

Lords of the Earth Campaign One

AN AGE OF AIR AND STEAM

Turn 209

Anno Domini 1747 – 1748



TURN 210 ORDERS DUE BY Friday, January 11th, 2002

ANNOUNCEMENTS

All Notes, Clarifications and Announcements have been moved into their own Notes document, as have the Industrial Supplement rules. **You should read them!**

http://www.throneworld.com/lords/lote01/11_notes.html

http://www.throneworld.com/lords/lote01/lote_is_1_3_0.html

Music List

Laputa – Castle In The Sky

Dead Can Dance - Host

NORTH ASIA

Mercenaries	Minimum bid listed in [x].
Condotierris	15c, 20i, 10a [1gp each] (at Bandar in Ormuz)
Captains	Saigo Tsugumichi (M968) [5gp] (in Bandar) Bantag Yen (MB77) [10gp] (in Zagros)
To hire, please contact...	Pacific Mercenary and Trust Corporation
Quality Ratings	i15 w15 s18 c12 a12 z3

TOKUGAWA JAPAN (Tokushima on Shikoku)

Kii Yoshimune, Shogun of All Nippon, Daimyo of Manila, King of the Philippines, The Sea-Spear, Monster-Slayer.

DIPLOMACY Nagi in Yamaguchi(f)

Doings in Japan were remarkably quiet – the cities of Nakamura and Tokushima were expanded and their fortifications rebuilt and improved. The various fleets which had been dispatched to the far corners of the earth were recalled and the sailors got some shore leave, which helped boost the local economy. The Shogun's wife and son, who had been dispatched to hide in safety, returned, as it seemed the sky would not, in fact, fall (again). Lord Yamazaki, who had been blatantly collecting a considerable side income from the pilgrims thronging to the shrine at Ise, was finally accused of corruption, tried by the Shogun's court and exiled to the northern islands to hunt for crabs. A brisk auction followed to re-appoint his lucrative position with a more circumspect governor.

PACIFIC MERCENARY & TRUST CORPORATION (Kryztn on Luzon)

Juchen Agoi, President and Executive officer

DIPLOMACY Medan in the Marianas(bo), Port Kolos in Sakalava(bo), Mexicali(mf)

Despite initial hostility between the Chinese court and the Corporation, the services provided by the PM&T apparently

outweighed the danger of 'cultic contamination.' As a result, a large number of PM&T ships were gainfully employed in shipping an even larger number of Ming troops to holiday in the Persian Gulf and then back again.

Closer to home, the Corporation acquired leases to the ruined Ming cities of Luang in Fujian and Kwangchou in Kwangsi. In both places, a large number of Corporation workers, officers and their families were settled, restoring each city to 1 GPv.

The deaths of the captains Che-Fu and Senge in early 1747 threw a number plans for a loop, but Juchen (as it happened) was in position to carry through himself, though at his advanced age it was far more work than he would have liked.

THE PURE REALM (Fusan in Silla)

Great Master Wan Ho, Abbot of the Wing Kung Temple of the Greater Vehicle of the Message of the Bodhisattva

DIPLOMACY Kwangsi(ab), Koeuichou in Szechwan(ch), Yichiang in Hubei(ch), Shaoyang in Hunan(ch), Nanchang in Jiangxi(ch), Ganzhou(ch)

Ah, now Fusan bustled with throngs of pilgrims and gangs of workers. The districts destroyed in the wild sea were repaired and repopulated – there were never any lack of men and women seeking lodgings in holy Fusan – and work continued on the northern 'pilgrim road' over the mountains into Koguryo province. Thanks to the generosity of many adherents of the faith, the storehouses of the city were also stocked afresh with rice, beans and wine.

The influence of the Realm spread rapidly in Ming lands, swifter almost than the plague which had destroyed the southern provinces. All this expansion, sadly, proved too much for Cho Hun, who had been keeping things in Kwangtung and points south together by main effort. He perished of a cough (no, not the plague, something else of common derivation) in 1748. The hosts of guardians and spies around him could do nothing to save him.

Back in Fusan, the guidance of the Realm immediately fell into the hands of the notoriously martial Wan Ho, who held the loyalty of the large and politically powerful Temple Guard. Given none of the other priestly potentates was present, his accession was without incident. Well, almost...

Also in 1748, a great congregation of younger priests from throughout Asia and India converged upon Fusan to debate (as they had been invited by the late Cho Hun) matters pressing upon the faith. The most vocal of these young firebrands were those from Judean lands, where living a circumspect and hunted existence had given them some very strange ideas.

In particular, they felt even the least-learned priest or acolyte should have some say in temple or stupa affairs. There was vigorous conversation as a result. Wan Ho, who was not the most patient of men, finally tired of their endless prattle and had the whole lot rounded up and set to ascetic devotions – under a vow of silence!

Further, the death of Cho Hun caused communications between Fusan and the Khemer lands to fail – as the Great Master had been handling such things himself – and there was great confusion. As a result, the various abbots and monks in those territories south of Annam took to deciding matters for themselves and paying very little attention to whatever irregular direction they might happen to receive from Fusan.

THE MANCHU MONGOL EMPIRE (Harbin in Shangtu)

Manchu Ch'ien-Lung, God-Emperor of the Middle-Kingdom

DIPLOMACY Jilin(f), Mantap(f)

The breakneck expansion of the Manchus into the northern wastelands halted as they took a breather from clearing Ice-blighted

land. Instead, the cities of Tungur in Bandao, Kaiching in Koguryo, Shenyang in Liao-Tung and Amgar in Suifenhe expanded.

THE KINGDOM OF PRESTER JOHN (Maclan in Tuhnwhang)
Megan Corrigan, Khagan of Karakocho, The White Goddess, Wolf-Sister of the Altai

DIPLOMACY Kucha(nt), Sinkiang(nt)

Faced with nothing less than a crisis of faith in the ability of the government to rule after the disaster of the Mesopotamian campaign and the deaths not only of the Khagan and the khan of the Guranites, but also of nearly every fighting man in the kingdom, Queen Megan summoned a *jirga* of the clan headmen to advise her in how to proceed. While the elderly hetmen gathered in Maclan, everyone else was busy expanding the cities of Maclan in Tuhnwhang, Hami in Turfan and Anxi in Yumen.

As it happened, Megan knew what she wanted the *jirga* to approve – a nation governed by a compact between the people, the clansmen and the royal family; embodied in the *jikhe tsaaz* (or constitution) which defined the roles of the royal family, the *jirga*, the clansmen, the people and the *tsets* (the courts). A great deal of wrangling and complaining followed, but Megan was very stubborn.

THE DIVINE KINGDOM OF JUDAH (Pienching in Honan)
Yui-Yen Ben-Yair, The Hand of God, Champion of the Hosts of Christ, Celestial Emperor, huey tlaotani

DIPLOMACY None

Matters in the northern kingdom were remarkably peaceful. The people – despite the harsh winters and pale sun – had plenty to eat and drink. Many soldiers who had been absent on the frontiers returned home for winter festival of '48, which was a cause for great rejoicing, particularly since very few of them seemed to have perished in battle. The grumpy old Emperor also returned to his palace in Pienching, and would have been satisfied with the state of the world save for news of the death of his son Pei-Wen to measles. Then the Emperor was even grumpier than before.

Only an expedition led by General Tcho into the wasteland of Kiangsu marred the peace and prosperity of the realm – they were beset by unnatural creatures and slain, leaving no survivors. Well, and there was the trouble in the northern cities of Beijing and El'Khudz – were efforts to convert the Buddhist populace to Roman Catholic founded amid rioting, murders and general anarchy in the streets. Judean troops were forced to intervene to restore order and the garrisons in those frontier towns were reinforced.

JUST THE PLAIN OL' MING CHINESE EMPIRE
 (Wuhan in Hupei)
Hongzhi Ying-Kwon, Emperor of China, Hammer of the Barbarians, The Redeemer, Divine Son of Heaven, The Merciless

DIPLOMACY Miao-Ling(t)

Unlike the slothful Judeans – who never did anything – the Ming were very busy. Young Ying-Kwon was eager to prove the indolence of his youth was a thing of the past. Aye! Instead, he would wench, debauch and carouse as no Emperor of China had ever done! In fact, aside from greedily seizing command of every spare regiment of troops in the Empire, he spent so little time in the palace or his offices the clerks forgot what he looked like.

Luckily, the bureaucracy knew which way was up and things trundled along without the 'Young Tiger.' Two new cities were founded as military colonies in the south – Hanoi in Annam and Oniko'wan in Lingnan. The city of Hong Tseng in Kwangtung also



expanded in a desperate attempt to recover from the loss of the north-eastern cities to the Blow and the Plague.

While the Japanese rebuilt the cities on the coast, the priests of the Pure Realm (who held ever greater sway over the temples and local priesthoods of the Empire) rebuilt some barns and paddy-dikes in Kwangsi province. The unaccustomed appearance of a Franciscan 'brown-robe' in Lingtung province caused something of a sensation, but apparently the padre was only on his way northward, making his way to Judea and avoiding the Burning Sea.

Rather desultory work also began on a whole complex of airship factories in Wuhan, a road between Kienchou and Lingtung and this stupid European plan to have all the pig-pens be of a consistent size. In all of these matters, the Emperor took an intense interest for, oh, about three days and then abandoned them to his subordinates.

Rumors of a fresh Javan invasion of the south proved to be wildly exaggerated tales caused by four or five thousand Javan soldiers being let out on 'liberty' from the naval base at Yu-Lin simultaneously. Some property damaged was sustained by the bars on the Lingnan side of the border, but that might have been caused by the construction workers from Oniko'wan.

There was also the matter of the "Two Blossoms" – the Emperor's seventeen-year-old aunts Yanma and Nimma. These hellions were constantly making a ruckus in the imperial court, flirting with boys, throwing almonds at the Emperor, being a bad example for the Empress and generally paying no attention to his august majesty. As a result, Ying-Kwon ordered them packed off to legendary Wudan Mountain, where he hoped they would be regularly beaten with birch-sticks by the Dao masters. Only after they had been gone for several months did the dissolute Emperor realize his young wife, Ye Geema of Lingsi, had stowed away with the caravan. Being parted from her best friends had driven the usually mild Ye to desperation.

By the time a column of cavalry arrived at Wudan Mountain to escort the wayward Empress back to the court, she was already an accepted disciple of the Wind-Sword masters and refused to return.



Figure 1. The Three Blossoms

SOUTH ASIA

Mercenaries	Minimum bid listed in [x].
Condotieri	30c 30i 10a 5s [1gp each]
Captains	Gemish Huorn (M956) [5gp]
To hire, please contact...	None
Quality Ratings	i15 w17 s20 c11 a12 z5

THE KHEMER EMPIRE[♠]

Bao Dai "The Pious" Moldoraja, True Emperor of the Khemer

Doings in Hafez, at the court-in-exile of the betrayed king Moldoraja, became ugly very quickly in '47. Thai agents were busy among the refugee princes and nobles, finding an eager accomplice in the Duke of Saigon, who wished to return home!

As a result, Moldoraja was murdered by the Duke's men in the spring of '47 and Blajakay's agents were quickly on hand to secure the loyalty of the dead Emperor's troops¹. By the fall Dai Viet, Mison and Champa were in Thai hands. A sad end for an ancient and noble lineage... though the boy Khejaraja still lived, though he was no more than a prisoner in the cruel hands of Blajakay.

THE THAI EMPIRE (Angkor Wat in Khemer)
*Ayuthaya Blajakay "Red Hand", Regent for...
Khejaraja Moldoraja, Emperor of the Khmer*

DIPLOMACY Ugly, very ugly...

Having seized an empire, the Red Hand now devoted all of his efforts to secure the prize. He ran through two wives before finding one who could yield up a healthy son without dying herself. He also directed his son Bharwonkay to wed, though the boy was rather sulky about the whole affair. Armies and embassies were dispatched in all directions.

The noble-browed lord Taqajaya took an army up to the troublesome north-western frontier and found the provinces of Samatata, Arakan and Palas all once more independent. Lacking what he felt was sufficient strength to essay a campaign among the Moslem barbarians, he saw to the defenses of Ava. On the eastern side of the realm, general Hansajya marched through Cochin, Champa, Mison and Dai Viet – accepting the fealty of those provinces for the Regent. Some nasty business in Hafez was cleaned up and the 'missing' Imperial fleet recovered.

For a wonder, the priests of the Pure Realm actually backed off on their aggressive campaign of proselytization in Moslem lands. Instead of engaging in fisticuffs with the Shi'a imams in Yasarid territory, they concentrated on the independent or Thai provinces of Samatata, Arakan and Ava – where they found great success.

Diplomatic efforts in Mon and Laos met with unmitigated, violent, failure. Both embassies were ambushed by the hostile, doubtless-flesh-eating locals and slaughtered.

HOSOGAWA BORNEO (Kozoronden in Sabah)
Hosogawa Suenaga, Daimyo of Kozoronden

DIPLOMACY None

With the tides receding and the sky – at least – not growing any dimmer, the Hosogawa minded their own business, built a lot of queer-looking warehouses and factories and mourned the passing of the veritably ancient lord Shigo, who had ruled them for so many years. His grandson Suenaga, though of beardless years, became the new daimyo.

JAVA (Sunda in Pajajaran)
Pedregon, Great Kahuna of Java, Emperor of the Maori, the Sea Spear

DIPLOMACY Tempyo(f)

In the sunny southern isles, everyone breathed a sigh of relief – the trouble in the west had died down and Shir'le and her mad quest were already the stuff of legend – so considerable hope was held out for the reign of Nita, and her soon-to-be-child. Sadly, the Empress did not survive childbirth and the boy delivered from her cooling corpse died within hours. Lord Pedregon was devastated,

¹ Truth be told, the Thai had sent an embassy to convince Moldoraja to abdicate in favor of his son and enter a monastery in retirement. But the old man was already dead when they arrived – so what could you do?

but managed to muster himself enough to declare himself Kahuna and Shir'le's nine-year old son Wili his heir.

Poor luck also struck the Javan diplomatic mission to Tempyo in the great southern land – lord Lr'ee took sick and died after eating too many blue crabs in shrimp butter – and admiral N'dret was forced to sail to take charge of the embassy. An Aztec trade delegation arrived in Sunda to see the Kahuna. They had crossed the Pacific on a PM&T cutter.

THE SUPREME PRIMACY OF ORO (Fukuzawa in Irith)
Mola ne Wooka, High Priest of the Shark

DIPLOMACY Nokama(ch), Pocara(ch), Rabaul on Bismarck(mn)

The priests of Oro, as is only proper, spent a great deal of time at sea, sailing hither and yon.

THE BORANG BAKUFU (Sakuma in Borang)
Izuryama Toho, Daimyo of Borang, Lord of the North, Emperor of Austral

DIPLOMACY Eromagna(f)

The tragedy afflicting the royal house of Java echoed in Borang, where the young Queen Jima also died of complications of childbirth. Though Toho was saddened, she had already borne him four sons! "A blessed woman," he said, watching as the ashes of her funeral pyre mounted towards a dim blue sky. In the north, stymied by the growing power of Java in Broome and thereabouts, the cavalcade of Bakufu ambassadors turned east and visited Eromagna and Arukun. Sadly, the tribesmen and bush-samurai of the peninsula rejected their overtures, forcing Kahwazi and Shiguro to repair to Iruka in Aanx to find hospitality.

NANHAI WANG'GUO (Rabaul on Bismarck)
Sugawara Te Anu, Daimyo of the Southern Seas

DIPLOMACY None

Angered by the temerity of the Borang and the Black Fleet, Te Anu ordered his fleets to sea in a great armada. They surged forth from the fortress-city of Rabaul, covering the blue waters with endless sails... but where they set course for, no man could say.

Until they landed on the coast of Madang, that is. A very powerful army under the command of general Watamati marched inland and, after several months of hacking their way through the jungle, invaded the highland province of Maoke. The headhunters and bat-people could not resist the Nanhai guns and artillery, so all the cloudy valleys were brought under the sway of Te Anu.

THE MAORI IMPERIUM (Joetsura on Te Ika A Maui)
Tinopai Great Tooth, Lord of the Fleet, Emperor of the Maori, Blessed of Oro, The Big Kahuna

DIPLOMACY Chotan on Attu(t)

Fearing the rightful wrath of the Nanhai, Tinopai summoned home all of his ships and soldiers, preparing to defend Joetsura to the death! But then nothing happened... so the Maori were forced to invent rugby to fill the time.

