

Lords of the Earth

Campaign One

AN AGE OF AIR AND STEAM

Turn 214

Anno Domini 1757 - 1758

TURN 215 ORDERS DUE BY January 1st, 2003

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The campaign Notes and Modern Era supplement have been updated.

You must read them both! Do so now!

http://www.throneworld.com/lords/lot01/l1_notes.html
http://www.throneworld.com/lords/lot01/lot01_rs_3_1_4.html

"The war is ceaseless. The most we can hope for are occasional moments of tranquility in the midst of conflict." ~ Lobkowitz

AN OBSERVATORY: SOMEWHERE IN THE PACIFIC

"Another night staring through a keyhole," grumbled the young ensign. The graveyard shift, the only shift for night sky observation, always took its toll among the ranks of the enlisted astronomers. The government had 'militarized' the national astronomical research program for obvious reasons. Certain events had made it necessary to keep recent revelations a state secret. The commons must never find out what was happening over their heads for the security of the state and the welfare of the people, or so went the political reasoning.

The young ensign peered into the scope, and scribbled something into his logbook. Yawning, he placed his head upon the console. "What a waste of time, nothing is happening tonight," he thought. Drool pooled around the controls as the junior astronomer slept fitfully.

NORTH ASIA

Mercenaries	Minimum bid listed in [x].
Condotieri	5i, 2a [1gp each]
Captains	Saigo Tsugumichi (M968) [5gp] Bantag Yen (MB77) [10gp]
To hire, please contact...	(No one)
Quality Ratings	i15 w15 s18 c12 a12 z3

TOKUGAWA JAPAN (Shinto, Tokushima on Shikoku)

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

DIPLOMACY Kagoshima (^nt)

Fueled by the steadily-increasing industrial power of the Shogunate, the cities of Edo, Kyoto and Kumamoto all expanded a level. At the same time, the farmers in such provinces as Aichi, Shikoku and Nigata began to use ever-increasing amounts of steam-power (mills, lumbering operations, water-pumps for the paddies) and increased their productivity by a marked amount.

Wood-cutters working the backwoods of Amur happened upon placer gold in one district, inciting a sudden gold rush into the remote fastness of the province. The abandoned city of Nagora (now protected by the looming guns of Fort Kuzon) was swiftly filled with enterprising types looking to make a quick *koku*.

The flow of gold from the north make Edo sparkle, where the bakufu had also mandated wide-ranging improvements in sanitation, public cleanliness and road-repair. The muddy, dirty city which had sprung up from the ashes of old Yedo was now something more like a proper dwelling-place. Lord Nagumo also arrived to take up permanent residence in the port as 'warden of the east'. He brought a large number of troops with him.

The continuing fortification of Nagora and Kuzon also provided a secure base for a vigorous community of Shinto priests, missionaries and monks working among the cannibal tribes of Dzungur Coast – where the holy men found excellent success despite the even greater presence of Buddhist faithful in the hinterlands. They had a bit of a boost in their proselytizing as the Tokugawa government had dispatched the lords Itichi, Sumitomo and nearly thirty thousand samurai to keep the peace (and throw a whole passel of Manchu Buddhist missionaries out on their ear).

Prince Sii was officially proclaimed Yoshimune's heir and wed to a relative of the previous dynasty. Though their connubial bliss only yielded a daughter in '58, the prince had every expectation of many strong sons.

OUTPOST: SOMEWHERE IN NORTHERN MONGOLIA

It was a crisp fall day, with the temperatures hovering near freezing, but still "warm" for the season. Many of the outpost scientists turned out for the launch of the prototype "Stratospheric Aeroship", the *X-Ming* as it was officially known. It was hoped this new class of zeppelins would allow clear, unobstructed observations for spying. Additionally, they would be used as astronomical platforms, far above the clouds and atmospheric distortions, allowing them to peer ever closer at the strange machinations on and near the surface of Huo Hsing, which had lately been observed.

"This could be our first step to the stars," one scientist wondered aloud. Stretching his arms towards the distant horizon, "I wonder if other beings live out there."

PACIFIC MERCENARY & TRUST (Shinto, Kryztm on Luzon)

Juchen Agoi, President and Executive officer

DIPLOMACY Mexicalli in Boruca (^ci), Krungthep in Nakhon (^bo), Saigon in Phan Rang (^bo)

While the president of the company was off gallivanting about in the Amerikas, trying toasted locust and grilled dog, his son Jugo was eating smoke in southern China, trying to keep the imported Tagalog workers laboring on the tracks. Captains Yashuhiro and Shimura, who were operating down in Thai lands, got a hot reception in Saigon – unidentified assailants shot their litters full of holes, sorely wounded captain Shimura, and killing six of their retainers. Undaunted, Yashuhiro continued on...

NORTHERN MONGOLIA: THE LAUNCH

Massive airship doors swung open, and the prototype 'parasite' aeroship rose slowly, purposefully out of the bay. A small cheer went up among the scientists as the engines growled to life. The Mongolian national flag was unfurled along its sides, and the men below saluted. Dropping its ballast – a few captured tribesmen screamed angrily before tasting dirt – the *X-Ming* rose quickly into the arctic sky.

THE PURE REALM (Buddhist, Fusan in Silla)

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

DIPLOMACY Hong Tseng in Kwangtung (^ch), Luang in Fujian (^ch), Moulmein in Thaton (^ab), Annam (^ab)



Construction work continued apace in Holy Fusan, with a mighty ring of fortifications now rising all about the landward side of the city. The armed component of the Wing Kung expanded as well – these were dangerous times and the holy city had already been burned to the ground once... never again! Considerable aid was sent to the Ming and in return, a small group of aeroship pilots, crewmen and technicians arrived in Fusan to assay the (seemingly) insurmountable task of teaching the priests to build, operate and fly their own aeroships. This particular initiative had been forced upon Wan Ho by the perplexing issue of the Burning Sea, which rendered communications between Fusan and the steadily expanding Realm presence Thai and India very difficult.

Still, Wan Ho did what he could... including moving his seat of administration to Akone on Okinawa and striking a variety of deals with the Japanese and the Ming. A large number of clerks, transcribers and accountants were sent south to succor the Thai.

NORTHERN MONGOLIA: THE GOAT

Zhenting and his goat were out among the bare trunks of scrawny pines, gathering kindling. “Another cold day, eh General Wai?” Chuckled Zhenting. The goat glowered at him.

“Hehehe, you old goat. Always so cranky.” Zhenting stood up, stretching his aching, crooked spine and glanced back at the village. Smoke drifted lazily above numerous thatched huts.

“Don’t worry, General Wai, we’ll be back next to the fire soon enough.” A cold, dark shadow crept over Zhenting. Zhenting shivered and looked up. “An aeroship? What are they doing out here? Wait. Where’s the gas chambers?”

A brilliant, searing light answered the old man’s question. Zhenting, or what was left of him, fell to the ground. The goat bleated angrily, glowering at the sky.

THE MANCHU MONGOL EMPIRE (Buddhist, Harbin in Shangtu)

The Dread Lord Manchu Zao Ma, King of Kings, the God-Personified, The Eternally Victorious and Divine Emperor of the Middle Kingdom, the Celestial Emperor, Smiter of the Barbarians, The Bulwark of Civilization, The Son of Heaven, Most Favored of Bodisvatta, The Supreme Master of the Universe Before Whose Feet the Craven Ming Grovel, The Son of Heaven, the Divine Light of Wisdom, Gurkhan of Khitai, Lord of the Tribes, Beloved of his People, The Manchu, Merciless Destroyer of all those who talk Too Much, The Big One

DIPLOMACY Quaran in Kerait (^c), Khalaka (^c)

The Manchu kept a wary eye on the northern frontier – where their armies had lately been scattering the remaining Ice tribesmen and heaping up pyramids of skulls in honor of the Gracious and Merciful One – and expanded the cities of Tungur, Amgar and Shenyang. Massive beautification projects were also undertaken in Harbin and Amgar. The Emperor was tired of getting shit on his slippers when he was walking down from the palace to get some pie at the local café.

Prince K’ang-Hsi came of age and was presented with his own regiment of foot and guns. Being sixteen, he was very pleased. The Dread Lord was distracted from the birthday celebrations by a long-running and ever-more-bitter dispute between the ‘blue jade’ Buddhist sect prevalent in Manchu lands and the Wing (spit!) Kung southerners. Though Zao Ma was attempting to moderate the

situation, his own priesthood was growing more and more incensed by the day...

The duties of state called, however, and Zao Ma was *very happy* leave the bickering, intriguing priests in Harbin while he rode north to Quaran to dicker with the local nobility. The city of Ulan-Ude and the province of Khalaka had been put under their own ruler(s) again, as Zao attempted to restore some kind of tolerant rule in the northlands.

The ‘blue jade’ monks were a little put out – until they realized that the very young and impressionable Prince K’ang-Hsi was now in nominal command of the capital and the Imperial army.

Everyone – Emperor, prince, priests alike – was alarmed and startled when reports reached those various parties of a Judean army (ranging in reported size from 11,000 to 24,000 men) marching through the provinces of Tumet and Wudan, searching for something... K’ang-Hsi responded immediately with the main army, marching pell-mell northwest from Harbin and into Wudan. By the time he arrived, however, the putative Judean army had retreated south-west into Kin.

THE KINGDOM OF PRESTER JOHN

(Maclan in Tuhnwhang)

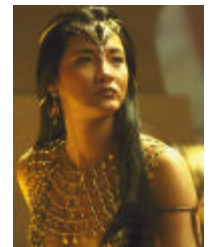
Megan Corrigan, Khagan of Karakocho, The White Goddess, Wolf-Sister of the Altai

DIPLOMACY None

Untroubled by all the trouble elsewhere (and no one had molested their goats),

Megan’s work-crews continued to toil in the

Desert. Royal roads were built from Maclan to Anxi and Hami.

**STRATOSPHERE: THE SHIP**

“There’s a forest fire down below, sir.” An ensign pointed to a port-hole. The captain peered back at the distant ground. About where the Manchu Empire border should run among the wooded hills and valleys, huge columns of black smoke obscured the ground.

“There’s much work to do. Attend to your tasks,” barked the captain. “Deploy the telescope before...” the captain’s voice trailed off, making many of the men cease their work. They stared warily at the captain, who stood transfixed, staring straight ahead.

A crewmember made a gasping sound and pointed to the front view-port. The captain spoke, “What the—”

THE DIVINE KINGDOM OF JUDAH (Pienching in Honan)

Wahu Chahi, The Hand of God, Champion of the Hosts of Christ, Celestial Emperor, huey tlaotani

DIPLOMACY Miserable effects...

While his advisors worried and fretted over the missing princess Sutay, and the vanished generals Han and Tsuku, the Hand of God pressed ahead with the restoration of Divine glory. The cities of Beijing, El’Khudz and Xiapin were expanded and not incidentally the troublesome northern towns lost their fortifications while all of the new citizens were loyal southerners. Two new cities were also raised – Wen in Bao Ding and Guyin in Funiu – also with particularly ‘loyal’ populations.

The battle damage in Pienching was repaired and huge new public markets, plazas, baths and churches built in a frenzy of construction – all designed to win the hearts of the capital for the Hand. In the south, where the troops on the edge of the Wasteland reported the dust-storms and burning hail was letting up, a few brave settlers (encouraged by the government) began to try eking a living out of the wasteland.

Still, the Hand was not entirely bereft of his senses. General Aimi was dispatched to the north to search for Han the rebel, while many other lieutenants scattered from Pienching like dandelion fluff, searching for enemies of the state. The clergy was kept entirely happy with a renewed program of missionary efforts among the tribes of the Gobi.

