by their constant efforts to strengthen Novo Venizia economically, technologically, artistically, and militarily.

Zeno – A merchant house, famed for its bold explorers. They are a relatively new house, and have never supplied a doge.

## Notable Personages

Doge Marino Grimani, the 89th doge of the Serene Republic of Novo Venizia, has reigned for five years. As Doge, he is both Lord High Admiral of the Fleet and President of the Council of Ten. His reign has been marked by a diplomatic struggle with the Universalists over the issue of whether Universalist officials are immune from prosecution by local authorities. Although a conservative non-radical in his style, he has nonetheless supported the Sprezzatura initiative.

Council of Ten: the major office holders of the Novo Venizian republic, chosen from the highest level of the major noble houses by the Senate (which itself represents the entire nobility). The Council is presided by the Doge and is responsible for the various organs of state: diplomatic relations, taxation, military infrastructure, economic regulation, etc. The Council nominates and ratifies all minor office-holders, such as governors, secretaries, judges, and the like. They also advise the Doge on military matters, and may overrule him by a vote of no confidence.

Bridge-keeper Clemens Octavus is the head official of the Universalist Gaiaist Society. While the conflicts against the Reformers and the Atlanteans are ongoing and serious, he also has to deal with factions within the Universalists arguing for one course of action or another. The Universalists are officially allied with Novo Venizia, but there is a great deal of behind the scenes disapproval of the republic within the hierarchy, due to the Venizians’ part in recovering and propogating artifacts and knowledge from Helenic space independently from the Universalists.

Emperor (New Imperial League) Rudolf II is the elected leader of the entire league and also king by hereditary right of a large number of rich systems. Rudolf is currently right in the middle of the fight between the Universalists and the Reformers. He sees (rightly) that most of the fighting is really about who will control League territory, the Emperor or the local princes. Most of Rudolf’s efforts are at healing the rift between the League territories, so that they can be united against the Atlanteans. So far, his efforts have largely backfired.

Governor of Crete, Antonio Barbaro is at the forefront of the fight against the encroaching Atlanteans. He must on the one hand spare no resources to fortify Crete against the inevitable assaults, but he must also maximize the profitability of Novo Venizian commerce, for what is the point of holding Crete if not to make a profit?

Governor of Cyprus, Catherine Cornaro, descendent of Queen Catherine Cornaro who once ruled Cyprus in the name of the 4th Alliance. As with Crete, Cyprus is both on the front line against the Atlanteans and an important profit center along the old Imperial trade route.

## Posts & Ranks

Commanding Officer – Master of the ship – must be a Venizian noble. (Sometimes this restriction is circumvented by the expedient of a quick knighting of a condotierre.) Often called the Captain (even if this officer does not actually hold captain's rank). Informally called "Skipper," "Old Man," and other names, flattering or not.

1st Mate – Second in command below the Captain; in charge of cargo and crew.

2nd Mate (Navigator) – Third in command; in charge of navigation.

3rd Mate (Tactical Officer) **–** Fourth in command; tactical officer.

Helmsman – Fifth in command; in charge of moving the ship (including docking).

Chief Engineer – Sixth in command; in charge of ship's systems.

Chief Steward – Seventh in command; in charge of maintenance and equipment.

Chief Medical Officer – In charge of crew health; sworn to not let plagues spread from system to system

Officer of the Watch – Any officer assigned to watch duty, that is, assigned control of the ship's bridge for the duration of a ship's watch. Typically this is one of the mates or a lieutenant. Directly responsible for ensuring the Captain's orders are followed.

Major – In charge of marine operations

Bosun – Highest ranking enlisted crewman

### Naval Officer Ranks

Captain

Commander

Lt. Commander

Lieutenant (Senior)

Lieutenant (Junior)

Ensign

### Enlisted crew ranks

Master Chief (Bosun)

Chief

Able Seaman (AS)

Ordinary Seaman (OS)

### Marine ranks

Major

Lieutenant

Chief Warrant Officer

Warrant Officer

Sergeant

Corporal

Private

## Sprezzatura-class Explorers

Eight years ago, the Council of Ten gave secret funding to an initiative to revitalize or open up new Venizian trade. The Council foresaw that continued pressure from the Atlanteans on the most profitable old Imperial trade routes, coupled with the new competition arising from the results of Hispanian exploration, would cause a long-term and perhaps permanent decline for Novo Venizia. What could be done? One idea was to use the new technology made available by the recent scientific *renaissance* to create a small fleet of very fast, very powerful ships that would be used solely for exploration. This was the genesis of the Sprezzatura class.