CENTRAL ASIA AND INDIA

Mercenaries	Minimum bid listed in [x].
Condottieri	2hc, 7c, 7i, 5a [2gp each]
Captains	Rajah of Vijashuram (M836) [5gp] Zoloft the Calm (M821) [5gp] Eon of Axum (MB45) [10gp] ²
To hire, please contact...	None
Quality Ratings	i16 w20 s17 c11 a13 z6

² Will not work of Masai, RSA or Java.

SHI'A IMAMAT (Yathrib in Kosala)*Rhemini, Ayatollah of the Shi'a, Voice of Allah***DIPLOMACY** Kalinga(ab), Panyda(mn), Gaur(ch)

Rhemini, while traveling throughout the south and convincing the local imams, mullahs and judges to follow his direction, responded a letter received from the west by sending Aba'sin Hammadi to the court of Mosul, where the noted Islamic patriot and war-hero Muyayia Sayyaf Adin was grappling with a number of pan-Islamist issues.

Efforts at missionary work in Palas were foiled by the intransigent nature of the Buddhist colonists there (who, even with the withdrawal of the Thai armies in the area, were still fighting on.) In a similar matter, the Imam withdrew its 'interest' in Jaunpur.

YASARID INDIA (Yathrib in Kosala)*Abdullah Al-Din, "The Lucky", Shah of India, Prince of Basra and Amon Sil***DIPLOMACY** Gaur(nt)

Abdullah's daughter kept busy while her father was away, bearing another son and keeping the rickety-rails of government sort of on the tracks (but she just was not the greatest and most enlightened ruler of the age).

Abdullah, meanwhile, was determined to test his luck on the field of war **again**, despite being repeatedly thrashed by the Hussites. Determined to restore his tarnished honor, he hired a large number of mercenaries (under the command of the exiled Prince Eon of Axum) and launched a three-pronged invasion of the Southern League states.

Abdullah and Imhotep the Egyptian marched into Chera at the head of 12,000 men, emir Wahad of Tripuri invaded Kakatiya with his personal guard of five thousand samadars and Eon embarked on a campaign into Karnata with eight thousand Persians and a coterie of Yasarid engineers.

THE SOUTHERN LEAGUE (Amon Hen in Karnata)*Georg Fulk, Baron of Satava, warleader of the League, plus seven of his fellow dukes and barons***DIPLOMACY** Pawar(f to Anhivarta, then to Kakatiya)

With the onset of the Yasarids (Muslim scum! when would they ever learn?) the various and diverse princes of the League rushed to aid their fellows. Of course, some of them moved a little slower than others – Adhemar of Anhivarta paused in marching to aide Robert of Kakatiya so he could marry his daughter to Raymond of Pawar's son and seal a tight little relationship between them...)

However, the fighting in Kakatiya dragged into later summer as Robert delayed a standing fight. Eventually Adhemar did arrive and then a spirited engagement at **Sekunderabad** laid matters straight. The six-thousand-odd Hussites (mostly cavalrymen) plowed into the midst of the Yasarid lines and were immediately butchered by massed rifle volley and chain shot from the Moslem guns. The Leaguers broke and scattered. Adhemar was killed and Robert only barely escaped with his life.

Emir Wahad hoped to advance into Pawar in the wake of conquering Kakatiya, but found the Hussite landowners and townsmen so violently opposed to Moslem rule he was forced to hold in place with his entire force, just to secure a line of retreat.

Prince Eon's foray into Karnata faced greater difficulties – the mountains of the Carnatic were rough and the enemy was possessed of sufficient artillery and Duke Fulk was a match for Eon's own formidable military prowess... as it happened, the League armies gathered in Karnata outnumbered Eon's army by 12,000 to 10,000. After blocking the mercenaries advance with a strong force under the command of duke Tancred, Fulk swept into

the enemy rear with his forces and Eon's army was smashed in a bloody rout at **Vellore**. The Axumite escaped, though his army did not – though some did raise their swords in surrender, so sparing their lives. Fulk and Tancred, their blood up, immediately counter-invaded Madurai.

Abdullah's invasion of Chera, meanwhile, had met with great success. The League barons of Nasik and Chera could only muster a paltry four thousand men to resist the 12,000 Moslems, so they ran away. The Shah subdued the province in fine style and then learned of the invasion of Madurai. Worried, Abdullah marched back south and east to protect his capital. This caused Chera to revert back to League control as the baron slipped back into the province with his men.

As it happened, both Fulk and Abdullah reached Madurai and the environs of **Zefara** at much the same time. Their armies were nicely matched in numbers and artillery, though the gulf in expertise between Fulk (a veritable Hussite Alexander) and Abdullah (far closer to Darius than Xerxes...)³ was wide. The Yasarids were soundly thumped and streamed in disorder from the field. Then Tancred's horsemen were among them and the retreat dissolved into a horrific rout. The Hussite lancers and hussars slaughtered the shrieking Moslems, leaving the roads south from Vellore choked with bodies, abandoned guns, cassions and all the wreck of war.

Eager to make hay while the sun shone, Fulk and Tancred did not pursue Abdullah (yes, he'd survived again) south, but looted Madurai and shelled Zefara into submission. The hapless city was subjected with a thorough sacking by the Hussite soldiers, who took great delight in wreaking as much havoc as possible. They were helped, in great part, by the large underclass of Hussite landowners, peasants and tradesmen in the province, who took great delight in overthrowing their hated Yasarid oppressors. Those mosques, schools and libraries maintained by the Shi'a Imamate were also destroyed.

At the same time, the barons of Chera and Nasik had made a foray into Pandya as well. They did not have enough strength to capture Mozul, though they blockaded the city from the land. They did take care to loot and destroy the Shi'a madrasas and mosques in the province, which proved to be rich with loot. Very rich.

THE REALM OF ARNOR (Schwarzkastel in Edrosia)*Peregrin von Hessen, Rajah of India, Duke of Delhi, Grand-Duke of Aballach, Prince of the Black Tower***DIPLOMACY** Uttar Pradesh/Dehli(f),

Rajput(down to ea)/Kaunaj(ea),

Massive infusions of Albanian gold kept the Duke's ship of state afloat, as it were. Armed with this largesse, Peregrin expanded his capital at Schwarzkastel again and cleaned up the city considerably. New public parks, theatres, sewer systems... almost modern! Missionary efforts began in Chandela under the watchful guns of the Arnorite garrison. Peregrin also announced the institution of the "Rajah's Cup" – a horse race in Schwarzkastel set upon the first weekend of cool weather in winter. In '48, despite bombings and a suicide-machete-attack, a Chitorean rider – Dunher Filisios – won the cup on 'Snowpeak.'

While the Rajah attempted to put a good face upon the state of the realm, the end of the war with the Yasarids had not ended the divisiveness between the Hussite lords of the west and their Moslem and Hindu subjects. In fact, between '47 and '48, there were literally hundreds of attacks against the organs of government in Arnor-controlled lands. Dozens of ministers were murdered



³ Hey, these are **Greek** Hussites fighting **Persian** Moslems in India. Wacky.

(mostly by machete attacks in the streets, or by gunpowder bomb attacks) and hundreds of lesser civil servants, particularly tax collectors, judges and bailiffs were also slain. At the same time, Schiller's "Black Watch" waged a brutal counter-war of repression against any kind of Hindu or Moslem communal society, including burning temples and mosques and widespread arrests and executions at all levels of civic life. No one, on either side, seemed safe.

Even Peregrin moved amid a veritable sea of guardsmen. His efforts to find princess Arwen a husband bore fruit, however, in John of Dehli. The two were wed in early summer of '47. The wedding was nearly without incident – no terror attacks at least – but the bride's joy was a little tainted by the sickness (and eventual death) of Queen Katarine due to consumption. Still, the woman had not been *her* mother, so she did not shed too many tears.

The newly-married Arwen, meantime, spent her honeymoon in Jaunpur as commander of a strong army, where the Imamate was run out of the province and every mosque, madrasa and Moslem holy-place was put to the torch. A vicious and protracted effort was made to stamp out Islam in the region, which resulted in thousands of deaths, a great deal of property damage, enormous ill-feeling and – by the end of '48 – very little change in the beliefs of the populace.

SHAHDOM OF AFGHANISTAN (Kabul in Afghanistan)
Ahmad Durani, Shah of the Afghans, Lord of Kabul

DIPLOMACY Dasht'e'lute(a), Shadad(a), Firoz Kohi(f)

While the Durani-shah remained in Kabul, attempting to convince Persian scholars to come to his capital and teach in the new university, his son and lieutenants were busy in the hinterlands, securing the active allegiance of the chieftains on the Persian frontier. The death of the shah of Firoz Kohi came as unwelcome news, particularly since the grizzled old chieftain had been in command of the garrison of Kashmir...

THE KINGDOM OF KUSHANS (Astakana in Kush)

Bujayapendra, Blessed of Vishnu, prince of Astakana

DIPLOMACY Kashmir/Parapavura(f)

And while the Durani busied themselves in the south, Bujayapendra marched his army south over the mountains into Kashmir. There, the long and secret work of his son Mujehendra was revealed – a general uprising filled the province with cheering crowds and unexpectedly armed men, the adherents of prince Kushemu of Kashmir. The Kushans were welcomed with open arms and the combined forces of Bujayapendra and Kushemu advanced upon Parapavura.

The Afghani commander of the garrison, the chief of the Firoz Kohi, meanwhile had taken sick and died. His men, faced with a popular uprising in the city and the advancing Kushan army, fled. The rest of the Afghani garrison fled with them.

In the fullness of time, prince Mujehendra and his wife, princess Jahina (of Kashmir), entered the ancient city atop an elephant draped with gold and flowers. Mobs thronged the streets, praying and weeping and cheering. It was as though Krishna and Radha (see picture) had come upon the earth again, heralding an age of love and peace and harmony.⁴



THE NOBLE HOUSE OF TEWFIK (Al'Harkam in Carmania)

Tewfik Solomon, Purveyor of a slightly used set of office suits in Basra!

DIPLOMACY Ar-Raqqah in Mosul(ma), Oman(f), Kuwait City(ma), Ufra in Gurgan(mf)



Grown cautious in the wake of the recent calamities (though did Solomon complain? No – "man proposes," he was wont to say, "and Allah disposes.") the Tewfiki stayed close to home, summoning back agents in far-away places and tended to their knitting. A fortified post was established on the Omani coast. A trade delegation was also dispatched to Ar-Raqqah to extend the best wishes and hopeful prayers of the House to the Islamic Union forming there.

THE SAFAVID PERSIAN EMPIRE (Bukhara in Turkmen)

Safi Nusayr, Khan of Khans, Shahanshah of Persia, Prince of Bukhara, Caliph of the East

DIPLOMACY Beirut in Lebanon(t)

Having crushed his enemies and kept the realm safe from harm, Nusayr betook himself and his army back north from the coast, taking the time to visit many of the towns and cities of the central plateau. He return to Semnan (the new Persian capital) was a glad occasion, for news reached him upon arrival of the departure of the Judean host in the north and peace upon all the land.

A veritable wagon-train of gold was sent off to Sweden to repay various war-loans which had finally come due. Nusayr was pleased to see the item cleared from his books, though his accountants were still having heart-palpitations about the sums involved. A delegation, headed by Bahram Suren, was sent to Ar-Raqqah to assist the Islamist union being founded there.

In June of '47, a powerful squadron of Javan and Madagascarene ships arrived in Basra under the flag of the Sunlander Alliance. As the city was only held by a minimal garrison, the local Persian governor could do no more than salute as ten thousand Javan soldiers unloaded, regrouped and then marched north towards Baghdad.

A month later, general Faridun was entirely surprised – as he was supervising massive excavations of the rubble in and around the city – when the Javans marched past, flags flying, horns blaring and Skull Surfers hanging ten on their 'land-boards'. He rushed a regiment of riflemen to block their path and found their commander to be one Z'nardi the Wavewalker.

Discussions between the two commanders revealed the Javans were marching to Ar-Raqqah in Mosul, where Z'nardi had a message from Empress Nita for the Sultan, Muyaia Sayyaf Adin. After more discussion and some head-shaking, the Persians let the eastern sea-devils pass.

Efforts by the Persian lord Qasim on the Mediterranean coast bore some fruit – the middle-aged princess Kea was wed to a nobleman of Beirut and the Safavids made some diplomatic inroads there. The citizens were glad to accept Persian gold and immediately began fortifying their town.

THE ISLAMIC UNION (Ar-Raqqah in Mosul)

Muyaia Sayyaf Adin, Sultan of Ar-Raqqah, Prince of Mosul

DIPLOMACY Arbiliq(ea)/Kirkuk(nt), Diyala(t)/Khanaqin(ea), Kurdistan/Nineveh(pt – ceded by Sweden), Azerbaijan/Tabriz(pt – ceded by Sweden)

While Muyaia labored to gather a great conclave of embassies from all adjoining lands, and from the leaders of the Arab principalities, money also flowed in from friendly states, allowing

⁴ Sure....

him to restore Ar-Raqqah to goodly condition and fuel his various plans and desires. A powerful force of Masai soldiers ran up from Aqaba to visit, tried the food (made a face) and then ran back, singing their favorite running song (which involved counting the number of Ethiopian soldiers they had killed in battle).

In particular, letters and gifts were dispatched to every Moslem leader within a year's ride (it seemed), proclaiming a new "Islamic Union" to restore order and peace to the fertile crescent. Unfortunately, save for the Tuareg chieftains in Arbiliq and Diyala, there was not much response.

Respected leaders of the land, There will be a gathering of nations in Ar-Raqqah in the year Seventeen Hundred and Forty Seven. The meeting is being organized to discuss the fate of Islam most notably the lands formerly under the total domination of Rashid the Georgian King. I, Muyaia Sanyaf Adin "Sword of Allah", am aware that many if not all of you only did as were told under the all seeing eye of Rashid. Those days are behind us now, the evil overlord rest in the abyss, so please join me in my capital city and contribute to the organization of a new Moslem State, THE HOLY UNION OF ISLAM. The Holy Union of Islam will rise out of the ashes of Georgia like the proverbial phoenix and Islam shall be made whole again, Allah willing.

~ MUYAIA SANYAF ADIN "The Sword of Allah"

Help did arrive from the east, where the Shi'a Imam had dispatched an embassy to aid Muyaia and his efforts to restore Islamist control over the Middle East. A large number of clerks and scribes were also sent, which heartened the prince greatly.

CLOSED DOOR SESSION

Delegates from the former Georgian Lands, Muyaia, the Shi'a mullah Rabbani and Ali Adin in attendance.

Thank you gentlemen for coming to this somber occasion. I have been negotiating for the past year with the petty tyrants of the Alliance the brought down Rashid. I will tell you here and now they are nearly as foul as Rashid himself. Allah as my witness they demanded huge swaths of territory once part of Georgia and prior to that Syria. It was the belief of the Alliance that they could lock me in this province and that I would be happy living out the rest of my days there. They laugh at my small nation and they tell me no great power will respect me or bow to my wishes for I have not power.

The Ethiopian representative told me "your nation is meaningless as is all of Islam without a unifying force and the Coptics will do all they can to make sure there is never again a unified Middle East".