Unfortunately (though the priests had begun to make some progress among the Gaxun Nur) the arrival of generals Sifi and Twifo enraged the Moslem chieftains of Gaxun, igniting a sudden and unexpected war along the frontier. Moslem raiders burst out of the north and swept into the lands of the Lang Shan and the Lob Nor (clients of the Divine Kingdom).

A huge crowd of Judean commanders in the area (at least four of the Hand's recent appointees) immediately fled for the safety of Yan'an city in Huang. The only one who tried to muster a defense of the frontier – General Sea'h – was killed in a skirmish while riding to meet the Lob Nor muster.

The Moslems, now massed under the command of Baylak of the Gurvanites, pressed the Christian tribes hard and – despite an attempt to bring the idolators to battle – succeeded only in forcing the Lob Nor and Langshan tribes to flee south into the Divine Kingdom. This they did, flooding down into Ordos and beyond, into Huang. There they found the 'four cowards' huddling in the city, behind truly impressive defenses.

Meantime, Baylak's tribesmen had burst across the Judean frontier, ravaging the provinces of Yanzhi, Wu Hai and Ordos. This invasion did not go unmet, however, as the Hand of God himself, accompanied by Prince Jui-Yen Bandares, marched east with all speed (and the entire Divine army) to repel the incursion. They reached Yan'an and found everything in great confusion – the fields tramped by the frightened Lob Nor and Langshan – fighting having broken out between the rural landowners and the smelly barbarians. The Hand stopped – taking the infantry, guns and engineers under his command – to sort things out, while sending Bandares north into Ordos with the cavalry army to chase off the Moslems.

Despite scouting aggressively with his zeppelins, Bandares failed to catch the nomads in Ordos – which was fairly ravaged by that time – and pressed on into Dzamin Uud, whence Baylak's army had fled. Among the trackless wastes, the Judeans began to falter and were simply unable to make the same speed as the Mongols. Disgusted, Bandares turned around and rode off south again. Baylak's attack was, therefore, quite unexpected – the Mongols were mad to attack an airship-supported army!

At **Wubairha**, 33,000 Moslem Mongols attempted to ambush the 30,000-man strong Judean army while it refilled canteens and water-bags at the oasis. A confused battle resulted – the Judeans rushing to mount their horses – while airships rained fire and shot down from a clear blue sky. The Mongol attack was beaten off with heavy losses on both sides. Bandares attempted to pursue, but the Moslems scattered into the desert again. Unable to come to grips with the enemy, Bandares retired into Ordos and tried to patrol the frontier as aggressively as possible.

Further south, another Turkish army (of swift-running infantry) pounced over the mountains into Kansu and laid waste to the countryside before withdrawing into Yanzhi. Meanwhile, negotiations with the Lob Nor and the Langshan had failed to win the Hand any kind of solution, so – in a fit of rage – he ordered his army to beset the tribesmen. A ferocious brawl erupted outside of Yan'an as the Judean guns suddenly erupted in smoke and flame, sending a devastating rain of chain and grapeshot into the nomad encampments. Nearly sixty-thousand nomads were slaughtered, plowing the earth with their blood. Both tribes simply ceased to

exist. Afterwards it was discovered the 'four cowards' had somehow been killed – rather messily – in battle with the Langshan guardsmen.

GREAT QING CHINESE EMPIRE

(Wuhan in Hupei)

Qianglong Yu-shen, Emperor of China, Hammer of the Barbarians, the Redeemer, Divine Son of Heaven

DIPLOMACY No effect



Thousands of coolies continued to labor on rebuilding the emperor's road between Hengyang in Kienchou and Wuzhou in Lingtung, finally completing the mighty effort with the help of hundreds of Realm priests doing a penance. More settlers were sent to die in the Wasteland. Aping the Europeans (Nimma had been reading the Feudal Press), work began on a massive observatory in the mountains of Hunan.

The hustle and bustle of the new foundries, iron rolling yards and workers barracks in Kwangchou transformed into actual work on an actual project! In particular, the construction of a steam-railway from the port, north through the countryside of Kwangsi and Lingtung to the town of Wuzhou. The 'walong' is still incomplete – the tracks end several miles short of Wuzhou, but the project engineers claim they will finish the first working railway in China within two years – barring Javan interference, of course.

The economic boom of the south Chinese coast continued, as the cities of Hanoi, Onikowan, Kwangchou, Hong Tseng and Luang expanded. Local merchants were secretly quite pleased with the destruction of Shanghai and the cities at the mouth of the Yangtze – how else would all these riches come into their greedy hands? After various false starts, the Qing technicians in Wuhan managed to finally get an airship that flew (and didn't crash into the nearest tree, temple steeple or barn) – launching the *Defeng*.

The arrival of a strange airship over Kwangchou nearly caused a panic in the city before someone noticed the silvery shape held the blazon of the Pure Realm prominently painted on its side. In an attempt to secure Realm communications from Fusan to the south, a regular mail service had been established by the priests between Silla and Kwangsi.

With a heavy heart (Wili was a sweet boy), the Empress banished the Javan king from her court. His doe-like eyes, melodious voice and brawny physique were too distracting for her, particularly when the realm needed an Heir of her blood. Thus Nimma set herself to bearing a child or six for the good of the state. Unfortunately, her first baby miscarried and then the second died at birth, taking the Empress with it in a gory, strangled mess.

This left the 'non-entity' Qianglong Yu-shen suddenly Emperor in fact as well as name. The boy was wracked with grief – his wife had just died – and filled with fear at the enormous responsibility he must now bear. First among his tasks was to inaugurate a new dynasty, for that of the Ming had perished at last with the lovely Nimma. Qianlong decided to call his regime the "pure", thus Qing. After a year of mourning, the new Emperor set himself to restoring every glory of ancient China, redressing all wrongs and bringing the whole of the earth under the banner of heaven.

A Pure Realm troop of cavalry arrived in Wuhan with a large number of enormous crates. Under the supervision of various Ming officers, the cavalymen and the crates disappeared into a reclusive warehouse district.

A Qing diplomatic mission to the remote forests of Wuliang in the far south-west returned with giddy news – an entire mountain of gold had been discovered!

SOUTH ASIA

Mercenaries	Minimum bid listed in [x].
Condotierr	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 THAI EMPIRE (Angkor Wat in Khemer)

Ayutthaya Blajakay "Red Hand", Emperor of the Thai, Lord of Khemer

DIPLOMACY Mon (^f)

Still trying to dig out of the financial mess inflicted on the Thai banks by the perfidious Yasarids, the "Red Hand" was forced to borrow large sums from the PM&T company, in exchange for granting them exclusive rights to any spare grain, rice, banana peels or elephant meat the empire could spare in perpetuity. The Emperor also went on bended knee to the Qing, who saw fit to dole out a few scraps to keep the "bastion of Buddhism" from disintegrating as the economy collapsed. By all these efforts (as well as squeezing the farmers and merchants) the "Red Hand" managed to shore up the banks, pay off all the bad paper and keep things on an even keel. "Long may his name be praised!" Shouted the bankers. Pretty impressive for a man who was quite possibly the worst ruler the Thai had seen in centuries.

In a similar vein, the Emperor begged the Pure Realm to help him administer the newly-conquered provinces in India, to which old Wan Ho responded with several shiploads of 'administrators'. Of course, many of these learned and literate men wound up running things in Angkor, not in barbarous India.

And on the northwestern frontier, more troops were marched up to Palas to reinforce the garrisons in Gaur and Ahvaz. General Nai-thim kept a ready watch on the frontier. He was not so sure the peace with the Chandellans would hold, not when every mosque was filled with the Muslim faithful praying the Lion of Bundelkhand would ride to their rescue. The fleet was withdrawn – the Moslems didn't have any warships and the sailors were homesick.

HOSOGAWA BORNEO (Kozoronden in Sabah)

Hosogawa Suenaga, Daimyo of Kozoronden

DIPLOMACY None

Miners, merchants, craftsmen and other settlers continued to flock into the highland forests of Linau, following the trail of gold spilling from the fog-shrouded mountains. The province became 1 GPv. Back in Kozoronden, the daimyo's entire attention was focused on continuing to improve the airworthiness of his small nations aeroforce. Other efforts – some subtle, some not so – continued apace in the workshops and foundries of the coastal cities. A spate of bad luck afflicted the hitherto fortunate Hosogawans – in '58 alone the prince Yernu, the lord of Timur, Admiral Nagumo and Lord Kuupene all took with a variety of illnesses, fell sick and died.

Then the gold deposits in Linau gave out, leaving all the miners with nothing but dirt and barren stone under their grasping fingers. The local economy of Huangor collapsed as a result. Amid all of this, a veritable plague of Oroist priests settled upon the land, whooping and hollering and throwing things into the sea. The merchants and craftsmen of Borneo – who had never been particularly tight with the southern priests – ignored them.

VERY PLEASANT JAVA (Sunda in Pajajaran)

Wili III, Great Kahuna of Java, Emperor of the Maori, the Sea Spear

DIPLOMACY Aceh (^nt),

Distraught and nearly crushed by Nimma's rejection, her horrific death and – worst! – the end of the Ming dynasty, prince Wili returned to Java in a despondent mood. His view of the world had grown bleak – where was the laughter? The joy? Even a miniscule lessening of the haze across the face of the sun did not rouse him to sing, dance or recite his customary rhymes.

Only the construction of weapons of destruction pleased him. So, without thought for a future of peace, he flung himself into revamping the Javan war-machine, in ordering the construction and crewing of hundreds of ships of war, in investing vast sums in the greatest array of airship yards the world had ever seen. Then, to ensure his nation's safety in this bitter realm of conflict, he dispatched Admiral L'page into the southern oceans on a mission of devilry. "Bring me what I need..." Wili growled, fingering a super-collectors edition of the latest Monster Island Playset ("Peregrine the Evil – starring Peregrin of Arnor, his son Stupid One, Gunga Din the loyal boy, the Hindu Avatar Elephant Nose, and Tina! The Super Secret Javan Spy who saves Gunga Din from Peregrine's evil clutches.").

The Kahuna did grant the Persians a boon.

THE SUPREME PRIMACY OF ORO (Fukuzawa in Irith)

Horoku ne Muuta, High Priest of the Shark

DIPLOMACY Singhasari in Java (^ab), Pocara in Iriadh (^ca)

Despite the rioting in Fukuzawa (and the inevitable violence when the Bakufu army showed up to suppress the students and guildsmen revolutionary unions), the priests of Oro cloistered themselves in the pyramid complex and turned some serious thought upon their administrative hierarchy. A reform followed, which freed up many priests and monks and shark-handlers for other duties, actually improving the reach and capability of the church.

THE BORANG BAKUFU (Sakuma in Borang)

Izuryama Jemmu, Daimyo of Borang, Lord of the North, Emperor of Austral

DIPLOMACY Fukuzawa in Irith (^nt), Arukun (^t)

The settlement of Japanese colonists in the sub-tropical woods of Erhos and Eha-rana raised those regions to 2 GPv. Izuryama also invested huge amounts in providing extensive coastal trade shipping, courier services and barging on the larger rivers. In the north, where rebellious students (the *zengakuren* movement) still controlled Fukuzawa, Bakufu armies converged from all directions. General Kahwazi was the first to arrive and blockaded the city and closed off all the roads.

Lord Shiguro was next to arrive and when he did the government officials attempted to find a diplomatic solution to the crisis. After quite a bit of negotiation, a few steps were made towards a non-violent resolution. The troops outside Fukuzawa hoped they could go home soon – the weather was turning particularly foul.