In 2323, five Sprezzatura class ships have been built and launched.

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| Name | Meaning |
| *Accertare* | “to hit the mark” |
| *Avventurare* | “to venture” |
| *Primor* | “excellence” or “goodness” |
| *Ripassare* | “to rebuff” |
| *Sprezzatura* | “quality of excellence without apparent effort” |

These are Jump-2 ships, capable of travelling twice as far as conventional ships in one Jump for the same energy cost. They are as large as military ships-of-the-line, and almost as heavily-armed, but also contain cargo holds and shuttles as do independent traders. They also are fitted with a great deal of specialized exploration equipment, such as probes and landers.

# Allemani

Allemani is a general term for the inhabitants of systems beyond the Gaullan frontier of the Lupanian Imperium. During the collapse of the Imperium, many Allemani groups moved into Imperial systems. These became the core of the later New Imperial League. The Allemani are a multifarious group bound by loose historical and cultural ties, but development among individual Alleman systems can vary widely. Some have lost the capability of space travel, while others can match or exceed the technology of any other system. Many Alleman systems, although theoretically all part of the New Imperial League, are currently at war with each other over the controversies surrounding the rise of the Reformers against the Universalists.

# Angleterrans

Another Allemani group beyond the Gaullan frontier, Angleterrans are often encountered individually or in small groups in former Imperial areas. They do not have much of a military or trade presence although merchants from Novo Venizia and other Langobardian systems do sometimes travel there.

# Atlanteans

The Atlanteans are a group of sects characterized by totalitarianism and forcible conversion. Doctrinally, they do not differ much from the Gaiaists. They believe that all life originated on Earth, and that an original civilization, "Atlantis," is responsible for seeding the galaxy with life. The Atlanteans embrace a rigid hierarchy that divides the universe into Atlantean and non-Atlantean. Atlanteans are incorporated into the system. Non-Atlanteans are either converted, enslaved, or destroyed. No other options are possible.

Atlanteans first rose to power as a revolt in the Novine Empire, and they quickly carved off huge numbers of systems to form the base of their empire. Ever expansionist, they waged a protracted and finally successful struggle against the Novines, conquered unknown but probably vast numbers of barbarian systems beyond Imperium space, and fought almost every post-Imperium power at one time or another. The Universalists have been the foremost source of resistance to them, but lately the Reformers have sapped their attention, and the Atlanteans are beginning to push outward again. Novo Venizian trade routes stand squarely in their sights.

# Cyclopeans

An ancient and now dimly-remembered civilization that rose and declined even before the rise of the Helenic systems. The great monumental space habitats they created are still used, though the technology that created them has been long lost. The former Cyclopean systems are now within Atlantean space.

# Dacians

The Dacians are a diverse group, separate from the Allemani, originally from systems beyond the Imperial frontier near Novine. As Novine slowly withered, the Dacians moved in and mixed with earlier populations. Some Dacian systems maintain their independence, but most are in one way or another subject to the New Imperial League, the Venizians, or the Atlanteans.

# Gaullans

In Imperial days, the Gaullan province formed a bulwark against the Allemani beyond. After the collapse, the term Gaullan began to refer to those Allemani invaders who settled there. After the Carlist attempt to create a new empire, the Gaullans formed the New Imperial League, but the Gaullan systems all left the League within a generation. Gaullan merchants compete with Langobardians and Venizians along the old Imperial trade routes.

# Helenics

The Helenic systems were a pre-Imperial civilization that greatly influenced the Lupanians as they were building their empire. Helenic science and technology is revolutionizing the Universalist systems as a result of old records being brought by refugees from Novine. The Helenic systems now retain little memory of their past glory and are under the yoke of the Atlanteans based in Novine.