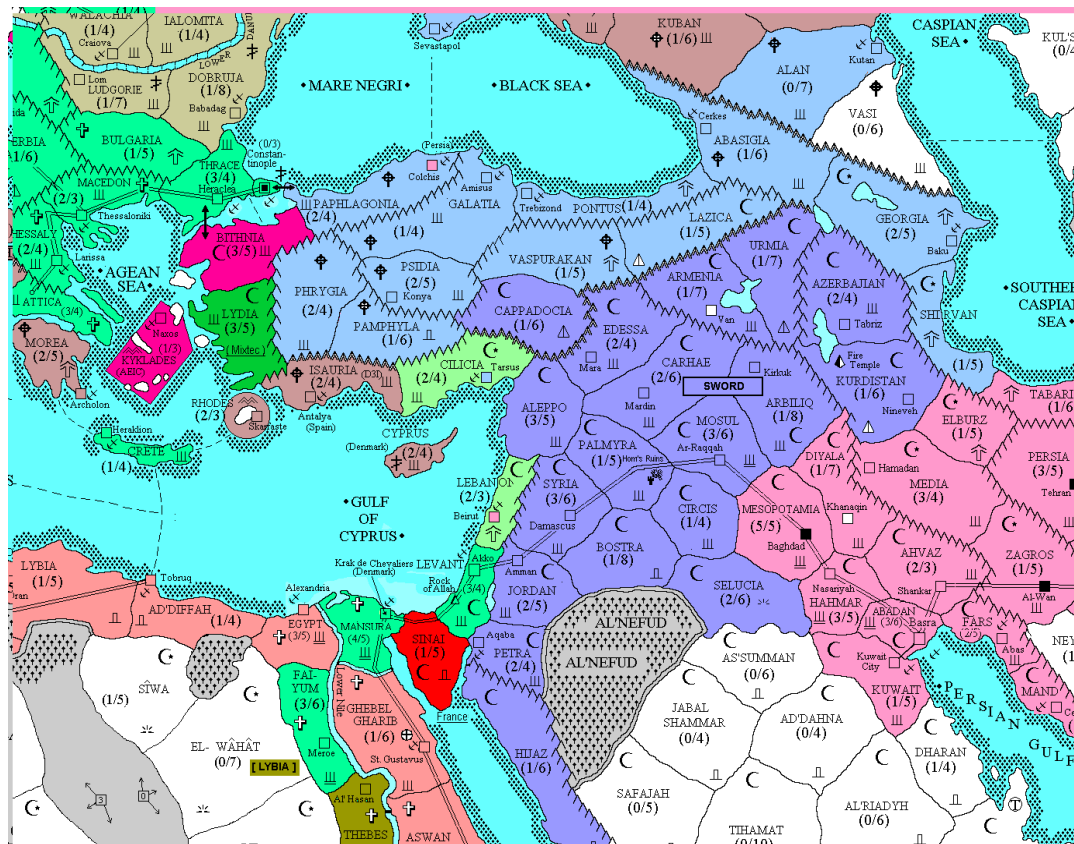
Well I am not about to roll over like an Ethiopian whore. I am not about to beg for scraps from Christian Nations table, be it Hussite, Catholic or Coptic. I told the Alliance representatives I would come to this meeting (with the Arab princes). I told them that Allah would guide me gracefully through the intricate web of anger and hate that wells up in the souls of the Arab states. I told them that I would bind your souls to a single cause and that when I returned to the Congress of Ar-Raqqah I would have alliances with all of you. I told them that Allah sent "the Sword" back from the Promised Land to be the Bane of Rashid, Douser of the Zorastoran Flame and Founder of the Holy Union of Islam.

They laughed the told me there was no way that you, the Arab princes would give up freedom so quickly. I laughed back, they will not give me their freedom I will give them theirs!

Do you think you are Free? Do you believe that now that Rashid is gone the Franks will just go away too? Please do not play me for the fool like the Christians do. Do not try to convince me you are so blind that you can't see the writing on the wall. The Christian nations and the Persians would subjugate every single one of you. They would roll troops across your borders and beat you and your people down till you have no more will to fight.

Do you want this? Some of you without occupation troops in your

country will say they Christians will not come and if they do we can stand up to them. Well.... I am here to tell you that if you willing jeopardize your nation by not uniting with your brothers, Allah will ignore your prayers for salvation from the Christian. You will plead to Allah, "Allah spare my wife from being raped by that Coptic soldier" or "Spare my son the indignity of working as a slave in the Coptic Salt mines." When you ascend if it happens,



Partition of the Middle East as defined by the Concord of Ar-Raqqah ~ 1748

you will ask Allah why did that have to happen, why is my wife a Coptic whore and Allah will tell you this simple truth. "You put yourself before me, you had to have a kingdom of your very own rather than uniting with your brethren for the greater good."

What do I know of Allah? Let me show you.

Muyaia lifts his shirt to show the wicked scar where Osman ran him through at Ain-al-Jalut. He removes the 'Shihab' stone from his shirt and rolls the glassy iron across the table. The stone is black as night, pitted by abyssal fires. None of the princes could bring themselves to touch something which had descended from heaven on wings of fire.

I have crossed the uncrossable Anvil of God; I have journeyed into the southern desert and recovered the Sharib. I have found the Descendent of the Prophet Mohamed and married her, I have given her and Islam a son Ali Adin, finally there is a male descendent directly linked to Mohamed. The Demon king has been thwarted. Are not all these things the portents of the Islamic Resurgence?

Would the Shi'a primate send an emissary all the way from India if he did not feel the events that transpire here are not important? If you

question the truth as I tell it then ask the holy men that occupy this chamber. Would they not have spoken up if what I say is a lie.

Enough rhetoric Muyaia, you say – get to the point.

Does the alliance fear me? Does the alliance fear you (*pointing at the Mesopotamian delegate*)? Does the Alliance fear you (*pointing at the Capadocian delegate*) No, as individuals they do not fear any of us. We are incapable of defending ourselves versus any of them. What they do fear is Unity.

A unified Pan Arab state to oppose their wishes, their manipulation and influences. A state dare I say Nation that could oppose an intrusion onto Arab soil. A Nation to stop the Coptic state from purging the Arab populations from Arabia. I propose to you that we found the Holy Union of Islam If all of you can agree to have some kind of connection with my proposed state then I will be able to begin to push back the walls of the Alliance. I can go back to the meeting at the Congress of Ar-Raqqah and show all the delegates involved that the Pan Arab states refuse to bow to the whims of nations that are not Islamic and that do not owe allegiance to the lands of the Middle East and that if pressed we will fight to keep our lands free of foreign influences.

You doubt my integrity?

My resolve?

Are you willing to die for you beliefs? I am.

Are you willing to risk your life to prove I am a sham?

I will accept your challenge if you want to make it. I do not fear you or any man, I know what I do I do in the name of Allah and live or die I have served him well. If you do not kill me someone will it is only a matter of time. So challenge my authority if you need to or accept my authority if you are having second thoughts.

The majority of the Conference had passed when, as Muyaia was speaking with a number of delegates in a shaded garden, a distant thundering boom was heard. Everyone leapt to their feet – artillery! The sultan gathered his guards men and immediately rushed to the southern gates of the city. There, to the gaping surprise of everyone, they saw a brightly-attired army of foreign aspect arrayed among the fields and orchards.

“We have come for Muyaia,” a herald bellowed.

The sultan – against the advice of his bodyguards – exposed himself on the wall. “I am Sayyaf Adin, lord of these lands. What do you desire here, strangers?”

The commander of the strangers, a brawny, tan, broad-chested man, betook himself from their ranks and – carried upon a long wooden board by six even-brawnier men – approached the wall.

“I am Z’nardi the Wavewalker,” he called in a voice like brass gong. “My Empress, the great Kahuna, the Sea-Spear, She-Who-Cleaves-The-Waves, slayer of the Ming, the Japanese, the Judeans, the Sarawak, the Khemer, the Australs; overlord of the Maori, has words for you.”

“Say them, then.” Muyaia spoke bravely, but his keen eyes could not fail to note the gleaming rifles of the encircling army nor the massed ranks of their cannon. Within the city, too, there were only a few thousand men... and only a paltry number of cannon.

“My Empress,” Z’nardi continued, his voice ringing back from the sandstone and brick walls of the city, “is lately with child. And her sleep is much disturbed by, sir, your *constant prattle* upon the mailing list.” His hand stabbed from east to west, indicating his army, “and if there is not restraint, and peace, and keeping upon the topic, lord Muyaia, then your city and all within shall perish and the walls shall be cast down and burnt with fire till they crack and the lands and groves sown with salt and ash.”

The sultan stared, agog, and began to sweat, feeling his death quite close.

“So says my Empress and so shall her irresistible will be done!”

And so negotiations began in earnest. Four months later, having eaten Muyaia out of house and home, confiscated all the rugs in the city and enjoyed themselves immensely, the Javans marched off south again. Nine months later, there were an inordinate number of squally, brown, brass-voiced babies born in the city.

There was also some kind of religious dispute brewing in the mountains of the Lebanon, where a fanatical sect (the Karidjites) of the local Sunni populace had grown popular among the downtrodden and those afflicted by the “Frankish” (Islander) occupation.

EUROPE

Hussite Mercenaries	Minimum bid listed in [x].
The Hussite Legion	10ec, 10i, 10c, 10a [1.5 gp each]
Captains	Ludovico Sfortza (M834) [5gp]
To hire, please contact...	Albanian East India Company
Quality Ratings	c12 i15 a14 w17 s20 z6



Officers of the Hussite Legion

Catholic Mercenaries	Minimum bid listed in [x].
Condotieri	5hei, 9xea (AA guns), 10hea (rocket batteries) [2gp each]
Captains	Baron Von Hausen (M783) [4gp] Natasha Tukachevsky (MA56) [5gp] ⁵
To hire, please contact	Norsktrud (save for Natasha)
Quality Ratings	c12 i16 a13 w18 s18 z6

Russian Winter Festival Song...

*We five worms of Sarku are.
Devouring flesh, we burrow afar
Field and fountain,
Moor and mountain,
Following yonder Shedra.
O Worm of wonder,
Worm of Blight,
Worm with deathly beauty bright.
Downward leading,
Still proceeding,
Guide us to Thy perfect night.*

AERONAUTICAL RESEARCH & FABRICATION

(Rostov in Levedia)

Jessica Orozco, Captain of the West

Solyom Pasternak, Captain of the East

DIPLOMACY Ukiyo-ye on the Shetlands(ea),
Astrakhan in Khazar(nt), Tsaritysn
in Urkel(ea), Cortez in Granada(t)



Thanks to a fat infusion of gold from Sweden, the company was able to continue a wide range of research and development projects as well as keeping the factories of Rostov busy. They also started a lucrative shipping business providing caviar and sturgeon to the markets of London, Kingston and Malmö.

⁵ Presumably she won't work for Norskstrud or Spain, since they've posted a reward for her stylishly-coiffed head.

PRINCIPATE OF KIEV (Kiev²)

Anna Kournos, Queen-Regent for...

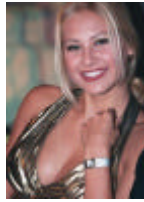
Boris, Prince of Kiev, Master of the Holy Rivers

DIPLOMACY None

A great deal of trouble was brewing in southern Rus lands. The prince had become convinced his government, his military, his groundskeepers were in the pay of none less than the Swede! Roused to unmitigated fury by the perfidy of his northern neighbors (who weren't even sending him a subsidy anymore...), Vladimir ordered his jackbooted lackeys to start breaking down people's doors and dragging the Swede-loving scum out into the street.

The prince was certain the Swedes were actively working for the annihilation of the Grand Principality – certain documents he'd received indicated they are hand-in-glove with the Cult of the Bone Mother whose debauched wheezing ghouls *feast on the flesh of Slavic Kievan children!*

All the Swedish merchants, tourists and expatriates in the country were dragged from their beds and many were lynched by enraged mobs of Slavic peasants and workers - anyone who bloody well spoke Swedish was dragged from their houses and received, at the very least, a sound kicking. Armed agents from the new BUREAU FOR PROTECTING CITIZENS FROM CORRUPTING FOREIGN INFLUENCES AND REPREHENSIBLE PRACTICES swooped down on any unwary Swedish citizens or other suspicious types and put them to the question. Many of these unfortunates were executed on the spot.



Belanus reviews the "Iron Guard"

To make matters worse, once the mob had a taste of looting and burning the houses of the 'Swedish sympathizers', they turned their attention upon those well-to-do enough to have escaped the worst of the famines.

In at least two instances, the enraged mob stormed the gates of some boyar's estate and crashed in upon their household at dinner before thinking "Hold on! We've become a mob! Woe! Woe! We were so swept up by the mob mentality that we were gonna lynch this poor Russian, one of our own.... Hold on! What's this? *Cultic paraphernalia! And children's bones in the soup! He's a cannibal cultist! Lynch him!*"



Vladimir became more distraught as reports poured in from the countryside; not only was he dealing with foreign infiltrators and cannibals but, worse, they had reduced the Orthodox sons and daughters of Kiev to the level of cattle! The noble men of Kiev died fighting Sweden's war in Georgia but now the Swedes used them as a food source! The Orthodox clergy in his realm was only too quick to pin the blame for all these horrific events upon the Catholic priesthood... most of whom were Swedish!

As the 'dark year' of '47 progressed, Vladimir and his 'Iron Guard' – led by Belanus and Vasilyko – seemed to have crushed all opposition in their realm. Hundreds of Swedish sympathizers and spies had been caught in the enormous dragnet. Actual cultists had been arrested and executed, their homes and hidden temples burned and sown with ash and salt.

Then, in the winter of '47, while Vladimir was attending church services with his youngest son Alexander at the great Orthodox cathedral in the kreml of Kiev, three men burst into the Royal box and opened fire at close range. The prince and his son and three of their attendants were instantly killed. Pandemonium ensued and a wild firefight broke out in the nave of the church between the assassins and a group of green-cloaked men who'd burst in only moments later. The assassins were all killed before the Kievan guardsmen (enraged and crushed by their failure) could intervene. The green-cloaked men, distraught at arriving too late, disappeared soon afterwards.⁶

Within the week, Queen Anna was proclaimed Regent for her son Boris Vladimirovitch, who was still only eleven years old. Pressed to make a statement, the Queen could only say the men seemed to have been 'servants of the Pale.'

PEOPLES REPUBLIC OF BAKLOVAKIA (Komarno in Slovakia)

Wysowski, First Citizen, Protector of the Workers and Peasants

DIPLOMACY None

Still sort of stunned by the Skyhammer and the damage wreaked upon the fair realm of Baklovakia, the Senate managed to bestir itself enough to allow Carthaginian, Islander and Swedish ships to call at Komarno (particularly since the dock was now repaired and the river was flowing clear again).

A learned conclave also gathered in the fields behind Mrs. Toporosky's shed, near the distillery, to discuss the construction of a *Planetary Ox Catapult*. After consuming a great deal of vodka (they were, sadly, out of Kievan vladka) everyone agreed that protecting the world required a mechanism to reach beyond the heavens.

"The first Ox on the moon!" Berkowski proclaimed, rather tipsily. "The people's Red banner on the Red planet!" Shouted back Gemmillisky, before falling out of the boat.

"Hic!" Chorused everyone else.

Late in '48, a huge crowd of Franks and Spanish arrived in Moravia, where some rather-beary-eyed Senate officials reported they had found refuge at the town of Ostrava on the Polish border, greatly expanding the tiny burg into something very like a city.

A GROG-SHOP SOMEWHERE IN THE WESTERN MEDITERRANEAN...

The room was crowded with boisterous sailors and longshoremen. It was lit only by a few feeble oil lamps, the illumination struggling against a cloud of thick roiling smoke hanging beneath the blackened beams of the low ceiling. Two men sat together in a booth far from the doorway.

⁶ Overheard: "Will we always be a step behind? Our efforts are cursed! Damn the «enemy» and their servants..."

One sipped from his glass of vodka, his face partially hidden by a beret pulled down over greasy hair and the raised collar of his greatcoat. He nervously eyed the tomahawk resting on the rough boards between them. Even in this poor light, the steel of the blade glistened blue, deeply etched with the stylized design of a spotted snake wearing a crown of feathers. 'The code word is Scapegoat,' he said, wiping his moustache.

His companion Tatanka smiled and drew up his shoulders within his feathered coat. "Very apt. From Servius?" He spoke in a lisping accent as his pale eyes flickered towards the entrance.

The Baklovakian nodded, surprised, looking intently at the angular face before him, cerulean eyes incongruent with sharp, bronzed features and smooth black hair gathered back at the nape and secured by a ring of pale green jade. "You have read the classics of the imperialist slave-owners?"

"But of course. I have read... many things in the schools of the Sisters." Tatanka stroked the worn leather bag on the table and then hefted the heavy package in one hand. "The final installment? More than enough for the task I think."

"Zgoda, mój przyjaciel. Na zdrowie!" replied the Baklovakian, slipping into his native tongue before he drained his glass. "We destroy certain incriminating evidence."

"And the casualties?"

"Sacrifices to the cause," he shrugged. "The Danish bureaucrats will blame the bourgeois reactionaries."