NANHAI WANG'GUO (Rabaul on Bismarck)

Sugawara Te Anu, Daimyo of the Southern Seas

DIPLOMACY None

Minded their own business.

THE MAORI IMPERIUM (Joetsura on Te Ika A Maui)

Hatipi, Regent for...

Takotokino, Lord of the Fleet, Emperor of the Maori, Blessed of Oro, The Big Kahuna

DIPLOMACY None

Tried to mind their own business... but the Javans weren't letting them get away with that, no sir! Late in '57, the navigator's

watch in Joetsura started ringing the city alarm bar – a huge Javan fleet had suddenly appeared out of the cold mist. Maori pilots dashed for their airships and sailors scrambled aboard their trimarans sitting in the harbor. Chanting loudly, the last remnants of the Black Fleet put to sea, sails springing up to the boom of drums.

The Javan fleet itself bore down on them with all speed – over four hundred ships-of-war – and the sky lit with the flare of guns mounted on the Maori zeppelins and the answering crack of the Javan aeroships. Graustarkena's force was small, only thirty ships or so, but he hoped to nip in among the Javan battlewagons and burn their troop transports. Such was not to be... Admiral Br'ee had so many ships he could screen off the Maori with one wing while the other sheltered L'page's marines as they stormed ashore at **Joetsura**.

Graustarkena and his naval sortie were annihilated and the kahuna fell in the burning wreckage of his ship, dying bravely before being dragged down by the servants of Oro to dwell in the deeps. L'page's marines, supported by a heavy barrage from the fleet, seized Joetsura and stripped the city of everything of value. The Maori defenders scattered into the hills, though the Javans did not massacre the civilians caught in the town.

Instead, they went door to door, equipped with comprehensive lists of every technician, workman and supervisor laboring in the airship yards outside of the city. The factories themselves were broken down, labeled, boxed and hauled aboard a fleet of transports now filling the harbor. After three months of backbreaking labor, the Javans sailed away.

Several months later, lord Hatipi arrived from the north with a small fleet and found little Takotokino still sitting on the throne of his fathers, surrounded by weeping civilians.

CENTRAL ASIA AND INDIA

Mercenaries	Minimum bid listed in [x].
Condotierri	5c, 5i [1gp each]
Captains	Rajah of Vijashuram (M836) [5gp] Eon of Axum (MB45) [10gp]
To hire, please contact...	None
Quality Ratings	i16 w20 s17 c11 a13

Hussite Mercenaries	Minimum bid listed in [x].
The Hussite Legion	5hea, 6i [2.0 gp each], based at Bhuj on Kutch Island.
Captains	Robert Clive (M757) [5gp]
To hire, please contact...	Albanian East India Company
Quality Ratings	c12 i15 a14 w17 s20

EMIRATE OF THE CHANDELLAS (Bundelkand in Chandela)

Kuhman Singh, prince of Bundelkhand, Lion of the North

DIPLOMACY Seylan (^t)/Polonarva (^nt)

Granted a bit of breathing space by the general cessation of hostilities on the sub-continent, Singh ordered the usually formidable defenses of Bundelkhand improved and the ruined port city of Khalil in Kalinga occupied and restored. Other good news was had when princess Jinma (last of the Yasarid royalty) arrived via Norsk packet ship from Lisbon and was wed to young prince Kumar Singh. Throughout the old Yasarid lands, all the Moslem nobles shed a tear of joy to see the old and the new dynasties bound by blood in the eyes of Allah.

Things were less rosy in Dahala, where a Southern League army was trying to wrinkle the emir of Tripuri out of his home by spearpoint. With a heavy heart, Kuhman Singh wrote the rajah a sad letter indicating the recent peace placed Dahala in the Hussite

sphere of influence... there would be no relieving army. Despite this blow to their morale, the Dahalans refused to submit to the Hussite dogs!

SHI'A IMAMAT (Yathrib in Kosala)

Rhemini, Ayatollah of the Shi'a, Voice of Allah

DIPLOMACY Chola (^ch), Pandya (^ch)

The Buddhist pukes continued to press hard in the regions newly conquered by the Thai, which provoked an open uprising in Leakai in Assam. The Muslim rioters were viciously suppressed by the Thai goons and thousands were killed. Fortunately for the Moslem cause, many of those killed were newly converted Buddhists. There was also mild Buddhist missionary effort in Gtsang, though these priests were making a long journey overland from Ming China itself. Stricken as they were, the Shi'a imams did try and reverse the Buddhist tide in Palas, which was quite difficult given the steady influx of Khemer settlers.

THE SOUTHERN LEAGUE (Amon Hen in Karnata)

Robert of Kakatiya, King of the South

DIPLOMACY Nasik (^t)

The generally paltry state of the League's finances were much improved by a substantial infusion of gold from the Albanians. In exchange, rice, wheat, yams, mangoes and tons of spices were exported on Albanian hulls to northern markets. The Carthaginian governor of Calicut also doled out some specie to the League dukes to keep them malleable. A considerable number of African soldiers also found service under the colors of Stephen of Chera.

Much to everyone's disgust, the new Judean station commander of Tharbad in Nasik proved to be a canny governor. The defenses of the thriving port were restored, a strong watch put upon the walls and a cordial relationship maintained with the Duke of Nasik (which in turn made that fellow less amenable to the incessant pleadings of the League). Hussite missionaries financed by the Carthaginian Prayer Society began to circulate in Pandya, speaking to the people.

Speaking for the princes of the League, 'King' Robert announced the Carthaginians would be given right of free movement for their captains, troops and companies throughout the domains of the League. Priests from Arnor would also be allowed to enter provinces such as Dahala (still in infidel hands).

Duke Joseph of Satava returned home to have another go at begetting some sons and was immediately touched by tragedy, as his wife died messily in childbirth. Stricken, Joseph pressed on to Nasik (whence the king had bade him go) and unexpectedly found himself with a new wife (the studious Winnifred) and, late in '58, a son named Connor.

Meanwhile, in the north, the desultory siege of Tripuri heated up in late '57 with the arrival of a strong company of 10,000 Carthaginian regulars, dozens of guns and eight zeppelins. The raj of the city struggle on grimly, but with the heavens belching flame and spike-bombs into his palace and the walls crumbling under the battering of modern Afriqan artillery... the Dahalans surrendered in early '58, a morose and dejected lot.

THE REALM OF ARNOR (Schwarzcastel in Edrosia)

Peregrin von Hessen, Rajah of India, Duke of Delhi, Grand-Duke of Aballach, Prince of the Black Tower

DIPLOMACY None

Still bitterly disgusted, Peregrin moped about his palace in Kanauj, ignoring nearly every necessity of government and rule.

Despit the Duke's black humor, however, the Albanian and Carthaginian agents in the court were quite busy. Grain shipped out of north India and large sums of cash flowed back in. Enormous works were undertaken throughout Rajput to repair the damage done lately in war. Kanauj itself swelled again, as more Hussite settlers flocked to the capital. A port town, Somnath, was raised in Surashtra province, just on the junction of the Gulf of Oman and Malabar Sea.



THE CITY OF THE BLACK TOWER

A shot rang out in the distance, then more followed in return. Chaos, the city was still in chaos. Chaos, was what Robert wanted most for this mission. He had walked into the factory district as if he belonged and no one bothered him. The effects of the rioting were everywhere, it would take awhile to put the city back in order.

Schwarzcastel still reeled as a drunk from the riots and the capture of the city. Stupid play that, alas karma, life goes on. Finally he reached a small wall with a little red door still attached, he rapped a signal, and whispered "moon". A return signal was heard, someone muttered "stars," the bolt was thrown and the door opened abit for him to clearly hear, "well you bloody took your sweet time you knave of a Brit. Get in before anyone sees". Robert slid into the courtyard, and gagged, the stench of a thousand live souls can do that.

Before him spread the Yards, a hodgepodge of buildings, outbuildings, smoke, cast off metals, and the high falutin' dreams of hundreds of merchants. Even more apparent were the noise and stink, a smell like nothing he had ever experienced before. All had to be seen, tasted to believed, the place was a cesspool of scared humanity. When the attack started the workers moved all their families into the factories for protection. Chaos reigned in Schwarzcastel.

Robert turned to Bastable -- the other was a thin, wiry, snake of a man. Turbanned and suntanned, he and Robert were a team of long standing, the AEIC often called on them to take care of, stuff. He stood at ease an also surveyed the scene, he at least had veiled himself to guard against the putrid debalcle. The Brit soon did so as well.

"Show me, Bas." The little Frisian stepped over to a large well-like structure and lifted the lid. It could be bolted from inside he noted. Below spread a darkness that fled the light of the early morning. A steep set of stairs beckoned them. Bas in the lead, Robert following, their torches providing a flickering light, they came to a tunnel, the sound of moving water, and rats. Rob, thought to himself, *why always rats?* Gazing around the Captain scanned for <other> things as he took out a small greenish star and checked his Franklin. The Franklin was a high powered pistol loaded with silver slugs and other specialty bullets. The star did not glow, *good*, he thought.

"We'll need to start soon, Bas. Is there anyone reliable left here?"

"A few, not many", Bastable replied. "Iranians just walked in, nobody knows what will happen, people bloodied some on both sides, the riots, this lot here, the workers, gathered their families in though. Don't know how long before the Iranians really come

looking. Heh, there's Company ships sitting in the harbor, any chance of getting away that way?"

"Not any more, Bas. Nicolas ordered them out, yesterday. I saw many weighing anchor as I came across this morning."

"Okay, let's walk for awhile and see the end of this." Clive continued splashing forward along the tunnel. "Hello." The two stared up a nearly life-like statue of a blue monkey, eyes gleaming with intelligence. *Must be a trick with the light*, thought the Captain.

The tunnel was ancient, the city having been built over age-old foundations. The passage led downward a gradual slope. This stonework showed a remarkable degree of fine craftsmanship. Whomever had wrought here had built well.

The sound of water gradually picked up as the team went on, the tunnel continued downward and they came to a gate. Oddly enough the gate was not old but recently built. Taking out a key, Bastable inserted it and opened the Gate. Before them spread a large cavernous space of darkness. Their torches not bright enough to reveal more than a landing with large steps leading down again.

Bass turned to his left and torched a trigger with a match, and with a bang a flare arched out from the tunnel's other side. For the awhile the dark was drawn back and three large barge like boats were seen. They were normal looking cargo barges, save for some odd wrapped shapes along each side. Another shape loomed on the far side of the cavern, but only briefly.

"What was that?" Clive demanded.

"Newfangled submersible." Bastable snorted. "Devilish machine. Breaks down constantly."

We can just barely get them all on these, thought Clive to himself.

"This canal empties into the Rann of Kutch, right, Bass?"

Robert asked.

"Sure as snot, Captain. Didn't Old Nic tell you of this here project?"

"Always nice to have the first hand report" he replied.

"Captain, back to it then?" asked Bas.

Nodding *yes*, Robert turned, and drew his pistol in alarm. Before him stood the monkey statue. Thinking fast, he warned Bas and stepped away from him. Bass stunned, wrenched a curved blade from his belt.

Both men tensed for battle. Clive asking himself *why now, why when so much had been done here!* Then he noted the shining from below his coat, the Statue had awakened to the Starstone!

Robert circled to the left and pulled out a vial of holy water. Crying out to God he threw and struck the beast, glass breaking, water splashing, the beast screamed. Confident now he took time to aim. The monkey was not going to help him, and charged at Bastable. Striking a swordman's pose Bas met the animal in a flurry of scimitar slashes and bloodied it. Unfortunately he was then backhanded by the Monkey and literally flew across the tunnel's width, hitting the wall with a sickening thud, he slid to the floor.