# Hispanians

A far region of the old Imperium, the Hispanian systems were subjugated by the Atlanteans, but have since been reconquered by the descendents of Allemanic invaders from the period of the imperial fall. The Hispanian systems have recently sent explorers to the far region of “Novus Mundi” and have begun conquest and colonization attempts.

# Human Empire

A great empire, centered on Earth, that ruled the galaxy millennia ago. Some say it fell long ago, some say it still exists somewhere in the far reaches of the galaxy. What is certain is that no one within reach of Novo Venizian traders has any current knowledge of it.

# Langobardians

An Allemani group that invaded the Lupanian Imperium during its long collapse. They fought the Novine Imperium in a series of wars and kept their systems, but were unable to expand. They were invaded and incorporated wholesale into the Carlist Empire of the Gaullans, which later became the New Imperial League. They form a restive, semi-independent region within the League. Several Langobardian systems that sit on the old Imperial trade routes have become wealthy mercantile states, the primary competitors of Novo Venizia.

# Lupanian Imperium

The Lupo system, originally a republic, eventually conquered almost all known space, binding the various systems into its empire. The Imperium was more powerful than any state before or after it, and its culture, technology, and system of government was indelibly stamped on the worlds it ruled. It created trade routes throughout its space that are still jealously fought over. Eventually, the Imperium decayed and fell, half of it being invaded by the various Allemanic peoples while the other half reconstituted itself around the Novine system. Novine eventually fell to the Atlanteans, while Lupo itself, though not a major military or economic power, is the seat of the Universal Gaiaist Society.

# New Imperial League

The New Imperial League was formed from the Carlist Empire of the Gaullans, though the Gaullan systems themselves are not part of it. Purporting to be the inheritor of the mantle of the old Imperium, it is actually a loose coalition of Allemani and Langobardian systems. It is currently tearing itself apart in the struggle between the Universalists and the Reformists.

# Novine Empire

The Emperor Constantius created a new imperial capital in the Novine system, as Lupo was becoming less strategically and economically important. As the Lupanian core systems were lost to the Imperium, the area around Novine continued the imperial tradition, and was then known as the Novine Empire. For a while, it appeared the Novines might reconquer Lupo and restore the Imperium to its former glory, but a succession of wars against the Atlanteans, Dacians, and the Universalists sapped its strength and finally destroyed it. Now Novine is the capital of the Atlanteans.

# Universal Gaiaist Society (Universalists)

The Lupanian Republic, as were the Helenic states and the Cyclopeans before them, were Deist in outlook. This refers to an ideological and scientific stance that holds that life did not necessarily originate solely on ancient Earth. Deists tend to suppose that life was spread by powerful, unknown, non-human forces in pre-history. These "gods" do not seem to play an active part in the galaxy anymore. As the Republic developed into the Imperium, the Gaiaists became pre-eminent, finally achieving official status with the reign of Constantius, who moved the capital of the Imperium from Lupo to Novine. The Gaiaists were slowly put in charge of all state-supported science and education.

As the Imperium declined, the Gaiaist-run scientific establishment began to be self-directing, to the point where became a more or less independent interstellar state. It became indispensible as a means of preserving, teaching, and utilizing technology and knowledge of all kinds. Its reach and power spread throughout the old Imperium, and even beyond into the various Allemani systems. As the power of the Novine Imperium increased, the Universalists not within its sphere began to resist incorporation into its political system. Eventually, the Universalist hierarchy based in Lupo, the capital of the old Imperium, became the focal point for all non-Novine Gaiaists. The non-Novines began to refer to themselves as the Universalists and the Novine-dominated faction as the Metropolitans. The vagaries of history and cultural drift ensured that the schism would be a permanent one. The Universalists hold to the doctrine that all life originated on Earth, the original Gaia, and was spread throughout the galaxy by the first Human Empire. The ultimate goal of the Universalists is to restore humanity to its heights.

In theory, the Universalists are open to all learning and scientific progress. However, the Universalist hierarchy has often been jealous of anything that would threaten its own power and preeminence, which has led to political struggles in many systems. Lately, a new wave of such struggles has coalesced into the Reformer movement centered in the New Imperial League, and open fighting has commenced in many systems.