"Ah, by Yig," grinned Tatanka, "then they shall enter heaven on a raft of serpents."

"Niel!" snapped the vodka drinker, eyes blazing with fury. "The progressive dialectic denies the existence of gods. Or the rationality of such superstition." His empty glass cracked down onto the table. At the bar a few heads turned towards them and he hurriedly raised a hand to hide his face from their view.

The North Amerikan spread his hands slowly, one resting casually over the haft of his hand axe. "So it is written, in the little green book of your Tovarich Muhammad. Forgive me; you are right, of course," he agreed, inwardly amused. *Fool*, he thought, *my master will crush you in his coils, and She Who Cannot Be Named will devour you, even as you deny their very existence.*

ALBANIAN EAST INDIA COMPANY (Thessaloniki in Macedon)

Nikolas Argir, Senior Partner in the AEIC

DIPLOMACY Schwarzkastel in Edrosia(ci), St. Brendans in the Cape Verdes(bo), Calais in Flanders(mf)



Nikolas, ever mindful of securing his entrance to markets, poured quite a bit of money into the coffers of the Duchy of Arnor. His son's efforts in securing mercantile control of the Ducal capital also met with success, at last! Otherwise, the Company tended to its own business – particularly in Thessaloniki and Naxos, where a dizzying array of construction and research projects were underway.

Considerable investments were also made in the Hussite Legion, providing every man with custom boots, natty kepi-style caps, swank gray uniforms and fresh socks. Though the Concord of Ar-Raqqah gave the Company rights to the Asian province of Bithnia, their diplomatic mission there (led by an Englishman named Benjamin Franklin) failed to gain any leverage over the Moslem emir.

THE TREBIZOND BUGLE *Kiev Refugee Tales of Murder and Cannibalism Shock Crowd*

THE TIMES OF ALFREDVILLE *Three-headed Beast Devours Family in Goryn, pictures page 3.*

NEVILNA POST *Is This Another Khirghizia?*

THE SWEDISH EMPIRE OF RUSSIA (Grodno in Masuria)

Solomon, King of Sweden, Tsar of the All The Russias
Bengt Krycek, Crown Regent and Altkansler

DIPLOMACY Chernigov(nt)



The 'kansler breathed a big, big sigh of relief – believing the crush of events and war had finally slowed enough to allow him to see to the simple welfare of his kingdom. And indeed, work began on restoring fields long left fallow and new factories and jobs and economic stimulus... and then the first newspaper reports appeared about the catastrophe in Kiev.

During the advance of the Ice, with the cooperation of both Kiev and Riga, hundreds of thousands of Swedes and Russians had migrated south into Kievian lands, finding new homes far from the deadly Ice. Now, with the southern Rus in the grip of some endemic, virulent nationalism, they were dying or being forced to flee in droves. With the famines and chill weather already gripping the land, an epic-scale humanitarian disaster was in the making.

Krycek ordered Marsk Kutuzov south with his army to 'drive the cultists from Kiev' – for what else could have inspired Vladimir to such horrific excess?

The clerks in the Swedish Central Bank were forced to work overtime for three weeks to count all the gold Persian riyals which had arrived to close out a Crown loan to the Safavid court. "So much gold... hee hee hee..." The head clerk had to be taken away after six days, his eyes big as saucers. Local police forces, aided by Church fathers, made a number of raids in Skane. Apparently some vile cult had been operating there, corrupting the youth and confusing the adults.

As part and parcel of both the Royal Army withdrawal from Mesopotamia and the Council of Ar-Raqqah, the provinces of Kurdistan and Azerbaijan (so recently under Imperial rule) were ceded to the Islamic Union. The same council, however, placed the provinces of Georgia and Pamphyla within the Swedish sphere of influence. Alan, in the Caucasus, was made a protectorate.

An effort by General Thorvalds to overawe the denizens of Shirvan on the southern coast of the Caspian Sea ended badly – the Swedes retired in disorder, leaving many dead Moslems behind and several burning villages. The ethnic Kurds were *not* pleased at the incursion and swore blood-curdling oaths to take revenge upon Thorvalds and his men.

Back in Russia, the 'Kiev Crisis' was rapidly reaching explosive proportions. Not only was Kutusov's army advancing into the country from the north with orders to support the Vladimirist government against the 'cultic conspiracy', but Emperor Solomon's refugee fleet – packed to the gills with Swedish burghers and Russian babushkas, sunburns, bleached hair, trinkets and all – was rapidly approaching the mouth of the Dnepr.

Luckily for the pensioners, a Royal Navy courier zeppelin intercepted Solomon before he could sail into harm's way. The Emperor, learning of the atrocities being committed in Rus lands, immediately put his charges (including his family) ashore at Kherson and then set off for Kiev himself aboard an armored river boat.

Kutuzov, meantime, had rushed down to the walls of Kiev itself and there he found the Rus army had decamped southwards. Troubled by the sight of so many graves lining the road into the town (and suspicious-looking mounds of freshly turned earth in the fields) he entered the city. Everything was in a great uproar – Vladimir just having been murdered – and there was scattered fighting before the Marsk managed to find Queen Anna and assure her the Swedish Army was, in fact, here to help.

Between the Queen's appeal for calm and the Swedish troopers in the streets, order was restored within a few weeks. Kutuzov visited the Patriarch and assured that rather frosty gentleman of his intentions to support the Church against any cultist aggression and made sure every ex-Swedish citizen in sight was safely encamped within an enormous laager built on the river-bluffs south of the city.

Emperor Solomon arrived only a month later and met with the Queen. While expressing his regrets for the untimely death of her father, he also made it plain to Anna the rights and liberties of even ex-Swedish citizens would be protected by the Empire.

"If these men and women are no longer welcome here," he offered, as they sat to dinner – no tinned poodle meat in evidence – "then allow them to return to their homes in the north. I will arrange transport, food, housing and so on for them. There need be no further bloodshed."

Under the guns of a sizable Swedish army, there was little Anna could do but oblige the Emperor's request.

Field Marshal Belanus, meantime, had taken his Cossacks south into Atelzuko. An abortive foray across the Dnepr into Polovotsy found the Rus facing a host of Swedish regulars come up from the south. Belanus retired to Odessa, and then – when Dame Maksutov crossed the river to occupy the town – the Rus withdrew west into Pechneg.

THE GRAND DUCHY OF POLAND (Warsaw in Poland)

Frieda Leczinski, Duchess of Poland

DIPLOMACY None

The Duchess found herself besieged on all sides by incipient crises. First, rumors ran wild in the capital of an expected Swedish invasion. To forestall this grim eventuality, a hasty series of fortifications were erected in Bochnia, Lausatia and Pomern. Such was the rush of the moment, no one thought to consider the Swedes might, possibly, invade from the *other* side of the Duchy, where there were no defenses. All the construction work, however, caused the city of Berlin to expand.

Astronomers at the Royal Observatory in the mountains above Krakow also added fuel to a near-millennial fire by announcing a 'streak of light' in the southern sky was growing closer day by day... it could only be another Skyhammer nearing the Earth! Panicky mobs surged through the streets of Krakow, chanting and praying for deliverance, before someone noticed the astronomer's telescopes were catching sight of an airship beacon atop mount Babia Gora.

Due to an increasingly agitated series of letters between the Duchess and the Largoista regime in Spain, the Duchy decided to bar all Spanish shipping from their ports, fearing saboteurs and infiltrators of all kinds. Norskrad shipping, however, was not denied landfall. Behind the scenes, Frieda also had some very harsh words for her husband, Wilhelm, who had apparently gotten himself involved with some unsavory troublemakers.

To: Largo Caballero, President of Spain
From: Frieda Leczinski, Duchess of Poland

Excellency,

It has recently come to attention certain members of my household have engaged in common adventurism in Spain. We share your dismay and shock at this most distasteful turn of events, and assure you it is the official position of the Grand Duchy that your government is lawfully sovereign over Spain.

I have interceded personally to reorganize the Department in question, and a particular individual will be assigned more suitable duties as is becoming of their position, as soon as they return from Denmark. As

well, I have immediately ordered the reinstatement of Spanish shipping's landing privileges in Poland, the unfortunate rescindment of which was originally authorized by said same individual.

I very much share your position that the so-called "communards" were nothing more than youth lead astray into atheistic hooliganism.

Yours, Duchess Leczinski, Poland

Despite the tongue-lashing, the Duke set out for 'the south' within a fortnight, having gathered up a rough and ready band of brothers well steeped in carousing and all kinds of devilry. Though everyone seemed to expect their mission to remain secret, the loose tongues among the officers of hussars, grenadiers and landsknechts soon had the story all over Warsaw – there was to be war in Denmark and the Ducal Expedition would ride to fight on the side of right and justice!⁷

In the countryside, the general unease spawned by the reckless proclamations of the Astronomers and the government were edged ever closer to complete panic by the marauding passage of certain Ducal lords and their retinues of armed men – looking for 'suspicious people.' In fact, Lord Piotr was killed in Silesia near the end of '48 by a farmer he'd surprised behind a hayrick. Elderly Piotr, in the best fashion only bore a sword to beard his 'cultist' while the farmer had a musket.

Hussite missionaries continued to flock into Poland from Denmark, Bohemia and France. Some of them did good work among the Catholics, while others were no more than tourists and vagabonds taking advantage of a free meal and warm bed.

THE KNIGHTS OF TABOR (Mount Tabor in Bohemia)

Otto von Metz, Voice of Huss, Grand Master of the Order of the Knights of Mount Tabor

DIPLOMACY Dijon in Burgundy(ab)

The orderly life of the monks on Tabor was disturbed in the winter of '47 by the death of Grand Master Theisman. He was succeeded – after the proper conclave – by Otto von Metz, a senior knight commander and former secretary of the treasury. One of Von Metz' first acts was to sign orders lending the aid, assistance, treasure and manpower of the Knights to aid the Danish government, which was suffering something of a crisis.

Aldo Reichman, who had a mission of some import in Marseilles, was badly wounded by a failed assassination attempt. A ruckus had developed on a street as he was passing and a man among the shouting crowd had fired a pistol into his chest. The man was not caught and Reichman spent several months recovering in the local Knight hostelry.

THE UNITED KINGDOMS OF GREAT BRITAIN (Kingston in Northumbria)

Oliver V Cromwell, King of England, Scotland and Wales

DIPLOMACY No Effect

The Church continued to dog the King's tracks, badgering him to appoint an heir from among his sister Margaret's brood of children if he would not take the time to wed and sire a successor himself. Finally, while spending Michaelmas of '48 at the hunting palace of Falkland, the King rounded on the Archbishop of Canterbury, who had been reading to him – rather loudly – from the Bible upon his kingly duty.

"You wish an heir for this precious throne, do you?" Oliver's face was sharp with disgust.

"Yes, your majesty." Archbishop John Potter smiled with great patience. The placid look on the man's face angered Oliver more than most anything he'd ever seen.

⁷ Whoever that might happen to be.

"Very well. I will give you one." The King drew aside a drape of heavy velvet separating the sitting chamber where he'd tried to find some peace from the ball-room floor. The larger room glowed with a sky of candles, the roar of two enormous fireplaces and the tinkle of glassware and the murmur of nearly five hundred voices. Oliver scanned the faces of the crowd, then settled on one man he knew by reputation, if not personally.

"There is your next king," Oliver said, lifting his hand to point. The Archbishop looked out with mild interest (he expected to see a donkey or perhaps a juggler), but upon sighting the middle aged nobleman standing beside a table covered with pastries, carved meats, imported Caspian caviar and surgeon and a wealth of puddings, he blanched as white as his samite cassock.

"You cannot be serious." Potter stared at the king, the corners of his mouth grown dangerously pale. "You... you are mad."

"You wanted me to choose," Oliver said, his voice low and filled with menace. His eyes – usually a merry, liquid brown – were hard, cold and glittered like winter ice. "You would not let me be – for two years you've hounded me to choose. Now I have, and the cost will be upon your head for daring to lecture to a king."

Oliver threw aside the drapes and stepped out upon the dancing floor. The crowd near him turned, then backed away in a graceful circle, bowing and curtsying as required upon the appearance of the king.

"James Edward Stuart." Oliver's voice boomed across the room, silencing all conversation, cutting across every voice with the crack of a rifle on a cold morning. The man standing beside the table looked up, muddy blue eyes sharp with surprise. "Attend me, cousin."

Stuart approached the king and bowed. His seamed face was tan – remarkable amongst a room with so many winter-pale faces – and his elegant, expensive clothing of a markedly different cut than the norm in Kingston. "Your majesty, I am at your service."

"You have come lately from Rome, have you not?"

Stuart nodded, alarm sparking behind his eyes. "I have, your majesty – my family keeps an estate in the Latin hills..."

"This is known to me. Kneel." Oliver's brusque tone brooked no delay or disrespect and Stuart knelt rather smartly, though his jacket and vest would suffer for it.

The King cast a glance around the ball-room, ignoring the goggling, astounded crowd. He lifted his chin and one of the 'Kingston Rovers' – his personal guardsmen – was immediately at his side. Oliver held out his hand. "Blade."

The rasp of a drawing sword quelled the last nervous muttering in the crowd. Oliver tested his grip on the cavalry saber, turned the blade to catch the firelight, then laid it swiftly against Stuart's temple. The man did not flinch away, though he did turn a little pale. The Archbishop of Canterbury made a gargling, choked sound as if a fat eel were wedged in his throat.

"James Edward Stuart, second of that name, in front of these noble and pious witnesses, I proclaim you Prince of Wales, my acknowledged Heir and successor. Rise and greet your king."

The sword moved aside and Stuart stood – rather shakily – to look questioningly at the king. "My lord... a stunning honor, surely, but... I am a Hussite as are all my family."



James Edward Stuart
Prince of Wales

"Really?" Oliver said, giving the Archbishop an amused glance. He handed back the saber. "So you are. How shocking."

Despite the King's decision and the acquiescence of Parliament (over the stunned and rather feeble resistance of the Church) to make James Stuart heir to the English throne, Oliver did not intend to allow any further religion trouble – either on the streets of London or on the Wessex downs. All Hussite religious figures were barred from English soil.

An English embassy to the city of Kusan, on the island of Taino in the Carribean, was nearly killed in the fighting when the Aztecs invaded that balmy tropical paradise, but Captain Cadawaller managed to escape by hiding in a cellar. Fighting in Ulster province in England went rather more smoothly, if such can be said of the English repressing the Irish...

THE SOCIETY OF JESUS (London in Sussex)

Gustavus Grayhame, Vicar-General of the Society of Jesus, Defender of the Faith

DIPLOMACY Giri(t), Malaga in Creek(oh), Penzance in Cornwall(oh), Basilhavn on Anticosti(f)

The Jesuits continued to keep their fingers in many pies. Some of the pies had teeth – as Karok Redfox found in Copenhagen, where the city fathers opened fire on his ship as soon as his business with them was known. The Society cutter was sunk, but Redfox was a good swimmer and managed to make it to Malmo with some help from a passing fisherman. Tribesmen in Colon took the life of father Quahcoatl with much the same kind of greeting. Other efforts met with more success.

THE FRANKISH COMMONWEALTH (Paris in Ilé De France)

Jacques du Maine, Archon of the Commonwealth

DIPLOMACY No Effect

There was much rejoicing in Paris upon the completion of the new highway to Tours. The mayors of both cities cut the dedicatory ribbon and there was a picnic. Work had already begun on a high road from Tours onward to Brest on the Breton coast.

In the east, Admiral Ney and Princess Margaret secured control of a section of the Sinai coast near old Ascalon and Frankish military engineers laid out guidelines for a modern city (Cherbourg) to be built there. Shiploads of workers, settlers, equipment and timber began arriving almost immediately. Among the theatres,

racetracks and churches, the Commonwealth soldiers erected a shrine of the "Eternal Flame" to honor those slain in the war against the Daemon Sultan. General De Claye's remains – recovered from the dreadful field in Levant – were interred there, among so many others.

Such news (and the newspaper drawing, shown above) grieved the Archon, making him feel his age. There were too many such memorials, too many names on the list of the dead – now including Francois Ney, who had taken sick in Sinai and died of a hemorrhage. The Archon took up his pen, then, with bitter ink and dispatched this missive to the officers of the Honorable Company known as Wolfden and Cane:



"Le Morte" ~ Cherbourg, Sinai

Mssrs. Harrison Wolfden & James Cane

It has been brought to the attention of the Ministry of Justice that W&C Holdings have failed to make good on a reparations payment schedule to the Norskrad otherwise known as the Nordic Trading Company. If this information has been conveyed to us in error, then we apologize for the tone of this dispatch.

