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GALACTIC ERA

2-PLAYER VARIANT
with Passive Automa

2 | 120 | 14+

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The advantage of this 2-player variant over the one in the rulebook is, that it is faster to play and requires less effort to handle the third faction. This variant is also suitable for beginners.

While exploring the galaxy, two nascent star peoples stumble upon an ancient, light-oriented civilization. After millions of years the civilization has degenerated and is unable to react to new situations.

1. Overview

This variant is played with two human controlled factions, and one passive faction. It follows the normal setup and play rules for a three player game. The third player is an automa that has a more extensive setup but will only react passively during play. The automa counts as a player for all purposes except as detailed below.

Use the rule for random selection as in the solo variant rulebook (see page 3, chapter 3.2), and also the two 6-sided dice.

2. Setup

Remove the "**Alignment**" and "**Central**" domination cards from play before starting. Remove the "**ICC**" star people tile from the possible tiles for the two players. The automa can be the "ICC" star people though.

Setup the automa randomly, before the two players choose their own setup. Follow the normal setup rules for the automa, but with the following changes:

See an example setup on pages 4-5.

The automa starts with the STO alignment and does not get any domination cards. If the automa needs to choose a different technology to start at level 2 (usually because the star people and the sector are giving the same starting technology advantage), then select it randomly.

2.1. Population

The automa's population track is not used.

Do not place any neutral star counters in the automa's home star sector, instead, place a number of the automa's population discs on each star that would normally get a neutral star counter. The number depends on the color of the star icon in the hex:

- red = 1 population
- orange = 2 population
- yellow = 3 population
- green = 4 population

Note: The number of population discs is equal to the distance from the automa's home star.

2.2. Ships

Instead of the normal starting ships at the home star of the automa, place a fleet there as described in the following section. Also, place two ship miniatures at every other star in the automa's home star sector.

Fleet

Take the following selection of 16 hidden ship chips: 3x "0", 8x "1", 2x "2", 2x "5", 1x "10". Turn these face down and shuffle them. Draw four of them face down and put them in a stack at the home star. Keep the remaining 12 chips from this selection face down and out of the game.

Take all the automa's fleet counters except the "D". Turn these face down and shuffle them. Draw one face down and put it of top of the stack of chips at the home star. Keep the remaining fleet counters face down.

Note: The average size of the fleet is about 8. The minimum size is 1, the maximum 22.

2.3. Technology Levels

After determining the starting technology levels for the automa as normal, roll the two dice. Reroll any sixes. Increase the level in each technology field of the automa that is indicated by a die result by two. A technology field can be increased twice (by a total of four levels).

Die result: 1=Military, 2=Spirituality, 3=Propulsion, 4=Robotics, 5=Genetics.

Example: You roll a 2 and a 6, then reroll the 6 to get a 4 instead. You increase the automa's Spirituality level by 2 and their Robotics level by 2.

2.4. Advanced Fleet Tactics

If the automa gets an advanced fleet tactic (also during play), place it on a randomly selected (available) fleet spot with the "x2" side face up.

3. Play

The automa does not take any turns (neither in the move/combat phase, nor in the growth phase), but still has a position in the turn order.

3.1. Retreating

Whenever a player attacks ships of the automa and they could "retreat before combat" the opposing player (the one who is not attacking) decides if and how the ships retreat.

If the automa's fleet is attacked but cannot retreat and then it is revealed to be the "E" fleet, the opposing player may decide to retreat after all. With the advanced fleet tactic even after the attacking fleets have been revealed.

The opposing player also decides where any surviving ships of the automa retreat to after a lost battle.

3.2. Winning Battles

If the automa wins a battle (either alone or together with a player) then the opposing player (the one who is not attacking) chooses which ships to destroy, both for the winning and losing sides.

Note: The automa can only win a battle as defender.

3.3. Home Star Evacuation

When the home star of the automa is evacuated and there are multiple possibilities for the location of their new home star, then select which one randomly.

3.4. Trading

Players can trade with the automa if they fulfill the normal conditions (i.e. are at peace and in contact).

A player trading with the automa can both select which technology level to get and which one to give to the automa.