Screaming the name of John Huss, Robert fired his Franklin. Roaring in rage and pain the Monkey turned to face the soldier of fortune. Drawing forth the Starstone he boldly attacked. The two collided, a bright light flashed as the Stone touched the Monkey.

Later, as he came to, Clive staggered to his feet and looked around, the monkey was gone. Going over to his companion it was clear that Timothy Bastable was gone as well. His body lay limp on the floor and rats were already beginning to gnaw on his exposed flesh. Enraged, Clive took his sword and scattered the vermin from his friend. He sat down and cradled Bastable's head and wept.

It took a day to gather the wits of the AEIC workers above. He finally found men and women who were thinking, thinking of their futures. Gathering them in family lots, odd lots, and what not

he got them going below. All knew of it, of course, how could they not know about the projects below?

Opening the sea-cocks on the submersible sank the odd craft to the bottom of the buried canal. Everyone waited for night. The odd shapes on the barges turned out to be small steam plants and paddle wheels. When night finally fell the huddled mass slowly began to pole themselves out into the underground canal and then current helped towards the cavern's exit where the canal drastically narrowed. Several men jumped on both sides and began to turn turnstiles. Slowly and ponderously large doors opened and the Rann of Kutch was seen. The rioting could be still heard in the city as the first barge left the canal. The waters were calm and the night deep. Poling themselves onward the first engine coughed to life and the group fled to freedom. A small skiff was towed behind holding the mortal remains of Timothy Bastable.

THE SHAHDOM OF IRAN (Al-Harkam in Carmania)
*Bukharm Al'Qadir, Shah of Iran, Overlord of India,
Light of the Aryans*

DIPLOMACY None

Faced with an increasingly restive population (both Hussite and Hindu), the Iranians dug in.

The garrisons of Sind, Sukkur and Tarain established fortified cantonments throughout the provinces to secure Iranian control. The Shah also directed the settlement of nearly ten thousand of his soldiers throughout Edrosia itself. This was not likely to please the Hussite inhabitants... no, not at all. Of course, Bukharm was careful to absent himself from the province for the duration, returning to Al-Harkam to see to the care and feeding of his harem.

Nothing indicated the level of paranoia and tension in the court of the Shah than the ominous and unmistakable presence of the "Chin Guard" who watched Al'Qadir's back and secured the safety of his family. Many in the court looked upon the foreigners with distaste – why should an Aryan king need these barbarians to protect him? The truth was even less palatable... the entire edifice of the state rested on the presence of nearly 20,000 Qing troops encamped in and around Schwarzcastel (plus a large number of Borang mercenaries, and three fleets of Qing and Hosogawan warships). The honor of the Aryans was a little soiled by holding such a barbarous overlord.

Even more troubling, the citizens of Carmania (a poor and destitute province, particularly by Persian standards) wholeheartedly embraced the Karidjite revisionism introduced by Tewfiki merchants constantly coming and going from the port. All this was noted in the travel journals of an Afghan soldier named Akmed Bahulan who traveled to the port of Al-Harkam in '57 and then returned to his mountainous home in '58, having failed in his mission for Shah Durani of Kabul.

While the shah's generals Gudarz and Mahmoud al'Basrah were poking a hornet's nest down in Edrosia, Subir al-Jawzi was picking a fight with the Hussite Rajputs in Chitor province. The foolish nature of his enterprise, however, was belied by a swift, victorious campaign shedding a minimum of blood. Subir's lancers shredded the Hussite infantry and ran circles around their knights. The baron of Chitor was forced to make obeisance to the Shah.

The attempt to force the Arnori citizens out of their farmsteads, estates and homes in Edrosia was inflicted by the Iranians at bayonet-point. The presence of the Red Cross with tents, water and food did little to assuage the fury of the betrayed Hussites in the valley of the Indus.

"Traitors!" Screamed mobs of outraged Hussites, flinging bricks and offal at the Red Cross workers. "Pawns of the satanic Qing!"

Qing, Borang and Hosogawan troops took the field and stepped up patrols in Schwarzcastel, trying to keep the lid on. But the presence of the hated Chinese and their lackeys fed more oil into the flames gathering among the citizenry. Worse, the still sizable Hindu underclass now found common cause with the Hussite landowners – the Moslems were well known for their outright destruction of Hindu temples, and the Buddhists were even more reviled...

In September of '57, while the Iranian army was trying to organize the evacuation of the Hussite inhabitants of Schwarzcastel, the entire Indus valley erupted in **The Great Revolt**. Edrosia, Sind, Sukkur, Bauluch, Punjab, Sahis, Und and Tarain rose up in a frenzy; mobs of citizens attacking every Iranian outpost and garrison, the Bauluchi highlanders sweeping down onto the plain to take revenge, the Ajmeri and Jats desert-men slipping into the cultivated lands to slit a few Moslem throats...

Though some might have expected the rebels to call upon Peregrin of Arnor to succor them, to lead them, they did not. He too was disgraced in their eyes!... the stolid farmers, craftsmen and merchants of Danish India would free themselves from tyranny!

The rising in Edrosia drew the immediate attention of the Qing / Iranian / Borang army, resulting in widespread slaughter. While battles in the streets of Schwarzcastel made the gutters slop with blood, the Ajmeri, Jats and Bauluch converged on Sind and obliterated the Iranian garrison. With Subir al-Jawzi and his lancers tied up fighting in Chitor there was nothing to prevent the isolated garrisons of Sukkur, Punjab, Und, Tarain and Sahis from being enveloped and besieged by hordes of Hussite and Hindu rebels.

The garrison of Sukkur put up a stiff fight, but was overwhelmed. In Punjab and Und, particularly vigorous Iranian commandants managed to crush the local rebellions before they could rightly form. The rebels in Sahis and Tarain, however, managed to gather their forces, then attack the garrisons and rolled up the Iranian presence from east to west. In middle '58, they were joined by the remaining rebels from Und and Punjab.

Meanwhile, the 'International Peace Keeping' force in **Schwarzcastel** was locked in a brutal house-to-house battle for control of the city with (essentially) the entire population. Buildings burned, artillery leveled whole blocks, the harbor districts roared up in flames and smoke, and thousands were killed in the crossfire. After two months of constant battle, the revolt was crushed. More than half of the IPK troopers were slain, wounded or missing. Forty-four thousand civilians (armed and not) were dead. The city itself was a smoking wreck, nor more than a shell of its former self. The rebellion in the countryside was also suppressed with equal vigor. At last, with their villages in flames and their menfolk dangling by the roadsides or consumed by the charnelhouse of Schwarzcastel, the Hussite population began to flee up the road to the north and safety.

In the wreckage of the port, the Borang contingent had been wiped out (along with its commander), the Qing forces were nearly shattered and the Iranians were exhausted. The Qing commander Kuo Cheng had fallen in the worst of the fray.

The settlement of Edrosia did, however, succeed. While the port burned, Giv Gudarz had been slaughtering civilians and driving them off their land with a will. In late spring of '58, however, a Hussite army (composed of the diverse rebels in the north, as well as the bands of raiders come across the border from Ajmer, Jats and Bauluch) swept out of the north with fire in their eye and a forest of lances newly washed in Iranian blood.

¹ Plus, Peregrin was from a dynasty of *southern* Hussites – latecomers, Macedonians, really Greeks – not the pure stock of the northern Dane. So the rebellious lords had little truck with him and his failed schemes.

(Punjab and Und, as it happened, were still under Iranian control, but the decision of relegate those garrisons to regional fortifications stole their mobility).

News of the Hussite counter-attack struck fear into the hearts of those Iranian and Qing commanders in the south, but Giv Gudarz was made of far sterner stuff than the palsied sub-commanders who had succeeded Kuo Cheng. Claiming their first duty was to 'preserve the army', Dhin Duy and Joo Siah rushed to board their fleet and fled, taking the five-thousand-odd men they still commanded to Mei-Guo in Muscat to 'regroup'.

This left Gudarz to face thirty thousand angry Hussite troops with only 13,000 of his own. Finding the odds not particularly palatable, the Iranian general marched day and night and managed to evade the Hussite rebels and reached the modest safety of the Carmanian mountains. Mahmoud al'Basrah, meantime, took over the defense of Schwarzcastel itself.

The Hussites, who had now organized themselves under the overall command of John Abraham of Bauluch laid siege to the city with a portion of their force while the rest harried the Iranian settlers out of their newly won homes. While this second round of slaughter and misery transpired, Al-Jawzi had learned of the revolt and had daringly led his horsemen across the wasteland of Jats to arrive all asudden in Edrosia itself. Then the Iranians dashed east, trying to meet up with Gudarz in Carmania.

Unfortunately they now traveled in an entirely hostile countryside, where every herdsman, shepherd and milkmaid was a hostile spy. Al-Jawzi and his riders were caught at **Khosal**, a dozen miles east of the Grand Trunk Road by Abraham's pashtun horse-archers. Despite great personal bravery, Al-Jawzi's command was destroyed on a dusty afternoon and the daring captain taken a prisoner.

John Abraham now spent the last months of '58 besieging Schwarzcastel (oh, unhappy city!). This time the port was fortified and defended – but against the markedly superior siege skills of the Hussites, the Persian defense was doomed. Of course, they suffered too without a fleet to support them with supplies (though there were Carthaginian and Albanian ships aplenty in the nearby waters...) and no one knew the byways of the old port as well as those who had grown up in it's once beautiful streets. Al'Bahram was captured with the last of his men.

KINGDOM OF BALUCHISTAN (Multan in Sukkur)

John Abraham, Lord of the Indus, Protector of the Faith

DIPLOMACY None

Now John Abraham was master of a domain forged in fire and steel – Edrosia, Bauluch, Sind, Jats, Ajmer, Sukkur, Sahis, Tarain and Peshawar in Und. The Chitori once more ruled themselves and Peregrin of Arnor stewed in his own bile in Kanauj, stripped of his birthright once more.

SHAHDOM OF AFGHANISTAN (Kabul in Afghanistan)

Ahmad Durani, Shah of the Afghans, Lord of Kabul

DIPLOMACY None

A mission sent to the southern provinces returned with empty hands, having been turned away by the Iranians in Al-Harkam.



KINGDOM OF THE KUSHANS (Astakana in Kush)

Bujayapendra, Blessed of Vishnu, prince of Astakana

DIPLOMACY None

The 'flower kingdom' mourned the untimely death of princess Jahina, the beloved wife of prince Mujehendra. All went in mourning for six months in her memory.

THE NOBLE HOUSE OF TEWFIK

(Al'Harkam in Carmania)

Tewfik Saul, Purveyor of tall pointy hats

DIPLOMACY Antioch (^bo), Kuwait City (^bo), Tortosa (^bo), Tikal on Cape (^mf), Nikolayev in Pechneg (^ci)

Trying to ignore the slaughter next door, the Tewfiki were very busy expanding and upgrading the shipyards at Al-Harkam.

Further west, the Noble House helped the Islamic Union expand the newly rebuilt port of Antioch. Saul himself had sailed east to Schwarzcastel – but turned back upon seeing the city cloaked in a dark cloud shot with leaping flames and the distant thunder of artillery. "No business to be had there..."

Mindful of the peril slowly spreading out from India, the home office in Al-Harkam was provided with many fierce guardsmen.



THE SAFAVID PERSIAN EMPIRE

(Semnan in Khurasan)

Safi Bahram "the bold", Khan of Khans, Shahanshah of Persia, Prince of Bukhara, Caliph of the East

DIPLOMACY Singapore (^ea), Persia (^c)

Bahram stifled a laugh at the torments befallen the Iranian rebels. "Just desserts," he said under his breath, lest Allah hear. Still, he did send lavish gifts of coin and gold bar to both the Iranians and the Islamic Union.