The Ministry of Justice hereby informs Messrs. Wolfden & Cane that unless these payments are made on schedule, the Frankish Commonwealth will seize the assets of W&C Holdings to make good to the agreed upon debt repayment. The Frankish Commonwealth expelled the Norskrad from our lands as they used our port facilities, but did nothing to assist in their expansion or development. The Commonwealth is not going to substitute one poor tenant for another.

The Ministry of Justice already has incarcerated members of our own banking community for improprieties that have threatened the integrity of the Commonwealth and the honor of its people. We will not hesitate to do so again. We await for your prompt reply.

Pierre Jeunot, Minister of Justice
On behalf of Jacques du Maine
Archon of the Commonwealth

The collapse of the Espanan cause in the south resulted in a brief but ultimately limited flood of refugees from across the border. Frankish troops on hand did not allow the ragged masses to settle within the Commonwealth, directing them instead to the east, where the Danish authorities could do something with them.

WOLF DEN & CANE HOLDINGS, LTD (Paris in Ilé De France)
Harrison Wolfden and Jason Cane, General Partners

DIPLOMACY Calais in Flanders(ma), Reims in Vermandois(ma)

The partners were busy, going to and fro, expanding the reach of the company. Plans were laid – but not yet implemented – to move the home office to the port of Brest, where the first ships in (what was hoped would become) a sizable Company fleet began plying routes to Poland, England and Spain.

THE DANISH EMPIRE (Thessalonika in Macedon)

Gregor “Black Georg” Dushan, Prince of Serbia, King of the Greeks, Emperor of the Danes, Protector of Italy, Mjólnir-na-Midgaard, Rex Germanicus, Pendragon of the Isles

DIPLOMACY None

“The Empress is dead,” Colonel Mason announced from the steps of the provisional Chancellery in Thessalonika. A silent, curious crowd of citizens filled the huge square. Still thin from the privations he had suffered in the Middle East and indelibly marked on face, hands and soul by the horrors he had witnessed, the colonel was reading from a handwritten sheet.

“She left no heir of her body to rule her subjects. In her life, there was no time for the joy and struggle of motherhood. She served humanity instead. We are all her children, held under her guardian wing.” Mason looked up, scanning the faces of the people gathered before him. “But she gave some thought for the future, despite all which weighed upon her mind. She has directed us to form an assembly – the *allthing* in the old tongue – to rule the Empire in consultation with the Emperor.

“And there shall be a new Emperor.” Mason raised his hand, indicating a stout, black-bearded man with a scarred, seamed face. “The closest relative by blood to the Empress is her cousin, Gregor Dushan, prince of Serbia. Tomorrow he will face the assembled ranks of all those nobles and potentates who survive in the Empire and by the grace of God, he shall be King of the Danes.”

The nearly-entirely Greek crowd stared with wary interest at the bred-to-the-bone Serb. Denmark endured as a state and an ideal, though the blood of the great jarls of the northern kingdom had been lost, scattered, diluted among these southern peoples.

Georg was crowned, and the *allthing* was gathered. Indeed, the Empress had left orders to form a ruling assembly (closely modeled upon the Swedish system, with some changes she had hoped would

be for the better) in every city and province. The ‘great assembly’ elected to gather in Thessalonika until such time as the ruined lands of the north Italian plain could be restored to habitability.

A very stiff letter from Skikda of Lybia – asserting *his* claim to the Danish throne on the basis of his short marriage to Regent Claudia – was widely ignored by everyone.

Shockingly, though there was a great deal of local trouble, the Empire did not splinter into all-out civil war. The generals and governors remained loyal, though the prince of Holland took the opportunity to simply stop paying any taxes or answering any correspondence. Thebes and Al’Hasan were turned over to the Carthaginians. The Communard elements in Marseilles declared a ‘free Republic’ and seized control of Provence entire.

Of larger consequence, the Catholic populace of Gibraltar revolted, slaughtering their Danish garrison and proclaimed a ‘Free City.’ Direct control over the provinces of Alsace, Champagne, Franconia, Hainaut, Holstein, Hannover (city of), Swabia, Bern (city of), Thuringia and Westphalia degraded, but was not entirely lost.

While Georg took the remnants of the civil government in hand, colonel Mason departed for the Levant with a small fleet and army. His was a grief-filled task, but not one he would leave to another.

Upon the heights of Golan, where Oniko fell in her final sacrifice, Mason directed the Danish soldiers: “to build a memorial to her, to her father who was lost in the waters off the Frost Wolf strongholds in Alaska, and to all peoples of the world who set aside their differences of faith and history and came together in extraordinary sacrifice for the ultimate common cause. We seek to make the Holy Land a living and continual reminder, to people of all faiths and creeds, of the sacrifice made by those who recognized what was at stake in the wars against Georgia and the Ice, and that no price is too high to uphold the highest of principles.”

No effort was made to redirect the faith of the Moslem citizens Levant and Akko. Their administration was left to their own elders. At the same time, Mason made sure to inform each of the patriarchs and prelates that the Holy Land would remain open and welcoming to pilgrims of all faiths, from all nations. Proselytizing was forbidden.

Quarrying the foundation stone of the old, ruined Rock of Allah citadel south of Akko, the *Shrine of the Flame* rose on the heights above Galilee, hard beside the highway to Damascus. While the edifice had a certain fortress-like, martial quality to it (being Danish, after all), it was not built to be defensible from the assaults of men – instead, a welcome was extended to pilgrims of all faiths and creeds. Chambers within the sprawling structure were filled with art and sculpture relating the story of the Ice and Georgian wars, and also rooms celebrating the great Faiths. Visitors soon noted the room set aside for Catholicism strangely depicted all adherents of that faith with a Chinese or Oriental cast to their features. Also, cast in metal and mounted on walls, excerpts from the more uplifting parts of Oniko’s speeches were presented in many tongues.

And beneath the shrine, was a crypt where the Empress herself was laid to rest, in full battle regalia, adorned with symbols and weapons from her life and from her father’s. Though this chamber was not open to the public, above the tomb, a public coffin incised with her recumbent form was viewable in a chamber lit by constant, never-dying flames. This fane was particularly well-visited by the sailors from the Nisei fleet lying abandoned at Akko (their captains had fallen in the final battle against the Sultan and none had ever come to lead them home again).

This effort in the distant, dusty land was echoed throughout the Empire, where returning soldiers, veterans and militiamen

endeavored to raise a shrine (even the least building or cenotaph) to the Empress and all those brave men who had fallen at her side. Not a single region or city under Danish rule did not have at least one.

NÖRSKTRAD (Lisbon in Portugal)

Johannes Teugen, Mäklareväldé of the Nordic Trading Company

DIPLOMACY Chitimacha(t)

At the behest of the Spanish government, auditors from the Company Accounting Section were sent over to the Largoista ministries to 'look over the books.' Large sums were also transported, under the heaviest possible guard. Contractors were also very busy in Friesland, where the Duchess Laucastra had expressed concern about rumored bands of 'Polish students and zenballers' who might seek to cause a 'ruckus' in her quiet, peaceful domain. As a result, a string of fortifications was established along the border with Danish Germany. A strong force of mercenaries under Baron von Hausen and several companies of riflemen were dispatched to ease the duchess' fears.

The board of directors approved a succession statement prepared by Johannes (re-affirming Bitrande Alphone Gumi as second-in-line to control of the company, followed by his son Malcom) just in time for the Bitrande to fall ill and die. Malcom, therefore, became the Bitrande and his father's successor.

The various army and naval forces under the command of the Norskrtrad had been reorganized into formal Companies, with standard uniforms and ranks. These were the *Norskwarden*, a professional, if small, force tasked with defending Norskrtrad installations and performing any necessary actions. The Friesians, for their sterling service were recognized as elite companies, and carry in addition to the normal Company ornaments, the Ducal badge of their country. Lucrea, Duchess of Friesland provided them with their badges from her privy purse.

The house guard for the Norskrtrad board families were drawn from the Friesian Riflemen. With so many waifs and strays coming under the wing of the Norskrtrad, security was particularly tight in the compound. The household was filled with the unfamiliar sounds of children. Malcom sees that the necessary, properly-trained staff were employed and the children were taught letters and sums in both Norman and in the native tongue. Proper facilities were also provided to see the waifs were able to follow their customs and beliefs. They are young as yet for formal schooling...

Malcom also wondered if young prince Ivan would have a home to return to, for the Principality of Kiev was tottering upon the edge of the abyss, now aligned as a neutral against the Swedish Empire of Russia on one side, threatened by Poland and its Baklovakian henchmen on the other, and from within by the hideous cult of the Bone Mother.

Returning to his private chambers, Malcom smiled at his wife, trying to hide the overbearing sadness he felt. He had earlier visited the tomb of his sister at the Cathedral of Lisbon after the presentation of the badges to the Norskrtrad companies. "Home at last, and children in the Company compound too. Perhaps God will bless us with our own soon..."

Lisbon, in turn, was the scene of massive activity as more steam-powered cruisers were launched from the Company yards (which were in a constant state of expansion) and fresh airships were commissioned to prowl the skies overhead. Events had pressed the Mäklareväldé to militarization – which did not please the board of directors – but could not be helped.



Extracts from Malcom Procure's

'The Co-ordination and Application of Naval Power in an Age of Steam and Flight'

(published by Norsktrad Press, Lisbon, restricted to Norskwarden officer training):

With the advent of the armor-plated cruiser, carrying heavy guns, mounted in steam-powered rotating turrets, the age of the traditional man-of-war needs must be near an end. In this time of transition, however, the heavy warship will still retain its place in any war at sea, especially at any distance from friendly ports. It takes but two years to build a ship, but a century or more to create a tradition. The application and employment of steam power is as yet at its infancy, and few captains appreciate the tactical advantages and disadvantages of their new ships.

A man of war relies upon wind and current; a cruiser is propelled by steam. A steam ship can out race (and out maneuver) a sailing ship, at least in the short term. The range of a steam ship is reduced by its need for overhaul and maintenance, whilst a traditional ship requires little support. In time, however, the mechanical weaknesses of the engines and condensers will be removed, until the steam ship is the equal or better of its rival, save for the strategic requirement for coaling stations or the attentions of a tender.

A warship's sails are a weakness and a strength - none see its progress by the trail of smoke upon the distant horizon. But in battle, the smoke stack may be utilized as a cover and a hindrance of enemy guns. Furthermore, the size of the guns of a cruiser and their configuration permit not merely broadsides but directed fire forward and aft, as the cruiser steams to engage or withdraw. Such a tactic also minimizes the apparent cross-section of the ship, providing a smaller target for enemy guns. When conditions permit, however, it is the choice of the captain to adopt a parallel course to his foe, to bring all turrets to bear.

Spotters on the mast above the funnels can direct gunnery, something enhanced by the employment of a zeppelin. From this greater height the presence and location of the enemy may be conveyed by signaling, and the long range of the guns used to full effectiveness. Zeppelins may also be used for long range scouting, permitting the location of enemy shipping at considerable distance, subject to weather conditions. The main armament of any warship will be limited by a maximum elevation, but, at long range, even a zeppelin can be fired upon. Anti-airship weapons are usually restricted to the secondary armament.

At close range, whilst an airship is vulnerable from the light deck-mounted guns, it can fire or drop incendiary devices upon the wooden decks of a warship, and the sails are particularly likely to burn. In contrast a steam cruiser, even on the upper deck, is plated, though in general this armor is lighter than that of the hull. No captain, however, can disregard the advantages of air cover, and conversely, the dangers of aerial attack. Zeppelins are of restricted utility subject to wind speed and cloud cover. An airship is adversely affected by contrary winds even more than a sailing ship. Low cloud and poor light will restrict visibility. The region and season will also affect the deployment and effectiveness of Zeppelins: compare the Mediterranean with the North Sea for example.

Interior bulkheads, particularly in the vicinity of the boilers and the magazine enhance the combat survival of the ship. With interior doors secured, flooding of a single compartment will only slow the ship, and intentional inundation of the magazine is the final defense against the explosive rupturing of the hull. Traditional war ships, with their galleries of gun decks are subject to great risk of sinking following a hull breach at or near the waterline. The wooden hull, also, is obviously more prone to damage from bombardment, causing fatalities among the crew as jagged splinters are torn away by shot. In comparison, a steam cruiser often has an inner and outer hull, with a layer of wood between and will better survive equivalent damage.

A notice was posted by the Company in Iberian, Langued'Occ and Norman in every office, warehouse and common place within reach of their agents:

Reward Offered for
Natasha de Leon (nee Tukachevsky)

Company shipping remained active in the war against the SRC – Captain Jorge Delgado commanded a squadron based at Barcelona, operating to enforce a blockade of the Espanán ports of Narbonne and Marseilles.

“Last year was easy,” Jose warned his officers. “This year the allies of the SRC will be free to lend them support. After their losses last year, the communists are likely to be desperate, at best they may flee overland into the Danish Empire. We can expect anything from blockade runners carrying arms and supplies, to a hostile fleet with or without airships, in the time it takes to sail from the wreckage of Georgia – or from North Africa. I want regular drills and inspections, especially of our anti-airship batteries. As before, report any problems to me. No ships are to enter or leave the port.”

He frowned, consulting fresh orders received from Lisbon. “Carthaginian or Polish shipping is considered to be hostile. No more than a single shot across the bows before commencing any engagement. Given they are nothing but thieves and pirates,” Jorge said, turning steely attention on each of his steam, sail and airship commanders. “Be prepared for trickery.”

RÉPUBLIQUE POPULAIRE DE ESPAGNE☞

The collapse of the Republic came with a sickening inevitability. Largoista troops continued to advance from the south, and their numbers seemed irresistible. The Committee met in haste and decided to flee for safe havens in Commonwealth or Danish lands – but a noose was already drawing tight around them.

Only days after electing to abandon the fight, Antone Beria (then the secretary-general of the SRC) was murdered by Jesuit ‘black-cowls’ in Limoges as he prepared to evacuate the city. His death threw everything into confusion, while further attacks wiped out the Marseilles committee (their safe-house was demolished by a coordinated attack by what proved to be Norskwarden marines and as the few survivors fled, they were ambushed by a second – unknown – group of assailants to slaughtered them with close-range pistol and shotgun fire.

Those members of the Limoge committee who survived the Jesuit attack were hunted down over the next two weeks by more unknown men in balaclava-style caps, also wielding pistols and shotguns. Of all the commanders of the SRC, only Francois Piard escaped, having surrounded him with a tightly-knit group of Auvergnais woodsmen. Piard managed to rally several thousand Communard refugees to him and – after finding the Committee treasury pillaged by some kind of aerial pirates, who had pounced upon the town bank during the confusion engendered by the sporadic fighting among the collapsing secretariat.

Though some of the more ardent Communards escaped with Piard into Commonwealth territory, most of the citizens just stayed home and hid in their cellars. They hoped the restoration of Spanish control would bring peace and calm to the troubled region.

THE REPUBLIC OF SPAIN (Lisbon in Portugal)

Largo Cabellero, Commandant of the Imperial Guard

DIPLOMACY Cortez in Granada(down to t)

Luckily for Largo and his regime in Lisbon, the Norsk merchants had deep pockets and managed to bail him out with enough cold hard cash to keep his creditors at bay. With the wolves held from his door by the grim-faced men from the north, Il Commandante was free to take his army into the field and crush the

last of the Communard resistance in the north. His brother Jose was left with the so-welcome task of overseeing the mass arrests implied by an extensive purge of the government ministries.

An arrangement was also struck with the Aeronautical Research and Fabrication company (out of Rostov), allowing them to establish a direct political presence in Cortez. In return, an ARF aerosquadron crowded with troops and bombs arrived at Barcelona in middle-'47 to support the campaign against the Communards.

