

HISTORY

The history of the Brotherhood of the Faithful in Exile, as the entire name of the political body usually simply known as the Brotherhood goes, began on late-15th century Earth. The birth of the HELL colony is believed to have been sparked by a single remarkable individual, namely the cardinal Giuliano della Rovere. Obviously the Vobians must have had their eye on the Vatican for a while before, and it is equally obvious they had hoped to be able to create a colony leaning heavily toward theocracy as the form of government. In della Rovere, they seem to have found a person whom they judged to strike the best balance between piety and practicality, secular strength and religious conviction.

THE ORIGINS ON EARTH

Giuliano della Rovere was born in 1443 of a probably noble but impoverished family, and was appointed Cardinal in 1471 by the Pope Sixtus VI. The Pope lavished on della Rovere six bishoprics in France and three in Italy along with an abundance of wealthy abbeys and benefices. The Cardinal, who lacked interest in spiritual pursuits, became an outstanding patron of the arts.

In the early part of his career, della Rovere's lack of interest in following the strictures of the Catholic church was amply demonstrated as he fathered three daughters (all of whom incidentally also were cloned for transportation to New Avignon). Nor was he above taking part in political machinations, for after the death of Sixtus IV, the Cardinal's candidate Innocent VIII was elected through bribery in 1484. It is apparent that della Rovere had great influence on the weak Pope.

Despite this he failed to seize the Papal see in 1492 and instead his rival – one could say a personal enemy -- Rodrigo Borgia ascended the papal throne as Alexander VI. Fearing for his safety in Italy, della Rovere fled by way of Genoa to the court of Charles VIII of France. During this trip, towards the end of 1493, the Vobians intercepted and cloned the Cardinal. Along with him and his daughters, they also cloned and transported a significant part of the population gathered from areas around the current episcopal sees of the Cardinal: Bologna, Lodève, Ostia, Savona, Vercelli and the Archiepiscopal See of Avignon (after which the world they were transported to was eventually named). They purposefully left out all of the higher ranking secular officials and dignitaries in order to create a "clean slate" for their experiment in theocracy.

Certainly both the original della Rovere (who survived his exile and later reigned as pope Julius II) and his clone proved to be ruthless and energetic in their pursuit of power, and were men of relentless candour and uncontrollable temper. Yet della Rovere was also incapable of baseness and vindictiveness, despised informers and flatterers and in the end wished greatness for the church rather than for himself. Also, despite being accustomed to making war, he also greatly desired peace in his own time: the original for Italy, the clone for his new homeworld.

THE FOUNDING OF THE COLONY

In the case of New Avignon, the peace took years to accomplish. Chaos reigned as people, divided by their original homes to the shores of the three inland seas separated by hundreds of miles of inhospitable desert, sought to come to grips with the strange new environment and lack of proper authority. The areas around the Sea of Ostia, where the clone of Cardinal himself had been posited, suffered least from the anarchy as the Cardinal seized control via measures that later were described as nothing sort of Draconian. The various companies of the Venerable Warriors of the Brotherhood military trace their origin to the shock troops employed by della Rovere against brigands and petty warlords who sprung up to challenge his rule.

Despite the massive obstacles and difficulties, the leadership abilities, charisma and sheer unbending will of the Cardinal prevailed. By the Earth year 1499, the regions around the Sea of Ostia were pacified and basic structure of the Brotherhood government and society that has been largely maintained to this day had been established. Minor struggles to incorporate the rest of the humanity strewn about the seas of New Avignon followed, but by and large there was little resistance from the other "colonies", weakened as they were by internal strife. In fact, the parching deserts of the planet claimed more casualties from the crusading forces of the Cardinal than actual fighting. The order of the Pilgrims was established during this period to watch the way stations and to guide the travelers to safety in the desert.

The official founding of the Brotherhood of the Faithful in Exile is considered to have taken place late the Earth year 1499 with the laying of the keystone of the Grand Cathedral. The Cathedral was completed over the course of the next ten years, which also saw exponential growth of the Brotherhood populace. Still, it was also accompanied by a huge rise in the standard of living to all but a handful of dissidents who struggled to survive out in the verges of the deserts.

When Cardinal della Rovere retired on the Earth year 1513 (coincidentally the same year when the original della Rovere died), he gave away the reins of a thriving nation with very little apparent internal tension and, obviously enough, no outside enemies. The della Rovere clone eventually survived the original by nearly 21 years and died a content man who had accomplished a monumental task of creating an entire nation.