The Javans kindly remanded their claims to Singapore back to Persia, which allowed the remnants of the east Asian trade network to stitch back together. The shah was also careful to dispatch priests, teachers and holy men loyal to the Safavid crown into the south-western provinces to remind the people there of their ancient faiths, and to urge them to turn their backs on the Karidjite heresy. As yet, there was no violent reaction to the popular new religion.

Bahram returned to his capital at Semnan and involved himself in the redistribution of garrisons and commands. The port of Abas in Fars expanded.

THE KARIDJITE IMAMAT (Baghdad in Mesopotamia)

Ali bin Abi Talib, kalifa of the Pure and the Faithful

DIPLOMACY Mosul (^ab), Levant (^ch)

Fueled by contributions from throughout the Islamic world, the Karidjites started to muster themselves. Some semblance of a hierarchy which could successfully administer a far-reaching church began to emerge from the previous chaos.

"Let it be known to the righteous, that there are still those who follow the word of the da'is of the Isma'ilis, and preach of the advent of the false Mahdi. 'Those who have done wrong will know to what end they will revert.' But it must be known that these ones are followers of Shaïtan, that they apply the doctrine of taqiyya, to hide their true purpose and their true master from the ears of the faithful. 'Away then with the wicked people!' When 'the truth comes the false vanishes; verily the false is apt to vanish.' There is no God but God and his Prophet is Muhammad, peace be upon him."

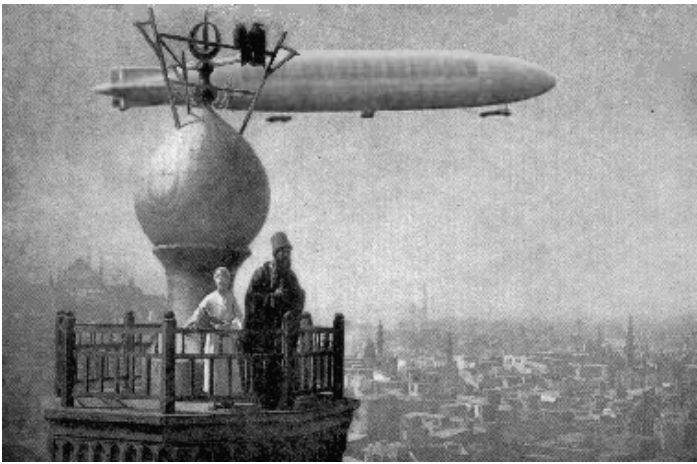


Figure 1. Modern cult-free™ Baghdad

THE ISLAMIC UNION (Ar-Raqqah in Mosul)
Ali Adin, Sultan of Ar-Raqqah, Prince of Mosul
DIPLOMACY Carhae (^nt), Petra (?un)

Busy with all the matters concerning a modern head of state, Ali Adin saw to the expansion of the cities of Antioch and Aqaba. A fortress was built on the site of old Palmyra (Tadmor), and every town, city and port was fortified. The Sultan feared war with the Christians... large sums poured in from overseas to bolster the strength of the Union. Oddly, very few of those 'friends' were Moslem. The Sultan dashed hither and yon, bolstering the defenses of the Union.

With the able assistance of the Norsk Aer company, the Union managed to get several cargo-rigged zeppelins launched from the aerodrome at Antioch. The airship yards at Baghdad also continued to work round the clock, for this was a dangerous world and who knew what calamity might next befall?

A huge fleet of airships arrived at Aqaba in late summer of '57, took aboard several hundred Union scouts skilled in desert work and departed south. They did not return.

A semi-secret diplomatic mission by the emir of Petra to the tribesmen loitering in the Sinai met with unmitigated failure. The emir made a fool of himself, the tribesmen chased him out of the province and then (in a sulky fit) the emir went home and refused to return any of Ali Adin's letters.

EUROPE

Catholic Mercenaries	Minimum bid listed in [x].
Condotierrri	1xea, 1hea, 10i [2gp each]
Captains	Baron Von Hausen (M783)
To hire, please contact	Norsktrad
Quality Ratings	c12 i16 a13 w18 s18 z6

Hussite Mercenaries	Minimum bid listed in [x].
The Hussite Legion	5ec, 9i, 5c, 5hea, 1z [1.5 gp each], b ased at Constantinople.
Captains	Sit Thomas Musgrave (M977)
To hire, please contact...	Albanian East India Company
Quality Ratings	c12 i15 a14 w17 s20 z8



Figure 2. Swedish Frontier Cavalry Officer

AERONAUTICAL RESEARCH & FABRICATION

(Rostov in Levedia)

Jessica Orozco, Captain of the West

Solyom Pasternak, Captain of the East

DIPLOMACY Kherson in Polovotsy (^bo),
 Cahokia in Michigamea (^ma),
 Almeria in Powhattan (^ma),
 Quadara in Timuca (^mf),
 Chiaca in Chickasaw (^ma)



In tribute to his holiness, the ARF shipped an entire years production of caviar off to Rome. A pity it spoiled... on the other hand, the result was better than dying of the Corruption, wof? A group of Aztec 'tourists' attempted to pass through ARF lands without attracting attention – got lost, had to be rescued from a swamp – and were summarily ejected from the Company domains with a stiff warning not to 'come round here agin'.

The eastern lands so newly under Company dominion were visited by gangs of engineers who tore town the citadel looming over Astrakhan. The factories of Rostov continued to run double-shifts, filling the pale gray sky over the city with clouds of black smoke. An effort by the Captain of the West to negotiate for landing and warehousing rights at Tynwald on the isle of Man was met with cannon fire from the city and gangs of unruly natives waving axes and muskets on the shoreline. Disheartened, she made port at Liverpool instead.

Operations in the midst of the Urst-Urt waste, at the massive citadel of the Khirgizites continued. Now Swedish, Danish, Persian and Company teams were turning over the wreckage, charting the acres of disturbing diagrams covering the desert, and inching their way cautiously through miles of subterrene tunnels in the buried city of Kurn. Lord Captain Antran held custody of the security forces deployed to protect and watch over the teams of natural philosophers...

A confusion of shouts and screams drew Antran's attention and he and a ready-squad of men armed with naphathene throwers rushed out of the main camp. A stiff wind was blowing from the northeast, throwing sand into their faces. The lord captain drew a pistol (more for his own self confidence than in any hope it would stop whatever horror had broken loose from the accursed soil) and reached the top of a minor ridge. Beyond, the clapboard buildings housing the Swedish Library Service workers sprawled under the implacable sun.

Antran frowned. There was no fire, no smoke, no monstrous inhuman apparition... only some men lying in the street. Another gust skittered across the desert and the Companyman caught a sudden stench of offal and ripening rot. He screamed in horror and staggered backwards. His skin was already blistering, black spots springing up in his flesh.

“Plag---“ He crumpled to the ground, dead like most of his men. His body made a squishy sound striking the ground – the fruiting bodies burrowing through his flesh were already peeling back cracked and withered skin, corpse-pale tendrils waving in the blistering sun. They ripened, split open in a dusty black cloud, and a haze of nearly-invisible spores drifted on the wind towards the main camp.

PRINCIPATE OF KIEV (Kiev²)

Anna Kournos, Queen-Regent for...

Boris, Prince of Kiev, Master of the Holy Rivers

DIPLOMACY None

Minded their own business. But would anyone leave them alone? No!

PEOPLES REPUBLIC OF BAKLOVAKIA

(Komarno in Slovakia)

Wysowski, First Citizen, Protector of the Workers and Peasants



DIPLOMACY Not to speak of, no...

With strictest secrecy, the Special Services group of the Komarno Police Department, in association with the Kivagrad Block Housing Surveillance section, the Fire Department, the Ox-Tossers Local 415, two student groups from the Komarno Public School 14 Detectives club and approximately four hundred Cossacks who had noticed ‘something was up’ stormed the house lately occupied by the romantic, dashing and just a little suspicious Prince Desreyl of Kiev. Unfortunately, by the time they had managed to knock down the door, trip over the rug, knock a candle over, set fire to the house, get lost in the smoke, put out the fire, round up all the oxen which had gotten loose in the confusion and save Mrs. Toporosky’s cat from a tree where it had fled to escape the tiger someone had been keeping next door (which had been let out by the Girl Detectives because it was inhumane to treat a big kitty-winkums that way), the Russian spy had escaped.

Back in the Senate hall, there was a muddled debate about the lack of funding for the super-secret project underway in the woods behind Mrs. Toporosky’s shed. The scientists working on the, um, the, well you know, the *thing* in the woods, needed more money.

Normally, the citizens of Baklovakia are too addled with alcohol and pastries to pay much attention to events beyond their glorious country, but from time to time they *had* noticed the tyrannically-oppressed natives of Banat were more-or-less understandable, also liked a good pastry, and brewed some mighty fierce fire water. Unfortunately, these like-minded patriots had long been the despotic, iron-handed rule of Princess Anna of Kiev.

So, when Banat suddenly erupted in revolt in the spring of '57 and the Baklovakian Revolutionary Guard just *happened* to be loitering around the border, waiting for an excuse to go charging across into Kievian territory, everyone put it down to a happy, though unlikely, coinkydink.

Prince Ivan of Kiev, however, did happen to be on watch in Banat with four thousand Russian troops and this led to a bit of a scrap at **Passelovitch’s Brewery** between the Revolutionary Guard and the Russ. Despite the Bakkies fielding nearly twice their number, the Russians under Prince Ivan fought the attackers to a draw, slaughtered the rebellious peasants and then managed to slip away in the night while the Bakkies were stumbling around in a stunned daze at the beating they’d received.

Unfortunately for Ivan, he’d suffered heavy losses too, and while he retired in good order, he no longer had the men to garrison the province, so it fell to the Baklovakians anyway.

ALBANIAN EAST INDIA COMPANY

(Thessaloniki in Macedon)

Nikolas Argir, Senior Partner in the AEIC

DIPLOMACY Augustina in Tunsia (^ma),
Brooklyn on Pachogue (^mf),
Takari in Colon (^bo)



Busy as ever, the Albanians had their fingers in so many pies even the senior partners weren’t aware of everything underway in the Company name. A Commonwealth fleet arrived from India and took custody of several clipper ships and zeppelins ordered by the Archon to bolster his forces.

A thriving grain exchange operated out of Naxos island, drawing factors from as far away as Sud Amerika. A new trade arrangement was struck with the Southern League in India, while a long-standing relationship with the Duchy of the Three Isles foundered abruptly, denying the Company many bases and lucrative trades in tea, silk and tobacco. This kept the poor, overworked accountants in Thessalonika very busy.

One project underway concerned the continued recalcitrance of the Bithnian emir – the European Hussite Legion was mustered, therefore, at Ephesus in Lydia under the command of Sir Robert Musgrave. The Company had employed them specifically to subdue the emir and his soldiers, allowing the Company control of the rich province. A very large force of Carthaginian troops soon joined them as well (which included the Frankish Foreign Legion amongst their number). The combined army was commanded by Nikolas Argir himself, who had been insulted once too many times! He would lead eight hundred of his own Company troops, six airships loaded with gunpowder bombs and napathe, Musgrave’s mercenaries, and seven thousand Afriqans against these damnable heathens himself!

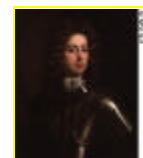
The Moslems fought bravely, but without artillery or airships their chances were slim... old Argir proved himself a canny commander in the field, scattering the heathens and putting garrisons in all the larger towns and estates. “Hmph! So much for that bit of business,” he grumbled.