General Alfonso led off the campaign with a direct invasion of Languedoc – and there he found nothing but chaos, civil unrest and confusion. Apparently the authority of the SRC commissars had collapsed, leading to anarchy. The Spanish immediately moved to restore order and to arrest those few Communards still alive and present. Largo, the ARF aerosquadron, a passel of Vastmark riflemen, African mercenaries and a strong force of Templars arrived later in the year, and by the end of '48, the provinces of Languedoc, Aquitaine and Auvergne (as well as the cities of Narbonne and Limoges) were once more in Largoista hands. Islander and Norsktråd fleets supported this operation offshore, blockading the coast and seizing considerable amounts of Espanan shipping.

Unfortunately for Largo's peace of mind, he did not have enough troops on hand to properly garrison the newly reclaimed provinces, so he was forced to leave the local worker's committees, mayors and landowners in control. Further, the outright revolt of the Provençals inspired a great desire to invade the rich province and capture Marseilles, but unfortunately his spies were certain the Communards had *not* taken refuge there – and the Danes had not shattered into civil war, as he had hoped.

Diplomatic efforts in Salamanca failed, though the ambassador escaped with his life. Royalist sentiments were strong in the northern highlands. The recently restored Empress Anna made her way to Seville, seeking to examine certain documents acquired in the capture of the Communard stronghold there. Unfortunately for her, her traveling column was attacked by a mob of *campesinos* in the hills above the city and all were slain. In particular, the body of the Empress was hacked to bits, proving hard to identify – but the abbess of the monastery where she had lived for so long was able to make a positive identification. Apparently peace had not *quite* returned to the south.

In '48, as peace seemed to have taken Lisbon in a firm grip, a Carthaginian ship arrived bearing certain unexpected prisoners – including no less than the Emir's brother – to face trial in Spanish courts for crimes committed against the Largoista regime. To say the government was surprised by this turn of events was to understate their reaction. Even the Norsk merchants were dumbfounded.

THE DUCHY OF THE ISLES (Valetia on Malta)

Neya al'Raschid, Empress of the Isles, Emir of Archimedeia, Duchess of Sicily and Sardinia

DIPLOMACY Skarfaste on Rhodes(down to t), Groza on Cyprus(pt)

Much like her Spanish allies, the Empress of the Isles struggled to make good on debilitating loans. However, by certain contrivances of a fiscal nature, Neya managed to keep the Duchy afloat and satisfy the oily-handed bankers. At the same time, the end of the war allowed the cities of Valma, Groza, Valetia and Archimedeia to expand a level each. There was some hope of a brighter future. Sadly, the students and artisans in the university and markets were mired in too much aqavit and absinthe, their senses dulled by clouds of cigarette smoke and too many late nights of

carousing to pay any attention to the proclamations of the government.

Further, an influx of Catholic settlers in Groza on Cyprus sparked a violent reaction on the part of the Orthodox inhabitants – some of their homes and an Eastern Rite church had been torn down to make way for the expansion – and the civil authorities were forced to violently suppress three days of rioting.

The Duchess' return to Valetia was cause for mild celebration, but when Neya became sick only a few months afterwards, the mood in the capital became quite gloomy. Complications from pregnancy led to Neya's death in late '47. Her younger sister Namia then ascended the throne of the Isles, but not without sparking a bitter, enduring feud with Demetrios of Isauria, her brother-in-law and Neya's husband. The Isaurian felt *he* should rule rather than her. Though neither faction took open action (and Demetrios, grudgingly, acknowledged Namia as Empress) a tense, poisonous air afflicted all arms of the government.

In the east, Marcello Riggia (one of Demetrio's partisans) had command of the army in Beirut and he marched north and west, gathering up the Islander garrisons of Lebanon, Aleppo and Cilicia. All three provinces were restored to their 'indigenous' administration – though the Concord of Ar-Raqqah had presumably granted suzerainty over those lands to other powers. Marcello, now commanding a powerful force, joined Demetrios in Isauria itself – where the now out-of-favor Consort had repaired to sulk.

THE CHURCH OF ROME (Vatican City in Rome, Latium)

Clement VII, Pater Patrias, Pope of the Roman Church, The Vicar of Christ, The Successor To Peter, The Keeper of the Keys, The Servant of the Servants of God, Patriarch of Azteca, Soldier of Light

DIPLOMACY None



The Church remained militant, sending Per Nunez and a strong force of Templars to fight alongside Largo in his conquest of the troublesome Lang'd'Oc provinces. Among the Templar troops were a large number of Jesuit and Franciscan priests, who pried and poked into every town, village, hogshed and parish sanctuary in the disputed regions. Oddly, they did not seem to be searching for heretics.

A great deal of activity in Vatican made the enclave hum with an unaccustomed pitch of fervent activity. While Danish Rome drowsed in the hot Latin sun, the priests were burning their candles late, scribbling letters, invitations and seating plans. After months of secret meetings (not a few marked by muffled shouting), the Holy See announced the convention of a Church Council, the first in many, many years:

We welcome representatives of the Catholic faith to a Conference in St. Georges (Morocco) to be held in 1747. The Council of St. Georges will begin the day after Pentecost is celebrated. The agenda for items to be deliberated include:

- ◆ Modification of the Liturgy to match modern language principles.
- ◆ Review of the order of celibacy on priests and nuns.
- ◆ In these modern times, identify the duties of the Church Hierarchy to the Catholic Nations, and the duties of Catholic Nations to Rome.
- ◆ Review the role of women in the Roman Rite.

Invitations were sent to the bishops and national leaders of all Roman Catholic nations, Roman Catholic Merchant Houses, the Jesuit Order, and the bishops are instructed to gather representatives of the laity to join the conference as well. All these members will have full participation rights. Invitations were dispatched to the Lencolar and Eastern Orthodox hierarchy as well, requesting their participation in the discussion, but they will have

no voting rights. All other organized religions are invited to send representatives to view the workings of God's Church on Earth.

Amid all the other excitement, a letter of interest was received by the Secretary of the Holy See from Lisbon:

To His Holiness Clement VIII, Pater Patrias, in Rome:

Your Holiness, following the devastation in the city of Lisbon, a number of the wounded and injured treated within the Company Hospital have related stories of the visitation of a radiant figure who brings them succor in their suffering. Whilst we are not well placed to fully verify or suggest a cause to these experiences, it was determined, after discussion with those priests and nuns ministering to the injured, that these tidings should be relayed to Rome.

Perhaps the most touching example is that of a young child, rescued from the cellar of a collapsed tenement in the Levren district. Despite no sign of physical injury the child was blind. She suddenly regained her sight several months later, insisting that 'a kindly lady with strange eyes' had touched her forehead whilst she slept.

Many of the people who have described similar experiences are citizens of Lisbon or employees of the Company, honest, hardworking people. A growing sentiment is that these events may be ascribed to the lamentably deceased Oniko, Empress of the Danes, who, though ruler of Hussite lands, was reared in the Catholic faith. Given the news of the manner of her death, her memory is already revered among many of the ordinary people.

We humbly request his Holiness to initiate an investigation of this phenomenon.

I remain Your Holiness, Your obedient servant,

*Johannes Teugen
Maklarevalde of the Norskrtrad*

AFRIQA

Non-Catholic Mercenaries

Minimum bid listed in [x].

Condotierr	30i, 15a, 10c, 6hc, 3xc [1gp each]
Captains	Bey Senghor (MB96) [10gp]
To hire, please contact...	None
Quality Ratings	i16 w16 s18 c11 a12

Catholic Mercenaries

Minimum bid listed in [x].

Condotierr	10i, 23xea, 20t [0.5gp each]
Captains	General Xho (M936) [5gp]
To hire, please contact...	Norskrtrad
Quality Ratings	I15 w18 s21 c11 a12

THE EMIRATE OF CARTHAGE (Augustina in Tunisia)

Hamilcar Barca, Emir of Augustina, Sultan of Tunisia

DIPLOMACY None

Troubled by reports received from overseas, Hamilcar expanded the Emir's Guard to nearly a regiment in size for he expected trouble. The airship yards outside of Augustina continued to labor, eventually producing another pair of zeppelins for the export trade.

Despite the poor luck traditionally associated with such efforts, Hussite priests once more plagued the Swedish and Russian expat citizens of St. Gustavus in Ghebel-Garib. This time they met with some success, but mostly among the Egyptian citizens of the town rather than the "sunburned." Diplomatic efforts in Meroe did not meet with such success, mostly due to the unexpected death of Ambassador Lebrija after falling from a runaway camel.

In spring of '47, the Carthaginian Parliament was presented with evidence of extensive involvement by the CIS in the Spanish Revolution by furious representatives of the Norskrtrad mercantile combine. Mistrusting his own officers, Hamilcar launched his own purge of the errant ministry, as well as enlisting a former Frankish military officer as the new Chief of Internal Security.

As it happened the swiftly cast net snared none other than the Emir's own brother, Hasdrubal Barca! Intercepted by complete



luck on the road to Egypt, the CIS minister was dragged back to Augustina in chains. With the traitor in hand, Hamilcar addressed the Republican Assembly:

"Too many of us have lived in the past, when the forces of the Empress Teresa invaded our lands. Actions contrary to all international rules of law and conduct have been committed by rogue elements within our very government, and we must be held accountable for these. While these actions were in no way known or sanctioned by ourselves or any legitimate authority within Carthage, we nonetheless accept responsibility, and do extend our apologies to Spain as both a people and nation. You may be absolutely assured that the perpetrators of these crimes will be brought to justice."

"We have all suffered greatly over the past years, Carthage no less than Spain. Although we are Hussite and you Catholic, let us embrace as brothers and put an end to this madness, and begin rebuilding. The nation of Carthage is at your disposal. We shall make amends for our errant brethren."

Hamilcar, Emir of Carthage

The traitors (Hasdrubal Barca and other captured CIS leaders) were then placed aboard ship, under heavy guard (and against serious internal opposition to the legality of the act) and extradited to Spain to stand trial there. With the forlorn prisoners, Hamilcar sent an emissary to Lisbon, offering formal and public apology to the Spanish government, and while truthfully and passionately disavowing any knowledge or involvement in the scandal. Again despite the fury of members of his own government, the Emir also offered to open all his Administration's records to Spanish investigators.

Meantime, in Egypt, General Hanno had taken the field against the Libyan enclave of Faiyum. As the province was not defended at all, the Carthaginians won an easy conquest. The city of Meroe begged for mercy and agreed to pay tribute to the Emir. Hanno completed an easy two years of marching by taking over administration of Thebes (and Al-Hasan) from the Danes.

A near-crisis occurred when a very large Ethiopian army tramped across Carthage-held Aswan and into Faiyum. Hanno and his men rushed to battle positions, but President Fredik saw he'd been beaten to the punch and retired (not particularly gracefully, but without starting a shooting war).

Now as it happened, a Nisei officer (Ieichio) passed through Carthage on his way east and met a warm welcome in Augustina where the locals had heard a little something of the bravery afforded by the samurai on the field of battle. Therefore, when at last Ieichio managed to round up all the drunken and wayward sailors from the squadrons languishing at Akko (and roust them out of various and diverse dives and haunts) and started for home, he made sure to make harbor at Augustina at the end of '48, so Carthage and Nisei alike might celebrate victory with a few glasses of rice wine and some broken furniture.

CHRISTIAN EMIRATE OF LIBYA (Noor al Senussi on the Azores)
Skikda, Emir of Egypt and Lybia, Emperor of the Danes

DIPLOMACY None

The Emir stayed home, grumbled no one was paying his claim to the Danish throne *any attention at all* and sulked in his study. Often he refused to come out at dinner-time. He did, however, emerge for his mother's funeral, for old Fatima finally died, languishing in exile.

THE PRINCIPATE OF VASTMARK (Chihuahua City in Takrur)

William Casimir, Stadholder of Takrur, Prince of Vastmark

DIPLOMACY None



The Stadholder ordered more fishing boats constructed, which put the port facilities in Bissau and Dakar to good use. Many of the fishing crews wound up coming from the Boure district inland, where the Bakani gold mines had become exhausted. Back in Chihuahua City (where there was a petition circulating to change the name of the stad to 'Casimir', but was having trouble gaining popular support), prince Jason was devastated by the untimely death of his wife Jenna. The cruel blow sunk him into depression.

At least one of the squadrons dispatched to fight in the Middle East returned under the command of Ixapopolotl, though Lord Nkwame and his soldiers were now fighting in Spain. A number of Carthaginian-built airships were unloaded in Chihuahua City, which allowed the Stadholder to claim an "aerial force."

THE MALI AX EMPIRE (Ax Mixtlan in Mixe)

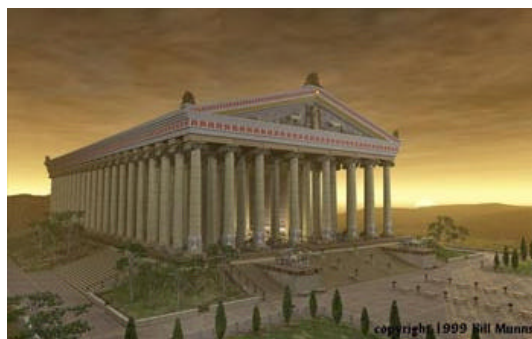
Nine-Jaguar, ne-Axamaloa na-Tochul, King of the Mixtecs, Lord of the Niger, Captain of the Firestorm Banner, True Emperor of the Aztecs, Emperor of Mali, DarkLord of Africa



DIPLOMACY Onogui in Teke(ea), Teke(t)

Though the Concord of Ar-Raqqah called upon the Mixtecs to abandon the province of Bithnia to Albanian control (which they did, very scrupulously, though the merchants failed to send in their own troops, leading to a very feisty and independent-minded Sultanate of Bithnia), they did not give up Lydia. In fact, the Mixtec army and fleet gathered there undertook extensive construction efforts and built a brand new town of Ephesus (the old Greek city having become landlocked as the Cayster river silted up) on the coast. At the same time, efforts were made to build a serviceable road up Mount Prion to reach the 'House of Mary', where the Mother of God had spent her last days on earth.

Excavations down in the valley also uncovered a massive temple – identified as one of the lost Seven Wonders, the Artemision – and work began there to rebuilt the grand edifice (architects' painting shown below.)



The Mixtecs were not alone in their efforts, for the Sisters of the Rose arrived in numbers (several hundred) and set about establishing a school, an orphanage and a hospital near the site of the ruined temple. Concurrent with these good works, the nuns circulated a letter from Mother Kelly:

Beloved Sisters and Brothers: Our Blessed Mother has, in her great goodness and mercy, allowed our brethren of Mali Ax to become the protectors of the province of Lydia. Lydia is a sacred land to us – it is the place Our Lady spent her last days on Earth, praying for the salvation of our souls. To this end, we will go to this holy land and restore to her name the shrines and monuments which have lain in ruins for so long. We will establish a school there to teach the young, so their spirit and mind may grow and mature in truth and love. All peoples, all faiths, will be welcome. We come in peace and love to make this land, so torn by war and hatred, a kinder, gentler place to live. We do not seek converts, only sisters and

brothers who wish to join us in bringing peace. May the love of Our Lady of Tepeyac shrine upon us all.
– Kelly, Mother Superior of the Order of the Rose of Christ

Much like everyone else involved in the fighting against the Daemon Sultan, the Mixtec fleet and army in the middle east returned home. General Mixcoatl arrived at Ax Idah to be met by cheering throngs. His soldiers and sailors were very, very glad to be with their families again. Leaving his fleet in the port, the victorious general marched to the capital, his men's armor burnished bright as the sun, their rifles and muskets gleaming.

Outside of Ax Mixtlan the general made camp and received a constant stream of visitors and well-wishers as he prepared to enter the city and receive the acclaim of the Emperor and the Court. The night before his entry, Mixcoatl returned from church services to find a cloaked figure waiting in his tents.

"Who are you?" Mixcoatl – alarmed at the absence of his guards – drew a long-barreled pistol from his belt. "Reveal yourself!"

"It is treason," the old man said, drawing back his hood, "to draw a weapon in the presence of your Emperor."

Mixcoatl stared in alarm and surprise at the gnarled old face of Nine-Jaguar. For a moment the pistol wavered away from the Emperor, then steadied and drew back upon him. "You murdered your own son," the general grated through clenched teeth.

"Mayhap I *should* keep a weapon between us, for my own safety."

"You," Nine-Jaguar said, rising and indicating stacks of letters on the general's camp-desk, "should not have been so free with your words in correspondence with the lamentable Quimichell. Treachery seems to have been mother's milk to him..."