If both players want to and are able to trade with the automa in the same round, then the automa preferably trades with an STO player. If both or neither players are STO then the automa preferably trades with the player who is first in turn order.

3.5. Scoring

The automa does not score any DP. The automa can still use any effects that would cause a DP loss. The automa does count for determining **who** scores, though, and can thus deny DP to players.

Example: If the automa has the most ships in its sector, then no player will score for that sector at game end.

Automa DP for Comparison

The automa is considered to have these amounts of DP for comparison purposes when playing with the "**Leadership**" galactic goal:

galactic story	first era	second era	third era
Journeys	3 DP	13 DP	28 DP
Migrations	5 DP	15 DP	30 DP
Wars	4 DP	25 DP	40 DP
Rivalry	4 DP	10 DP	32 DP

Automa Setup Example

Sida...

...rcturus

Inxtria

Zenetae

3.6. Star People Effects

When the automa is one of these star peoples, then apply their special effect as follows:

Anchara Coalition: The automa has an additional 2 DP for comparison purposes.

Caninoids: Determine which technology field they start at level 2 randomly.

Cosmic Mayans: Every time any of their population are relocated, then put them all on one randomly selected star of the automa within range (if there is one).

Felines: Their special effect to force an attacker to retreat before combat is used at their home star only. Use it at the first opportunity each round.

ICC: Both players can trade with the automa in the same round. The player with the higher preference (as per section 3.4) trades first and then the other player.

3.7. Domination Card Effects

General Scientific: When playing this card for the primary (A) effect, the player can use the immediate effect for an additional trade with the automa (regardless of alignment and turn order). The regular conditions for trading still apply though. The automa does this additional trade only after it has done the regular trade for the round.

Errata

Here are some corrections to the regular game:

Rulebook (page 21):
Grow Population example in chapter 6.2.6:
James has Genetics at level 3 (not level 4).

Rulebook (page 30):
The research+ effect of Robotics cannot be combined with a turn order change counter.
Cross out this part of the text in the rulebook.

STS Felines star people tile:
Bottom row of Gain Star table, rightmost column: should be "1 population" (instead of "all population").

Clarifications

Here are some clarifications to the regular game:

Declaring War to prevent additional actions:
STS players may declare war on a player to prevent them from getting an additional action only during the selection step of the growth phase (even if it is unclear whether they will take the additional action or not). Once the counters are revealed they cannot do that anymore.

Declaring War to prevent Stargate-2 movement:
STS players can only declare war to prevent another player using Stargate-2 movement from or to a star where they have a ship (because then it counts as "blocking"). Movement to where the player has no ships cannot be prevented by declaring war and also does not provide an opportunity to declare war.

This also applies to all other instances in which declaring war may appear useful, but is only possible using a blocking ship.

Example: STS players cannot declare war on the STS Caninoids to prevent them from forcing a trade.

Galactic Wars (galactic story):
During the Era of Darkness, only ships from the opposing side in battle that are destroyed count for your score.

Research+ Effect of Robotics:
When getting this effect from the relic "Ancient Technology: Robotics", you can apply it to a technology field that you are **researching** in the same turn. If you are not **researching** some technology in the same turn, then it has no effect.

Anchara Coalition (star people):
At Spirituality levels 5/6 you can still select the Switch Alignment action counter (even though it has no effect) and benefit from the special effect of the Anchara Coalition.
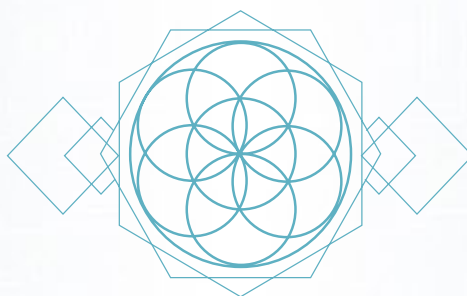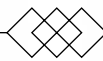
Caninoids (star people):
If you switch from STS to STO due to a trade (by getting level 5/6 in Spirituality) you immediately use the special effect of the STO Caninoids (1 DP for you and your trading partner).

Cosmic Mayans (star people):
The STO effect only applies to when your own stars get conquered by an another player.

Rogue AI (star people):
The STO effect only applies to your own ships (i.e. you cannot convert ships of other players).

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