THE SWEDISH EMPIRE OF RUSSIA (Riga in Latvia)

Solomon, King of Sweden, Tsar of the All the Russias

Prince Kjell Torsson, Crown Regent

DIPLOMACY None



Grodno Times ~ *Voltaire’s Candide denounced by Bishop; Playwright thrills thousands at Public Reading.*

St. Sigurd Star ~ *Imperial SkyWatch reaches Upper Scandanavia.*

Cerkes Post ~ *Group W claims break in Red Road Murders; search on for White Wagon.*

The mayor of St. Charles in Livonia took great pleasure in cutting the ribbon for a grand new bridge built across the Dvina to allow the restored King’s Road up from Neyvilna to cross the blue-black waters of the river and then turn west to reach Riga on the coast. The thought of so many travelers and tolls kept him warm at night. The mayors of Amisus, Cerkes and Riga were equally pleased to learn the Senate had directed their towns be fortified.

The long, difficult evacuation of Inner Afrika continued, with the province of Adrar and the city of St. Athanasius being the most recent to be abandoned, the citizens marching off to the north and west in long, trailing columns. Luckily for them, the Army had grown quite experienced in this kind of operation.

A SkyWatch Project began. This was intent on training, registering, and equipping as many citizens as possible across the

land in observing the sky, day and night, for things flying across our airspace or above it. SkyWatch observers receive a few weeks of basic observing skills training (sky coordinates, drawing skills, how to repair the equipment, etc.), are registered upon graduation, with the title of Royal Observer, and are given some equipment - a small telescope of 50mm lens and eyepiece in tube assembly (20X to 100X), plus a mounting for it, low-power binoculars, a thermometer and barometer, several notebooks with pages laid out for data entry, etc. (fairly inexpensive stuff) - and a contact in the nearest city to which data are to be sent. Royal Observers are encouraged to search for more than space rocks and odd zeppelins. They are also to record natural phenomena, such as crop growth, animal behavior, and so on. In an environment where death from above is a real possibility, and natural clues may help determine whether the Ice recedes or advances, a real motivation existed, particularly among high school students. Most of those recruited will probably be among the propertied classes, those with time to spend on such things. These may include retired military officers and their families, clergy and their families, lesser nobles, and so on. These will gather for annual summer conferences in their nearby cities. Awards for "Observer of the Year" and "Most innovative Observer" were given out.

Emperor Solomon, meantime, was boating about on the Dvina, trying to find enough chieftains in the Rzhev forest to talk to about reincorporating the province into the Empire. He had intended to return home in the latter half of '58, but serious news reached him from Riga, convincing him to stay in the forest.

Some kind of exceptionally virulent disease had broken out in the countryside south-east of the city and had swept the suburbs bare of life, leaving only rotting, distended corpses wherever it went. Riga itself had sorely hit by the outbreak of what the survivors termed the **corruption**. The loss of life was both dreadfully heavy and unexpectedly light. So fierce was the plague that it tended to erupt, slaughter everyone within its invisible touch and then gutter out as all hosts perished. Burning infected corpses, buildings, haywains and other possessions seemed to prevent recurrence of the blight.

A number of Swedish generals in the city were also stricken down by the corruption, including Marsk Zeldovich, who had recently marched a huge column of clerks and their families up from the provisional capital at Grodno.

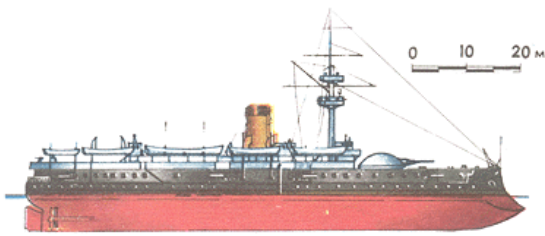


Figure 3. Royal Swedish Navy steam cruiser *Narvik*

A fleet under Count Effernich was dispatched to the Americas to find new homes for a travel-weary and parched lot of refugees from the Exarchate of Inner Afrika. Similar groundwork was laid along the Russ frontier, where the border watch continued to make vigorous forays into provinces like Cuman, Seversk, Muscovy and Tver to roust out any malcontents, heretics and ice-worshippers.

Missionary work continued in the far south; finding excellent success in Khazar (which became Catholic) and dismal failure in Georgia (where the locals were much more interested in becoming Karidjite). The various expeditionary forces in the far east were

recalled. This pleased Dame Maksutov and Marsk Teukolsky greatly – they had long felt they were wasting their time in the east, playing mercenary for the Persians.

Oddly, however, neither Maksutov or Teukolsky returned to the airbases in southern Russia where their most recent orders from the Altkansler had bade them – instead they flew (and marched) directly to Riga and there found the city in great uproar and confusion. The outbreak of the plague had slaughtered thousands and among them the 'kansler herself. With Mironoff dead, Prince Kjell was the ranking member of the government in the city. Once Maksutov had arrived, the prince imposed martial law on the city, quarantined all of the senior ministers, disbanded the Senate for the duration of the crisis and announced the formation of a military government in place of the 'cowardly and discredited' Senate.

The Danish, Baklovakian and Polish embassies were placed under guard and a strict and immediate purge launched to ensure all those officers and regiments in the city and environs were loyal to Kjell's government.² Prince Kjell entertained delegations from the Roman Church (soon to be in its own disarray) and the Shawnee Empire (many libations were drunk and the ambassador and the prince seemed to see eye to eye on many matters.

Amid all the upheaval, however, no one had noticed the disappearance of Bishop Issac Greycrow who had fled into the countryside as soon as he grasped the intent of the prince and his cronies. With the aid of the parish churches, he sped east and managed to intercept Emperor Solomon as that worthy rushed back from Rhzev to deal with the plague outbreak in Riga.

Solomon was stunned – his own son raising the army in revolt against their Emperor and Senate? But Greycrow had worse news... the generals had grown bitterly tired of Solomon's careful diplomacy and conciliation towards the Hussites. Denmark was still reeling from the Blow, and that meant Poland lay friendless and alone before the might of Sweden. War would be in the offing as soon as the coup-plotters secured their control of the organs of government.

Still rattled by this turn of events, Solomon dispatched letters to all of his generals and governors, to his wife Tristan (now a prisoner in her own palace in Riga) and to his other son, the heir-apparent Dagmar, who commanded a fleet in southern Russia. Without waiting for a response (at Greycrow's urging) the Emperor took his small flotilla of river boats and sped south.

Woods-runners under the command of Baron Borisov of Kur (now one of the 'militarists') came ranging after them only a day later. Teukolsky's airships quartered the sky, searching for the wayward Emperor. By great good luck, however, Solomon escaped the net and at the end of '58 had reached Kherson in Polovosty, where he found a very confused Prince Dagmar. He had received a letter from Kjell, demanding his loyalty to the 'new government'. Other news was waiting – Makari Glinkaya, the governor of Afrika, had declared his support for Kjell's 'restoration', as had Nikolaevna and Faddeev. This left the Emperor's faction with only himself, his son Dagmar, Greycrow and General Dottski who had recently returned from the Americas, making landfall at St. Sigurd in Halland at the end of '58.

The militarists, meanwhile, had secured control of all three centers of government, the vast majority of the army and air corps, as well as part of the fleet. All was in confusion as the winter of '58

² While Prince Kjell made a handsome and decisive public face for the coup, it was clear to anyone with the wit to keep their head low that Maksutov and Teukolsky were the true driving force behind events.

closed down upon the land – but everyone was certain war would erupt come spring...³

THE GRAND DUCHY OF POLAND

(Warsaw in Poland)

Frieda Leczinski, Duchess of Poland

DIPLOMACY

Unaware of the storm about to gather in the east, Duchess Frieda devoted her time to more high-minded pursuits... like world peace!

Stralsund expanded a level, enormous improvements were made to the agricultural situation in central Poland and the religious issues raised by the seizure of the Jesuit Academy were smoothed over (a little). Frieda and some of her advisors hoped to reconcile the hatred and bitter enmity between Hussite and Catholic throughout Poland. Most of her privy council, however, begged her to dramatically increase military spending and raise a new, modern army to protect the state.

Prince Vladislav was summoned back to the capital with the army, but most of the Polish command staff was involved in some kind of monkey-business in Baklovakia, so they paid little attention to the reports from the east. The knights of Tabor continued their effort to clean up the slums of Warsaw.



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 Ilé de France (^mn), Normandy (^ch), Brittany / Brest (^ch), Marseilles (^ch), Provence (^ab), Corsica / Bastia (^ch), Heraklion on Crete (^ch), Pomern (^ch)

Determined to strengthen the Hussite nations against inevitable Catholic aggression, the Knights lent the Commonwealth and the Poles aid in cleaning up Warsaw and Paris, and in expanding Stralsund. A serious effort was also launched (to the detriment of the Albanian East India company, as it happened) to bolster the unsteady Danish government (which had taken just a few knocks of late).

The questioning of Vicar Grayhame continued:

“Who is number one?”

“There is no number one.”

“Be seeing you!”



UNITED KINGDOMS OF GREAT BRITAIN (Kingston in Northumbria)

Oliver V Cromwell, King of England, Scotland and Wales

DIPLOMACY Isle of Man (^t)

Their attention drawn to the usually overlooked isle of Man by the failed ARF attempt to gain a foot hold there, the British fleet under lords Exeter and Simmons paid a visit (and after threatening to shell Tynwald into burning rubble) exacted at least a nominal obedience to the English crown.

Despite continued efforts by the King to suppress all missionary activity in the United Kingdoms, the Taborites continued to infiltrate more firebrands into the kingdom via merchant shipping from the continent. Anglia was the latest battleground, where the Hussites made good progress among the fen-people. The general confusion which had beset the Jesuits following the capture of the Vicar-General only helped the Taborite cause.

On the other hand, Jesuit efforts in Mercia made headway in a province formerly firmly in the Hussite camp. Spanish attempts to meddle in the religious situation in Wessex resulted in a nearly sixty Spanish monks being arrested for making a public disturbance with their wailing and chanting and stinking up Portsmouth with their incense. A gang of Shawnee frontier priests also turned up in Anglia, where they too muddled about, preaching in an undecipherable tongue and were taken into protective custody by the Protector's Guards. A group of Iroquois monks who were running soup kitchens in the poorest parts of London made much better progress simply by providing a good example.

Duke Cromarty, commanding a strong garrison in Mercia, fell ill and died – though despite rumors to the contrary his body was not afflicted with the Corruption.

THE SOCIETY OF JESUS (London in Sussex)

Gustavus Grayhame, Vicar-General of the Society of Jesus

DIPLOMACY None

Even though the Vicar-General continued to languish in a cell on Mount Tabor (in the very jaws of the devil himself, from the perspective of most good Catholics), his subordinates in London continued to labor unceasingly. One effort undertaken in Grayhame's absence was the promulgation of the *rerum novarum* which attempted to defuse some of the charges laid against the Church by the Hussite dogs; councils and unions were established for the lay people employed by the Order, certain protections were granted to the workers and farmers on lands owned and operated by the Order, and minimum wages and schooling were mandated for all.

Attempts to recover the staff, books and other materials involved in the construction of St. John the Divine in Sopot failed miserably. Order representatives, including Vicar Redfox, arrived in Sopot with a number of ships and were turned away. Polish soldiers on the docks refused them landing and they were forced to retire to London in confusion.

THE FRANKISH COMMONWEALTH

(Paris in Ilé De France)

Louis Alphonse du Maine, Archon of the Commonwealth

DIPLOMACY Holland (fails miserably), Brabant (?ea)

The fertile fields of France continued to blossom. Ponthieu increased to 2 Gpv.