Mixcoatl's finger tightened on the trigger, but before the pistol could erupt in flame and a stunning blast, a leaden cosh crashed against the general's head and he fell like an oak, solidly, to the floor.

"Clean up this trash," Nine-Jaguar declared as his Eagle knights poured into the tent. "He must be alive to stand upon a shield tomorrow, flanked by two strong men, as he enters the city in 'triumph' but not a moment longer."

The Emperor's face was graven stone, merciless and hard, as he looked down upon the traitor. His nostrils flared once, and then he turned away and disappeared out into the night.

THE REPUBLIC OF ETHIOPIA (Soba in Funj)

Fredik, Regent for...

Saul Ashür, President-For-Life of Ethiopia

DIPLOMACY No Effect

The collapse of the Georgian state left the Ethiopian presence there in disarray. With the return of their army to Ethiop lands, the Republican officers still in the area were unable to prevent the Lebanese from restoring their own clan chieftains to prominence (and the province becoming independent). The Danes occupied Levant and this left the Copts with nothing.

Fredik attempted to make good the losses with a foray into the middle Nile valley with his very, very sizable army. Unfortunately for his dreams of acres of rich agricultural land the damnable Carthaginians had already secured both Faiyum and Thebes, leaving the Copts with nothing. This had a familiar ring to it... An embassy to the nomadic tribes of the Darounga also returned home a failure. Nothing again!

Finally, young Saul came of age and was acclaimed president of the Republic. Unfortunately for his youthful dreams of glory, regent Fredik still held all the power in the realm and refused to step aside.

THE MAASAI KINGDOM (Mbeya in Kimbu)

Sogobu the Cripple, King of the Maasai, Emperor of Ethiopia

DIPLOMACY No Effect

Much like their co-religionists to the north, the Masai withdrew their forces from the middle east, abandoning Levant, Petra and Jordan to their own devices. The Masai soldiers were happy to return home and the cattle-blood and milk they loved so well. "The northern people look funny," they declared. "Their food smells."

Rather low-key missionary work continued in Kongo, which was made rather more urgent by reports of a Catholic mission having been established on the northern bank of the Kongo in Giri province.

REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA (Great Zimbabwe in Rozwi)

M'beron, Protector of the Senate and the Republic

DIPLOMACY Karanga(down to **t** then up to **f**), Hwange(f)

As the Masai and Ethiopians had done, the Afriqans withdrew their army from the middle east (assisted by a large number of leased Honorable Afriqa Company hulls) and sailed south. Unlike the others, however, they were not returning home to wench, drink, tell lies and celebrate. Instead, they were headed to the 'dark island' of Madagascar, where of late the realm of the Motaa Ojekh had collapsed into anarchy.

Entirely making history and showing everyone what studs they were, the Steam Rail company of South Afriqa completed and put into service the first working railroad connection on the planet – between Great Zimbabwe in Rozwi and the mercantile hub of Darian in Matopos province. A cheering crowd welcomed the Protector's arrival on the first passenger train from the capital. The company promised regular daily service between the two cities by the end of '49.

The Afriqan ships on picket off Madagascar watched the Javan outpost of Port Kolos with interest – the easterners were very, very busy rebuilding the fortifications of the town, laying down new hulls in the shipyards, and generally making quite a noise. However, this only lasted into the late spring of '47 whereupon a courier catamaran arrived from Java and the whole Javan West Indies squadron piled on sail and hauled north at high speed. Much later, they returned and seemed very pleased with themselves.

The prince of Karanga was reported dead while visiting in Hwange with one of his cousins. Agents of the Senate were politicking in Karanga even before the man's body was cold... In other social news, M'beron dispatched a letter to Juboara, informing the minister he was now Vice President of the Senate. Unfortunately, when the missive reached Namaqua, Juboara was dead. Grain was shipped off to the Japanese and Swedes.

The campaign in Madagascar was a success – lord G'mar's overwhelming numbers of troops and guns routed the few Motaa still brave enough to fight. Both Mahabo and Merintha were conquered. A great number of RSA soldiers then helped a fresh infusion of settlers to build a town – Maintirano – in Mahabo province on the Mozambique Channel.



THE HONORABLE SUD AFRIQA COMPANY (Iusalem in Karanga)

Kaiune, Master of the Southern House

DIPLOMACY Iesuwayo in Mbundu(ci), Brass in Ife(ci), Nova Roma in Phalaborwa(bo)

The Honorable offices fairly hummed with activity as the Southern House labored long and hard on a wide constellation of projects, including an ever-sprawling number of foundries and workshops in the suburbs of Iusalem – just the gear machining

factories employed almost six thousand people.⁸ Their ships plied ever more routes, bringing the manufactured goods of the RSA to distant lands.

Master Calitho (accompanying Kaiune to negotiations in Iesuwayo) fell sick and died in '47. This led to the Company approving the elevation of young mister Dahel (Kaiune's son) into the post of second-master. Unfortunately, while sailing to southern India, a typhoon overcame Dahel's flagship, the *Cormorant* and he perished with his entire crew. This left the embarrassingly young Numeke to fill his father's shoes.



Hulton Getty/Tony Stone Images

NORTH AMERIKA

Mercenaries	Minimum bid listed in [x].
Condotierr	12i,10c, 5a [0.5gp each]
Captains	Axayacatl the Wolf (M925) [5gp]
To hire, please contact...	None
Quality Ratings	i15 w17 s18 c12 a12

KINGDOM OF TZOMPANCTLI

Tizoc, Baron of Húkar-on-the-plain-of-bones

DIPLOMACY Kayak/Azaton(t)

Those Aztec settlers abandoned by the departure of the Tlahulli to the lands-in-the-sun mustered themselves into a domain ruled by Baron Tizoc from the shattered ruins of Húkar. Having managed to re-establish some semblance of civilization in the provinces of Kaska, Tutchone and Han; the Tzompans turned their attention upon Ahtena and the portage road to the coast. While the province was settled to 1w4 and the city of Bashar re-occupied, Tizoc himself made his way south to the coast in the company of his son, Kehuehuel and Lord Tiuhepan.

Agitating amongst the oppressed natives of Kayak inspired a rebellion against the Knights of Saint John, who had formerly held the port town of Azaton. This success led to a tentative agreement between the inlanders and the fishermen of the coast.

THE NISEI REPUBLIC (Usonomiya in Yokuts)

Kiyotaka Kuroda, Commander of the Armies of the Republic, Protector of the Emperor of All Japan, daitoryo of the Diet

DIPLOMACY None

Still suffering from droughts, the Ice and a general feeling of ill-use the Nisei soldiered on... the region of Crow was settled (to 1c5), reestablishing a solid presence for the Republic on the far side of the Rockies. Efforts to expand into Teton fell short. However, a large number of clerks, merchants and tradesmen made the cold, windswept journey down the Great Eastern Road to Igashi in Dakota, where they settled into homes recently seized from the Ithaqua-worshipping locals – who were evicted rather harshly, mostly with a bullet. The settlements along the Missouri were also protected by a string of freshly-built forts.

II Corps under Subaruashi withdrew from Dakota and flew west to Bohr in crow. The airship squadrons landed there to regroup and while refitting the corps commander was killed in a

senseless 'floating-world' brawl over some gambling debts. This would prove to be particularly unfortunate...

The North Pacific Squadron was very busy too, shuttling troops back from the very-far-flung outpost on Kazan Retto to Chemakum, then loading up a new crop of ~~hopeless idiots~~ brave settlers to found a new trading post on the Ice-damned, howling wilderness, coast of Kamchatka. On the other hand, there was a plentiful supply of firewood for heating and refueling.

The succession of disasters along the Eastern Road, including the capture of the airship squadron at Bohr, flashed across the Republic like a bolt of lightning. The Diet responded with a fierce vote of 'no confidence' in the Hirobumi government, which immediately collapsed. The III Corps (the only troops on hand to respond to the invasion) were already marching towards Morgul and the passes of the Rockies, so a flurry of letters were dispatched to general Tasho, urging him to hurry!

A measure in the Senate to embargo trade with the México Empire for their support of the Ghost Dancers stalled in committee, as such a blow would surely wreck the Nisei economy as well. Many of the Diet members were enraged at the "betrayal" they had suffered at the perfidious hands of the southerners.

THE HIGH KINGDOM OF COLORADO (Three Crosses in Navajo)

Fredrik Grosse, King of the Ute, High King of Colorado

DIPLOMACY Hohokam(a)

The Coloradans ignored all the strange comings and goings in their realm and concentrated on restoring some semblance of central rule over the fractious and divided barons, dukes and counts who ruled what passed for provinces in the High Kingdom.

ARAPAHO TEXAS [Shawnee Protectorate](Ayoel in Atakapa)

Kegemai Arroweye, Chieftain of the Arapaho, Liegeman of the Stormdragon

DIPLOMACY None

The remains of the Arapaho – after some discussion amongst Valeria's council – were granted the entire swathe of lands on the western bank of the Great Snake as a reward for their loyal service to the Empress. Kegemai Arroweye, the last surviving Arapaho chief, bent his head under the Stormdragon blade and rose King of his people. He spent '47 and '48 securing the provinces of Caddo, Osage, Quapaw and Kansa (as well as the cities and towns therein).

THE GHOSTDANCERS (Fushige in Missouri)

Teoclote Azurama, Prince of Fushige, War-Captain of the Ghost People

DIPLOMACY None

Standing beneath barren trees, still wrapped in the frost of late winter, Teoclote thinks of the plains of his youth now being flooded by Nisei invaders. He thinks of the homeland of his children and people now claimed by the Nisei. He thinks of his Arapaho and Ghost warriors, some of whom defended the Sooty Tower for the, now, enemy while the Nisei were weak and the Ice beset them. His anger rises and he speaks of vengeance to his chiefs and counselors. Those who were at the Sooty Tower or who defended the plains from the Ice while the Nisei interests lay elsewhere remember and add their voices. Only the Aztecs have proven to remember the sacrifices of the Ghost Dancers in the great war. The Ghost will not kneel to the Nisei! While deep winter is still upon the plains, the Ghost move against their ancient enemy.

Teoclote understands that time is against him. The Nisei are a great nation with massive production, advanced technology and airships. He knows his people are few and vulnerable. Teoclote understands that he must strike quickly and without mercy. So, while the snow is still upon the land, the Dancer army rides north and west from Fushige, entering the land of the Oto.

⁸ Actually, this is beginning to look suspiciously like Steve Stirling's DRAKA series, which will lose me a beer if it plays out. Damn him!

As it happened, the Nisei Vth Corps (commanded by Usuaoi Sora) was encamped at Igashi in **Dakota** when the Ghostdancers came sweeping out of the north-east. Sadly for V Corps, all of their air support had recently departed for Crow. On the other hand, they had a lot of freshly built fortifications to fall back upon.

Teoclote had mustered thirty thousand men against the seven thousand Japanese. His scouts were near-invisible, ghosting among the Nisei lines like wraiths – his spies listened as the Japanese huddled around their campfires... V Corps, left exposed by the withdrawal of the zeppelin squadrons, was annihilated in a two month campaign. Sora was killed. The Ghostdancers rushed north-west along the highway, unopposed.

With his light horse leapfrogging ahead of his main columns, Teoclote overran the Nisei garrisons of Okoboji, Teton and Crow before they could react. At **Bohr**, the Ghostdancer assault swept across the zeppelin landing fields outside the city and captured eighteen of the twenty-two airships moored there. The other three were shot down as they attempted to lift off. This news escaped over the rampart of the Rockies to the western cities.

His forces now reinforced by the captured airship squadron, Teoclote essayed an assault on the brooding fortress of **Morgul** in Shoshone, which stood guard over the passes into the west. The defenders – frankly in disarray – put up a stout fight, but with the sky above them raining fire and the Ghostdancers swarming over the walls, they did not last long.⁹ By September of '47 the passes were in Ghostdancer hands and the fortress regarrisoned.

In the spring of '48, Teoclote launched a direct invasion of the Nisei heartland – his troops had mewed up in the ranges above Lemhi for the winter and were down in the forested valleys before the snow had finished falling from the trees. Nisei III Corps was still mustering fresh levies in Nicolua. Both forces advanced along the North Road.

They slammed into one another in **Potlach** in May of '48, among the abandoned farms, overgrown orchards and deserted towns. III Corps had managed to scrape up about ten thousand men. Teoclote still had 24,000 effectives. The Nisei general Tasho backpedaled as soon as his cavalry scouts encountered the Ghostdancer skirmishers and he dug in. Unfortunately, his airship coverage was smashed aside by the Ghostdancer zeps and their superior numbers spilled around both ends of his line. The samurai fought doggedly, but were overwhelmed, their positions reduced one by one by concentrated aerial and artillery fire. III Corps was destroyed, much as V Corps had been in Dakota.

Tasho escaped to the south and eventually reached Yokuts with a ragged band of survivors. In the north, Teoclote advanced as far west as the city of Kara in Kalispel – but found all the land empty and desolate, inhabited only by furtive shapes in the forest and ruins. The Ice had come this way, leaving the land in ruins. With nothing in his grasp, Teoclote turned his army around and retired to Morgul in Shoshone to rest his men and consider the fugitive nature of Empire.

THE SHAWNEE EMPIRE (Cahokia in Michigamea)
*Valeria Stormdragon, Queen of the Shawnee,
 Empress of the Iroquois*

DIPLOMACY St. Thomas in Choco(f),
 Choco(down to t)

The Empress found her treasury unaccountably empty – the expense of the war against the Iroquois had nearly beggared the country – but help was on hand from the ever-



Empress
 Valeria of
 Shawnee and
 Arapaho

munificent Norskrad, who unloaded a very large number of padlocked crates in Cahokia. In return, an arrangement was struck over control of the delta province of Chitimacha:

The following treaty is hereby drawn up between the **Shawnee Empire** and the **Norskrad Merchant House**.

The Shawnee Empire recognizes and acknowledges the Norskrad rights and privileges to the cities of Jarlstad and New Orleans, and to the territory of Chitimacha, in perpetuity. The Norskrad recognizes and acknowledges the government of the Shawnee Empire elsewhere on the North Amerikan continent. Furthermore, neither party shall engage in hostile acts, covert or overt against the other, and maintain due progress and lawful interaction between two Catholic nations. Each party shall render assistance, as much as is possible, in the event of a hostile act by a third party in the North Amerikan continent.

Norskrad undertakes to maintain existing trade routes and expand such trade if possible. Norskrad may also build in these cities and territories factories and yards for the export, but will not utilize such facilities for the provision of items to powers hostile to the Shawnee Empire.

This treaty does not preclude future discussion between the Shawnee Empire and the Norskrad. A sum of 150GP is provided by Norskrad to aid in the rebuilding of the Empire.

Signed ~ *Valeria Stormdragon, Queen of the Shawnee, Empress of the Iroquois* and *Johannes Teugen, Maklarevalde of the Norskrad*

Valeria was also quite pleased to receive an embassy from the Papacy, led by the noted warrior-priest Peter Talltrees who made obeisance to Valeria at court, laved her feet with a silver bowl, announced the lifting of the writ of excommunication against her and begged her forgiveness in the name of the Holy Father. Not surprisingly, the Empress was quite pleased with this humble response on the part of the Papacy and granted them her renewed favor and protection within her lands. A number of priests were released from prison as well.

As part and parcel of her efforts to rectify the borders and security of the realm, the Empress also accepted the fealty of Kegemai Arroweye of the Arapaho and granted him the provinces of Atakapa (and Ayoel), Kansa (and Onora), Tonkawa (and St. Michaels), Caddo (and Natchez), Mescalero and Quapaw as his personal demesne. The city of Infni (across the bridge from Cahokia) was retained as an Imperial Shawnee possession.

A similar arrangement was concluded with the Iroquois rebels (with the intervention of the Jesuits, the Papacy and the Norskrad, who were very, very interested in keeping Shawnee within the realm of the Catholic nations). Canassatego swore fealty to Valeria and relinquished control of Choctaw (and Nigana), Tunica and Yuchi to the Shawnee. In return, Valeria granted her nephew Lucas suzerainty over Catawba (and Hebron), Chowan, Powhattan (but not Almeria), Delaware (and Treiya), Mohawk (and New Canarsie), as well as points north.

Trade resumed with the Aztecs as the Earthquake Legion fleet departed New Orleans (making many tavern, cafe and brothel owners very, very sad) and allowed trade on the Snake to flow freely again.

KINGDOM OF THE IROQUOIS [Shawnee Protectorate] (New Canarsie in Mohawk)

Canassatego, King of the Iroquois Nation, Regent for...

Lucas II Stormdragon, Lord of the East.

DIPLOMACY None

Freighted by a Shawnee fleet, the Iroquois-court-in-exile departed sunny St. Augustine in Calusa and made their way to the frigid north, where a paltry few thousand supporters had settled in the wasteland of Mohawk and re-occupied some of the abandoned buildings in New Canarsie. Prince Lucas found his new home cold and foreboding – nothing like the glistening beaches and warm seas of the south.

⁹ In fact, the whole assault took only a month and the fortress was captured nearly intact.

SOUTH AMERIKA

Mercenaries	Minimum bid listed in [x].
Condottieri	25i, 16c, 11a, 1ea, 1hei [1gp each]
Captains	Joseph d'Sackville (M977) [5gp]
To hire, please contact...	None
Quality Ratings	i15 w17 s18 c12 a12

THE KINGDOM OF CAQUETIO (New Hiquito in Caquetio)

Nima Viceno, Queen-Regent of Caquetio

Pardane Viceno, King of Caquetio

DIPLOMACY Cuna(down to t)

The Queen tread warily – her men had invaded the Chilean coast of Great France – and she expected a violent response to her invasion. As a result, the province of Mapuche was heavily fortified and Lord Eron and his men patrolled ceaselessly, watching for the counter-blow. In an attempt to curry favor with the locals, Novo Ghent was granted a measure of autonomy. So too was Cuna, as part of an arrangement with the Aztecs.

Unfortunately, none of this diplomatic efforts could keep the cold hand of death from the young (overworked, tubercular) Queen. Ladila died in late '48 leaving her step-daughter Nima as the sole Royal of age to take the throne in her son's name. So it was that unprepared, unexpected, single Nima (more noted for her ability with the viol than matters of government) became Queen-Regent.

THE KNIGHTS OF SAINT JOHN (New Granada in Acroa)

Nicholas Gafard de Masa, Grand-Master of the Knights of Saint John

DIPLOMACY Tobaraja(a)

Nicholas sat sweating under a banyan in Tupi, his army arrayed around him, the Templars spending their days practicing martial skills in the hunt and chase. He dickered with bankers until the sun set, then started again the next day. By sheer force of will he managed to stave off his creditors, though the cost was high. His foul mood was not improved by the unexpected death of the Papal nuncio Gerard Livingstone due to heart failure. Without his sensible guidance, the Grand-Master often let his temper govern his will. But he waited... there were schemes in play.

The Franciscans were kept busy in Kayapo and Schucuru, rooting out the heretical followers of the Lencolar rite.

THE PRINCIPATE OF BOLIVIA (Trishka in Karanga)

Ramon Mascate, Prince of Bolivia, Duke of Trishka

DIPLOMACY None

Also expecting a French counter-attack, the Bolivians hurried to fortify the passes in Quillaca and Uyuni against the hordes of angry Frenchmen... however, none came. Efforts to hire Josef d'Sackville (which had failed – the Caquetians won the toss) were therefore not necessary. To the misery of the Quillacans, however, a powerful earthquake rocked their province, flattening the city of Gaxan, which was effectively destroyed by the quake and subsequent fires.

GREAT FRANCE (Versailles in Calchaqui)

Francois de Saone, Emperor of France, Prince of Varres, Lord of the South, Smiter of the Heretic

DIPLOMACY None

Recent advances in the efficiency of the Court Ministries and the road networks allowed King Louis to 'let go' a veritable horde of Papal clerks, scribes, book-keepers and other nosy-parkers. The

THE ORDER OF THE FLOWERING SUN (Tenochtitlán)

Chikiel, Master of the Order, Shield of the Sun against the Ten Thousand Enemies

DIPLOMACY Zapotec/Mitla(oh), Pachamaxl in Lenca(oh), New Jerusalem in Quiche(op)

The Knights of the Sun continued to putter about in Aztec lands, though they suffered a setback when the House in Jumano was destroyed by Catholic bandits.

THE AZTEC EMPIRE OF MEXICO (Sion in Huave)

Trakonel "The Victorious", Emperor of Mexico, Warrior of Christ, Protector of the Faith, Smiter of the Infidel, Conqueror of the Incans, Rex Britannicus

DIPLOMACY Mitla in Zapotec(t), Choco(t)

Busy industry marked the Mexican heartland. Work continued on standardizing the corn-bins to the proper Lisbon-Accord-Mandated-Size. The cities of Itza (in Tamaulipe), Tucson (in Papago) and Acapulco (in Tahue) were expanded. Foreign loans incurred by the Ghost Dancers were forgiven by the government. This caused a lengthy and vitriolic outburst on the part of the Nisei ambassador, who was really, really pissed by this policy.

A great deal of money flowed out of the Exchequer to fuel the projects, intrigues and industries of the Sisters of the Rose, the Knights of the Flowering Sun and others. The merchants from PM&T were granted certain usages and rights to carry trade to distant Java, though there was little traffic with the Spice Islands as yet. The permanent Imperial Army camp at Mesa Verde in Unita became an actual city.

Intermittent trouble continued with the Kror cultists – the commander of the Smoking Sun legion was murdered in Tepanec, as was the Singing Flame commanderin Aser. In turn, there were more arrests and more citizens were dragged away screaming into the 'black carriages' favored by the Imperial authorities for such business. The defenses of the Guyami Canal were also reinforced, with the Eagle Legion being placed on guard there against any mischief. Diplomatic efforts across the border in Cuna failed, even though the Caquetians had arranged a power-sharing treaty.

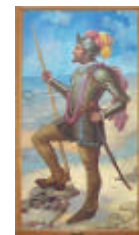
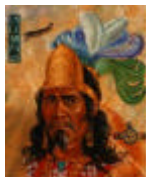
A little further south, the Pyramid Legion landed in Choco and secured co-control of the region with the Shawnee already in residence there. Another Imperial fleet (the Jaguar) was mustered at Aser in Ulva, where representatives of the Aeronautical Research and Fabrication company were ejected from the city and sent home on a boat, before sailing to Taino island and swarming ashore. Though the island militia put up a brave front, when faced with over 20,000 Méxica troops they surrendered and raised the white flag over the port. There too the ARF was ejected and their properties confiscated.

THE SISTERS OF THE ROSE (New Jerusalem in Quiche)

Kelly Davias, Holy Mother of the Lencolar Christian Order

DIPLOMACY Ax Tecoman/Kebbe(ch), Gao in Sudan(ch), Unita(ch), Riordana in Ute(ch), Lydia(ch)

Though very expensive efforts to finish the cathedral in Maya failed (again), the Sisters did not relent in their drive to see every village, town and district blessed with a school, hospital or orphanage. Missionary work advanced apace in Valdivia, Choco and Guahibo. An expedition was also dispatched to old Asia to assist the Mixtecs in their reconstruction efforts at Ephesus and the Artemision in Lydia.



King was quite pleased to do so – the Pope’s intervention into his marital dispute with the Knights of Saint John had not been welcome.

This maneuver had been suggested by prince Francois, who wished for Great France to strike a new path in international relations. He had his chance to steer the ship of state more directly in late summer of ’47 when his father suffered a heart-seizure and died. Upon his ascension to the throne of France, the new king dispatched letters to his neighboring kings, assuring them the policies of his father would not stand. The new king also took pains to muster many fresh regiments, just in case his honor was tested.

“But if you press the issue against Us, we shall resolve matters honorably.” The herald sent to the Caquetio made explicit reference to the province of Mapuche, which Francois expected to be returned to his beneficent and enlightened rule forthwith.

As it happened, Grand-Master Nicholas was *not* interested in letting this lie. His agents were busy in the port of Salamanca, attempting to sway Admiral Robert (who had made such short work of the Knight’s fleet two years ago) to betray the new King. Greedy and no friend of young Francois, Robert agreed and sent his men to seize the harbor and civil buildings.

Unfortunately for the traitor, Duke Gervais commanded the city garrison and *he* was not a man to let spies lurk about unwatched. Even as Robert’s marines broke open the armories in the naval arsenal, Gervais and his regulars stormed Robert’s mansion ashore and seized the traitor. The marine barracks were surrounded by artillery and everything was over within hours. The spies escaped.

Similarly, an effort by Bolivian agents to break Prince Josep out of jail in Toba failed and the young man continues to languish there, though sometimes Princess Niki (the once-wife of Nicholas de Gafard) comes by to talk. She too being a prisoner of unkind fate.

FRAGMENTS FROM A LETTER CIRCULATED AMONG CERTAIN PRIESTS AND BISHOPS IN THE AMERIKAS

The father enters small audience chamber, accompanied by Brother G., the «struck out» archivist. All present kiss his ring silently.

The father: I have gathered you here today to discuss the «struck out» project. There has been resistance, both open and hidden, from you and other members of the brotherhood. This resistance ends now. We, the guardians and leaders of this world’s «struck out, word replaced with *kurikon*» must stand united. Now, perhaps we can start by agreeing on the problems we face at present. Brother G.?

G.: Otherworldly; usually demonic; activity is at an all-time high, most easily witnessed through the desolation where once stood Venice. Despite the setback in Georgia, we expect minions «of the enemy» to continue to gain influence. Secondly, earthly forces work against the *kurikon* – either in a far-flung conspiracy or by some unhappy coincidence. The S civil war rages while the once-loyal population further from the «struck out, replaced by *flock*». The Sh and I look upon us with apathy, if not disdain. «struck out, replaced by *katolikos*» in South America continue to war against each other despite our best efforts to establish peace. The «katolikos» in Africa and Asia are lukewarm to «our» envoys. Even great «struck out, repeatedly» asks for our assistance in a tone almost demanding. The L and H evangelize in our midst, converting once-faithful followers of our «struck out». For most of us the «flock» becomes less relevant with each passing year. In short, learned fathers, we are facing a tremendous crisis of faith.

C.: If I may remark, first father, we are not entirely blameless for the lack of support in North America. Our recent acts «struck out»

did not endear us to the populace – they clearly revere and adore their Empress.

F.: The act was most necessary! Our reports clearly showed the rebellion was fomented by agents of Beelzebub. Aided perhaps by renegade L, who...

C.: But based on our current intelligence, «she» is *not* a pawn of the Lord of Flies. For good or ill, we bear some responsibility for recent events.

Father: Brothers, let us have peace. We have already turned out hand away from V and expressed our regret. She supports our ban of anathema on those who follow that entity known as K. We can rebuild – we must be patient. But do we all agree on the magnitude of the problems facing us?

All: Nod in agreement.

Father: Ideally, we can follow a strategy that will address both problems at once. Solving one without the other would continue to leave us in an untenable position. Most here are acquainted with the rudiments of the «struck out». For those that are not, I now ask G to recount the most recent history.

G.: Thank you, blessed one. Ahem... My brethren started by addressing the demonological problem, as that falls within our specialized research. Tremendous power is being exercised. Most visible examples of this are the current age of Ice and the rain of meteors falling upon us. How can we fight this virulent force? Naturally, daily mass, prayers, requesting the Mother and the «blessed ones» to intercede, and so on are called for, yet these efforts have not proven sufficient.

F.: Explain yourself, brother! Why could the meteors not be the Hand of God? The first blow struck the servants of the Ice, and the second hit the capitol city of heresy – the modern-day Whore of Babylon – Venice itself.

G.: Yes, err... our sources imply that the «daemon sultan» was the power behind the meteors – the blow to the Creatures of Ice was an attempt to settle an... intra-demonic feud. And Venice was destroyed due to the not negligible force the late Empress brought to bear against «his awfulness». In any event, we needed to find a source of Power that could be leveraged, both to banish the demons and to heal mankind and the Earth. We dare not use the various flutes, amulets, rings, etc. of magic as they could be tools of the Enemy. Regardless of their efficacy, many tend to corrupt their user. Therefore we examined «sentence replaced by: certain relics». The Spear of Longinus we knew about – its owners’ wielded it with skill, but it has been taken to a place out of our reach. The Bones of «the first father» are long vanished, with little hope of return.

H.: And the Cross? What of the Cross? It is said we possess a fragment.

G.: Unfortunately, the fragment we hold is not proven authentic. As to the Cross itself...

Father: The Cross is what it is, and will be what it will be. We cannot risk revealing it, for the consequences of its destruction – its “removal” if you will – do not bear thinking of. Forget the Cross for the present. It serves us already.

G.: Yes...No other Relics are imbued with the Power we need. However... Brother T. has found something... he has tied together missing, loose and frayed threads into what has become our current hope. In 496 AD, Clovis, King of the Franks, descending from the Merovingian line, was baptized into the Faith and recognized as King by all the Church. Later, when Charlemagne, of the Carolingian line, was made Emperor, he submitted to Pope Leo III. Why then, did Gelasius I, a proud Pope defending the primacy of Peter, not request that Clovis subordinate himself? Later, when Anastasius II, who had earlier sent his congratulations to Clovis, died, all acclaimed his death as the result of divine decree. What you do not know is Anastasius was in the process of drafting a letter

calling for Clovis to submit his kingship to the Papacy. That is a single thread of this tapestry. Another can be found in some of the Apocryphal Gospels and variants of the Gospel of John...

H.: You speak heresy!

Father: Be still for yet a while.

G.: Yes, the Apocrypha is deemed heretical. Yet there is sufficient documentation therein to support the belief that Our Lord wed the Magdalene and furthermore they enjoyed a fruitful union. Legend routinely speaks of the Magdalene journeying to certain areas of southern France accompanied by Joseph of Arimathea. Frankish legend holds Merovingian ancestry can be traced, and literally means "across the sea". The royal symbol of Clovis was the bee, which was also a symbol of King David. Is it beyond belief, that as Jesus passed his spiritual authority on St. Peter, that he passed his Davidic kingly inheritance on through his children? The third and final thread can be assembled through reviewing rumors of mysterious miracles occurring through the ages. We have grounds to believe Christ's ability to perform miracles, particularly in healing, has surfaced in another branch of his earthly bloodline. Completing a Trinity, if you will.

Father: Thank you brother. Remember, our Savior was as fully human as he was fully divine. So, this is our Hope, to find and bring forth the «struck out» Living Blood of Christ. Not for our glory, but for the Glory of God and of the «flock» upon Earth. We need this Power to banish «the enemy» and his minions, and to heal the suffering world. So, let us examine the possibilities: First, the «holy blood» does not exist, despite our best research. In this case, our search must be most secret, to avoid the «flock» becoming the laughing stock of nations. Second, it does exist. If so, we may stand at the End of Time, and the revelation of the Lord will serve as the entry unto the Second Coming. If so, let it be, and we will fight on the side of the angels. «We» pray it may be found and will assist the «flock» in our mission. We cannot be corrupted, for goodness and Love cannot create evil. His presence will re-invigorate the faithful, much as St. Thomas was assured when he saw the Resurrection in the Flesh. So, brothers, here is «struck out»: Locate the Living Grail itself. Do we have your support?

H.: If the «holy blood» is found, will not our laity desire the «flock» to follow it and not ourselves?

Father: We would be one in purpose. We are all guided by the Holy Spirit, the «holy blood» included. Remember too Christ left «struck out, replaced with *truø* authority to «us» through «struck out». That has not changed. Is there further disagreement? Very well, we proceed with «struck out», and will keep it a most secret project. However, the «flock» must be prepared if we are successful. As you know «remainder lost...»

BANK LIST

Aztec Empire of Mexico	Tenochtitlan Teocali	2,037	40%
Chan Mongol Empire	Uncle Wu's	618	40%
Free Republic of Ethiopia	Funj Gold Reserves	856	40%
Principate of Kiev	Royal Bank of Khitai	142	35%
Coptic Kingdom of Maasai	M'Beya House of Credit	1,128	20%
The Nisei Republic	New Yedo Matsuma Bank	579	40%
Republic of Spain	Aztlan Mercantile Credit	269	25%
The Republic of Spain	Banque du Galway	813	40%
Empire of Swedish-Russia	BUX	1,039	40%
Thai Empire	Angkor Fat Bank	379	40%
Java	Sunny Sunda Savings	854	40%

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