The port of Brest expanded (it was now the largest city in France) and work continued on the Paris to Metz highway.

The Commonwealth government took delivery of four Albanian *Racer*-class clipper ships to provide for more speedy and reliable mail service to the African outposts. Two newly built zeppelins (fitted solely for cargo haulage) were also acquired. Other foreign aid came from the Knights of Tabor, who knocked down a number of slums in south Paris and put up spartan, but homey public housing instead.

The Archon, meanwhile, was spending nearly every waking hour at the Eiffel Tower construction site, urging the work crews on, trying to get the enormous tower finished on time. Unfortunately, such a hectic lifestyle was too much for his weak heart – Archon Louis died in the fall of '57 of a sudden stroke. His younger brother Louis Alphonse then became Archon.

Lord Germaine's diplomatic mission to Holland (which had gone so poorly before) now entirely fell apart in a shouting match between the burgher's council and the Commonwealth embassy. Blades were drawn, shots rang out and the Duc du Brabant toppled



³ And the factional control of regions and cities will be determined at the beginning of T215.

over, quite dead. Everyone was horrified and Germaine fled the country before open war broke out.

THE POLYTECHNIC LEAGUE (Athens in Attica)

Harold Hasselhoff, Chief Technologist

DIPLOMACY None

Some very surly Albanians arrived in Athens to take delivery of several specially-built airships the League had promised them. "Unaccountable delays," answered the League project manager, when pressed about the two year delay in completion of the contract. "Beyond our control."

Athens expanded as more students, technicians, craftsmen and managers flocked to work for the League. Business was good, what with the airship yards expanding at such a unprecedented rate.

THE DANISH EMPIRE (Thessalonika in Macedon)

Eleutherios Venizelos, First Minister of the Senate

Judit Dushan, Princess of Serbia, Queen of the Greeks, Empress of the Danes, Protector of Italy, Mjolnir-na-Midgaard, Rex Germanicus, Pendragon of the Isles

DIPLOMACY Swabia (^ea and then ?un), Copenhagen (?t), Westphalia (?un)

The Empire (could it be called a republic? Perhaps...) continued to strive mightily to repair all the hurts suffered of late. Every constable, militiaman, sentry and informer was alert for further attacks by the Catholic 'underground' which had been so vigorous in attacks on the apparatus of the state. Everywhere labor crews and engineers worked furiously to complete the critical railway link between north and south. The naval yard at Augusta in the Lorraine was completed, and progress made everywhere.

Even the dust-rangers patrolling the edge of the north Italian wasteland reported signs of the land growing green at last, and the streams and rivers running clear. The natural philosophers examining samples recovered from the wasteland opined that soon, perhaps, those lands could be resettled.

Work began on rail-lines from Hannover in Saxony to Lubeck in Holstein, and from Augusta in Lorraine southeast into Alsace.

After re-securing the allegiance of the Swabian princes, Georg Dushan continued north with his diplomatic cavalcade into Franconia where, while speaking to a crowd of burghers in the mercantile exchange, a blonde man suddenly burst out of the mass of people and fired a pistol three times. Shouting "Only a true Dane can rule Denmark!" the assassin was tackled and clubbed unconscious by the Emperor's guardsmen.

Dushan was rushed to the nearest doctor, where he received immediate medical attention. Unfortunately, a bullet fragment had cut his stomach lining and he died in agonizing pain three days later. Results of the interrogations of the 'Danish nationalist' were not made public. The blow to national morale was enormous – coupled with the latest round of disasters, everyone expected civil war to erupt. Or for Germany, at least, to secede.

General Elikases, commander of the Thessaloniki garrison, however, kept a cool head and addressed the wary and suspicious parliament, calling upon them to elect a First Minister to serve as ruler of the nation until such time as Princess Judit (the sole child of Georg and Empress Sofia) came of age and could reign as Empress. Sofia, it turned out, had already declined the task.

The conclave of the parliament elected, after much wrangling, a brilliant Cretan senator named Eleutherios Venizelos, who had been a rising star in the political circles for some time. Venizelos' first task was to secure the loyalty of all the generals and provincial governors – both for his administration and in support of the

seven-year-old Empress Judit (who was actually still with her mother in distant Denmark, staying with relatives).

Unexpectedly, this met with terrific resistance on the part of the military. The generals would bow to an *Emperor* but not to a civilian leader, particularly one like Venizelos who was common-born and had long expressed a policy of tolerance for the Catholics and Moslems alike.

The garrison of Croatia under Showalter and Landau immediately marched on Macedonia, intending to depose the Venizelos government and restore a 'proper monarchy.' This news sped to every corner of the Empire within weeks and to the horror of the parliament the Imperial commanders in Bavaria (Colle), Crete (Mohaim), Mansura (Lowenthal), Provence (the duke) and Champagne (the duke) all responded with equal disgust. Rebellion rippled across the strata of military nobility responsible for governance in the weakened Empire.

Elikases remained loyal however, and he and Venizelos rallied the garrison and fleet of Thessaloniki to support the parliament. They marched north to intercept Showalter and Landau, encountering them near old **Pella**. Immediately things looked bad for the Parliamentarians – each army was tiny (less than three thousand men each) – but Showalter had a decided edge in cavalry and artillery. Venizelos attempted to break contact, but was forced into battle. Once the Imperial Guard (loyal to Judit and the Parliament) was engaged however, the 'old Danes' went nearly berserk and laid into Showalter's rebels with a will. Showalter and Landau watched in horror as their regiment disintegrated. They tried to flee themselves, but Venizelos' had taken command of the zeppelins loyal to him and bombed out the one bridge they could escape across. The 'Old Danes' roared into the fleeing rebels and smashed the rest. Showalter was killed in the fray and Landau captured. He was ordered executed for treason by a civil court three months later.

Victorious, Venizelos returned to Thessaloniki to find Admiral Mongredian had arrived from the west with nearly the entire fleet and most of the troops who had been fighting at Marseilles. Pledging his loyalty to the Parliament, Mongredian's forces now doubled the loyalist forces.

Now the threat were the squadrons commanded by Mohaim and Lowenthal at Heraklion and Krak-de-Chevaliers. Thus, Venizelos and Mongredian took the fleet to sea (including essentially every steam cruiser in the Imperial fleet) to crush these rebels. Elikases remained at the capital, wary and prepared for any further attacks.

Mohaim, meantime, had learned of Showalter's defeat from passing merchants, and sailed his force of twenty men-of-war to Mansura, where he made common cause with Lowenthal. No sooner had the two rebellious generals secured control of the Egyptian and Levantine provinces, however, than Venizelos and the loyal fleet arrived.

Venizelos surprised the rebels at **Pelusium** and smashed their fleet against the shore. His steam cruisers could easily hold the wind gauge against the old-style men-of-war, and their rifled guns easily outranged the rebel broadsides. The Mansura garrison surrendered, pleading for amnesty (which Venizelos granted).

Now the only remaining trouble was in Germany, where Colle and a small force of rebels marched on Denmark, intending to seize control of the Empress and Empress-Dowager. Elikases was riding north to try and reach Germany in time to do something, but the entirely situation resolved into the unexpected hands of the Electors of Alsace and Thuringia who gathered up their own men and intercepted Colle and his 'royalists' in Thuringia. Before Colle was quite aware of what was happening he was arrested and his

men disarmed. Later they were all turned over to Elikases in Munich. Like his fellows, Colle ended his life swinging from a hang man's noose.

NÖRSKTRAD (St. George-the-Defender in Morroco)
Jorge Delgado, Mäklareväld of the Nordic Trading Company

DIPLOMACY Tuxpan in Totonac (^bo), St. Genevive on Gronland (^mf), Andalusia (^ma), Morroco (^ma), St.Pauls in the Canaries (^ma)



Much like their Albanian rivals, the Company was busy building a wide variety of air- and steam-ships for the export trade. Recent customers included the Duchy of the Three Isles, the Islamic Union (two *Freyja*-class cargo zeppelins) and the Sharifate of Mauritania (though it's not entirely clear if Delgado knew how much trouble that would cause...). Contract work also continued on St. Georges in Morroco, where the builders arm of the company was busily repairing walls and building new gun emplacements, redoubts and bunkers.

Finding her exile in the New World not so onerous as she feared (and with her son Sebastian now responsibly employed in Morroco as a Norskvarden lieutenant aboard a modern steam cruiser), Natasha Tukachevsky wrote: "*General Xho and his men have departed. And now I have the leisure to enjoy the culture of the city. But whether attending a Church service, or the opera, or a soirée, I sense an unease amongst the people. All seem to perceive that another calamity may soon befall us, and the laughter is too forced, the jollity too insincere, the prayers too fervently whispered. We are waiting, I know not what for. I have ordered the guard doubled, and the militia drilled. Small matters in the scheme of things. We wait, we watch. There is the sense of a storm about to break.*"

Good relations with the Islamic Union now led to open trade.

At a meeting of the Nörsktrad Council: Jorge glanced at his notes and then examined the faces before him. "The Company continues to rebuild, and this year I am delighted to report that our university has been restored to its previous state of excellence. Furthermore a number of scholarships have been awarded to promising Spaniards, in our continuing efforts to aid the Republic. The construction of yards and factories continues apace, though there are still shortages in some areas."

Jorge chewed his pipe thoughtfully. "The promised airship plans have been provided, and we bid farewell to our Tzompanctli guest. Closer to home, to settle an unexpected diplomatic incident, which is still subject to investigation, a pair of airships have been exported to Mauritania. Given that the sale of steam cruisers to the Islamic Union caused anguish and angst among certain Hussite governments, no doubt our provision of zeppelins to one of their fellows will settle their fevered imaginations. Or perhaps not, as we are selling a pair of steam-powered troop transports to the Islamic Union.

"There is no news of the Baron. Our own investigations, and those of other parties confirm what we have suspected: The Black Watch, formally the Assassins of Alamut are merely an arm of the Polytechnic League. It is regrettable that the Danes, until now premier in the persecution and eradication of evil cults, have taken a viper to their very bosom. Only a few years ago these same Assassins, who now so easily pledge their faith in the Church of Huss, worshipped their Hidden Imam. No doubt they still follow their doctrine of concealment – the hiding of one's true religious belief, if the Black Man of the Witch Cults can be graced with such a term. The city of Athens, once the bearer of the sacred flame of

civilization, the home of Plato, Socrates, Aristotle and Pericles, is now the den of unimaginable darkness.

"Perhaps the most famous proclamation of Jan Huss will prove their downfall. 'Truth prevails,' he said. Let us pray that it does.

"We must assume the Baron dead or subverted to their evil cause. Given these facts any pursuit of compensation through the Danish courts is pointless. Those very authorities now give shelter to the servitors of the Dæmon Sultan, whose hands are stained with the blood of hundreds of thousands of innocent Danish citizens. And all for an advantage in technology, that might be won through the Christian ideals of honest toil and labor.

"Do these Assassins have a conscience, even as *Macbeth*, in *William Papatlacamitl's* play?

"Art thou not, fatal vision, sensible
To feeling as to sight, or art thou but
A teapatl of the mind, a false creation,
Proceeding from the heat-oppressed brain?"

He sighed. "The Empress Oniko, of blessed memory, would never have countenanced such a thing. God rest her soul. I cannot decide if recent events are a catastrophe, fit for *Anthony and Cleopatra* or *King Nezaualcóyotl*, or a farce, as in *Hamlet*, *Merry Prince of Denmark*. The Bard should have written a Danish Tragedy."

Unexpectedly, Baron von Hausen turned up six weeks later on Sicily, having been dumped blindfolded in a vineyard. He walked to the nearest constabulary and requested assistance in reaching the nearest Company office. Even more strikingly, the Company had carefully set aside his contracted pay and pension, even when they fully believed him dead.

With great trepidation, William Rohan visited the New French trading outpost of Novo Lyon on the Mauritanian coast and found (as had been previously reported) the city abandoned and empty, the citizens no more than gnawed bones and scattered scraps. Though his men were terribly fearful, Rohan determined the disease which had stricken down the town was not the notable corruption, but rather merely the black death.

Traveling along the eastern coast of Amerika on a company packet ship, Leonhard Euler wrote: "*At night I have formed the habit of inspecting the heavens with a telescope. Easier done at sea, where there are no lights to distract the eye or confound the lens. And I wonder, what minds, what intelligences look down upon us, cool and calculating scrutinizing and studying our world, with its wide gray oceans and cloak of cloud-wisps, bright with the glimmering of the icy wastes. My glass is too weak in magnification to see Mars as more than a pale red dot, dancing in the distortion of our own atmosphere, but I know that world too has its polar icecaps, and perhaps once it had lakes and seas. My calculations indicate that Mars, as a body smaller than Earth, will have shed much of its primal atmosphere into space; it will have cold thin air save in any deep rifts and canyons.*

I have read in the newspapers from Europe that a great light has been seen on one side of the planetary disc, an outbreak of incandescent gas. I am inclined to the fancy that the appearance may have been the casting of a huge gun, a vast pit from which projectiles might be fired into the empty gulfs of space upon a jet of flame. Do the Martians, if they exist, seek to escape from their dying world?"

THE REPUBLIC OF SPAIN (Lisbon in Portugal)
Largo Cabellero, Commandant of the Imperial Guard
DIPLOMACY Salamanca (^nt)



Restoration work continued in Lisbon, with the army corps of engineers being called in to clear out the sewers and rebuild the last of the aqueducts.

The Commandante was forced to send a letter of apology to the British government after a large troupe of Spanish monks became inebriated and made a violent scene in Portsmouth after being defeated by an equally loud group of Taborite preachers in a zenball game. The Taborites fled, however, before the arrests began. The Spaniards were so drunk on warm beer they could not escape the coppers.

Bishop Castellano, traveling in the mountains of Leon, was beset by Royalist bandits (yes, there were a few left lurking about) and murdered. The Franciscans continued to tend to the poor and destitute in the lower city, building a series of soup kitchens and cleaning up several parks which had fallen into disrepair.

THE BLACK HAND (Gibraltar)
Rhys Deverill, Master of the Order

DIPLOMACY None
Kept to themselves and laid low.

THE DUCHY OF THE ISLES (Valetia on Malta)
Neya al'Raschid, Empress of the Isles, Emir of Archimedeia, Duchess of Sicily and Sardinia

DIPLOMACY Groza on Cyprus (^nt)

The 'new' city of Catanzaro in Calabria expanded. The Empress took pains to repay various banks and merchants who had suffered when the Ducal government had defaulted on a series of loans several years ago. Neya also took pains to issue the following declaration:

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

Let it be known that the Ministry of Finance and Trade has discovered serious irregularities within the business practices of the Albanian East India Company as they relate to activity in the Duchy of the Isles. Despite the fact that the crown granted exclusive license to import tea, silk and tobacco into the ports of the Duchy, the AEIC has seen fit, through malice or negligence, to not turn over revenue from trade they manage. Within the last ten years the Duchy has informed the AEIC of this chronic failure, and cautioned their home office that the Duchy's factors would be keeping a careful eye on the situation. Despite these notices and warnings, the AEIC has continued to fail to meet their obligation.

The Duchy has decided that, being left with little other choice, all ties between the Duchy of the Isles and the AEIC will be severed. Trade routes managed by the AEIC for the Duchy will be nationalized, all AEIC offices will be closed, and the tea, silk and tobacco markets will be opened to all licensed tradesmen.

Within hours of the edict being dispatched, Ducal troops stormed into Albanian offices, warehouses and other facilities throughout the Duchy. Locations in Archimedeia, Sicily, Valma, Valetia, Malta and Archolon were seized and the contents confiscated without remuneration. The loss in capital to the Company was huge, and Neya was quite pleased. The political presence the Duchy had maintained in the Indian city of Bhuj was abandoned as well.

After lying entirely quiet for nearly sixty years, Mount Aetna on Sicily erupted unexpectedly in the winter of '57 with tremendous force. Enormous lava flows ravaged the towns at the bottom of the mountain, earthquakes threw down most of the buildings on the island (including Archimedeia) and tremendous fires ravaged the

inland villages. The plume of smoke and ash could be seen as far away as Crete.

THE CHURCH OF ROME (Vatican City in Rome, Latium)
Benedict XIV, 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 Rostov in Latvia (^ab), Crimea (^mn)

Clement returned to Vatican City with a light heart – the forces of evil at work in Khirgiz had been crushed and their citadel of darkness thrown down. Once home, he turned his attentions to the reconstruction of St. Peter's Cathedral (destroyed so many times... by the Danes, by the black Moslems, then again by the Danes) which he intended would rise above the city like a shining beacon of hope.

While the Templars had maintained a strong army in Urst-Urt near the excavations at Kurn, Cardinal Cardenas tired of patrolling the empty desert, so he marched his men north and east into the lands of Kama Bulgar (still held in the icy grip of the Wind Lord) and spent two years battling vicious tribesmen, burning Windlord Temples and committing Ice-priests to the auto-da-fe. By the end of '58, he had both conquered that land in the name of God and his Bishop upon the Earth, and also converted the tribesmen there to Catholicism.

Things had been going so well, in fact, that when word of a strange outbreak of disease in Rome itself reached Clement ordered his personal physician to attend to the stricken. Unfortunately for the Pontiff, his clerks, and the inhabitants of Vatican City itself the corruption had come upon them on a sweltering hot summer day, one of an endless string of windless, stifling days as the Latin plain baked under an implacable sun. Where Riga had been spared by the cold and by icy winds blowing the contagion away from the city, Rome had no such succor.

Within days, the entire city was stricken and enormous mobs of panicked citizens flooded out of the gates, many dying as they struggled to escape into the countryside. Their mad rush into the streets only carried the spores into uninfected lungs. Nearly the entire population of the city was annihilated. Close to half the population of Latium itself was slain. Entire towns were tenanted only by the dead. Every living thing was afflicted – no rat escaped this dusty black death – and even the cockroaches bloated, filled with pale white nodules, and then burst, scattering their gruesome cargo into ever more crevices and cracks.

With the trouble in Thessaloniki distracting the nearest Danish army (at Naples) there was no one with the ability to stop the spread of the disease. Luckily (as in other places) the outbreak was so fierce it consumed all available hosts within weeks and thereby extinguished itself.

Not such were they as in the North, where an issue of watery gray blood from the nose was a manifest sign of inevitable death; but in men a women alike it first betrayed itself by the emergence of certain pustules in the groin or the armpits, some of which grew as large as a common apple, others as an egg, some more, some less, which the common folk called gavoccioli. From the two said parts of the body this deadly gavocciolo soon began to propagate and spread itself in all directions indifferently; after which the form of the malady began to change, black and gray spots making their appearance in many cases on the arm or the thigh or elsewhere, now few and large, then minute and numerous. And as the gavocciolo had been and still were an infallible token of approaching death, such also were these spots on whomsoever they shewed themselves. Which

maladies seemed set entirely at naught both the art of the physician and the virtue of physic; indeed, whether it was that the disorder was of a nature to defy such treatment, or that the physicians were at fault - besides the qualified there was now a multitude both of men and of women who practiced without having received the slightest tincture of medical science - and, being in ignorance of its source, failed to apply the proper remedies; in either case, not merely were those that covered few, but almost all within three days from the appearance of the said symptoms, sooner or later, died, and in most cases without any fever or other attendant malady.

Moreover, the virulence of the corruption was the greater by reason the intercourse was apt to convey it from the sick to the whole, just as fire devours things dry or greasy when they are brought close to it, the evil went yet further, for not merely by speech or association with the sick was the malady communicated to the healthy with consequent peril of common death; but any that touched the clothes the sick or aught else that had been touched, or used by these seemed thereby to contract the disease.

Clement himself was one of the first to die, spasming violently as he struggled to live, his attendants falling about him as dry leaves in the onset of fall, then his corpse being nothing more than the garden-bed for the most loathsome flowers which then did spring up from his cancerous body.

Only a captain of the Templars, Prosperino Lambertini, had the wit to set every infected building afire, to issue his handful of troops masks of gauze and to drench every man with the most spirituous liquors on an hourly basis. By these means, though Rome and Vatican both burned like as to the ground, he did survive and bear with him a fragment of the Church hierarchy.

At the end of 1758, with no other Church father present to take the burden, Lambertini declared himself the Successor of Peter, and took the name Benedict the Fourteenth, *pater patrias*.

AFRIQA

Non-Catholic Mercenaries	Minimum bid listed in [x].
Condottieri	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].
Condottieri	23xea [1gp each]
Captains	None
To hire, please contact...	Norsktrad
Quality Ratings	I15 w18 s21 c11 a12

11 NOVEMBER, THE SKIES ABOVE NOUADI-HIBOU, 1757

The maiden voyage of the *Maud'Dib* met a violent and fateful end. To avoid the harmattan, a dire desert haze, the airship sailed at night. But on this flight, the crew of the airship was to learn there were far worse dangers than poor visibility.

Shortly before the end of her patrol the *Maud'Dib* spotted the dim lights of her destination. The darkness sheltered unrecognized violence.

Three rockets arced upwards with an actinic glare. Timeless, the rockets seemed forever suspended. Yet there was no hope for the zeppelin. She burst apart in a brilliant display, showering sparks across the sleeping city of Nouadi-hibou.

Fragmentary remains of the gondola plunged earthwards. The canvas of the airship billowed about the fallen ship, its broken frame jagged like a maw full of teeth. Fire rapidly consumed what remained. Drifting sand hid the wreckage by daylight.

A lone man watched the carnage from a rooftop. The insurgent nodded with little apparent emotion.

THE INTERNATIONAL RED CROSS (Alexandria in Egypt)

Taharqa the Elder, Dean the School of Alexandria, Governor-General of the Society

DIPLOMACY Egypt (^oh)

While Taharqa returned, disappointed, from Athens, Colonel Albrekt was in even more dire trouble in Schwarzcstel where (despite all his efforts) everything had disintegrated into unfettered violence. All the good intentions in the world could not dampen the flames of hate which burned so brightly there.

Disheartened, Albrekt withdrew the relief fleet to Bhuj.

LATER THAT MORNING, SAGUIA EL HAMRA, MAURITANIA

Magda awoke with a start.

Gathering her black woolen nightshift about her, she crawled upon her knees to the mouth of the tent. Surrounded by all that mattered to her, Magda was still troubled. She had yet to learn of the treacherous fate that befell the crew of the *Maud'dib*.

About her in the dry riverbed the many tents of the sheyk were pitched. Here, at this isolated location the desert peoples came for prayer and meditation. No mosque or cathedral could burn with the simple hard truths of the desert.

Her brow furrowed, Magda gazed across the encampment, seeking the Prince. She had given so much to find the heir and she feared for his safety even now. While searching Magda's pupils dilated, black within black.

There was the tent of the Prince, little different from those of the people he served. This tent was different, for inside lay the precious Book: the final and penultimate actualization of the faith, of the word of God.

Once again, her gaze shifted. In the sky she found what she sought.

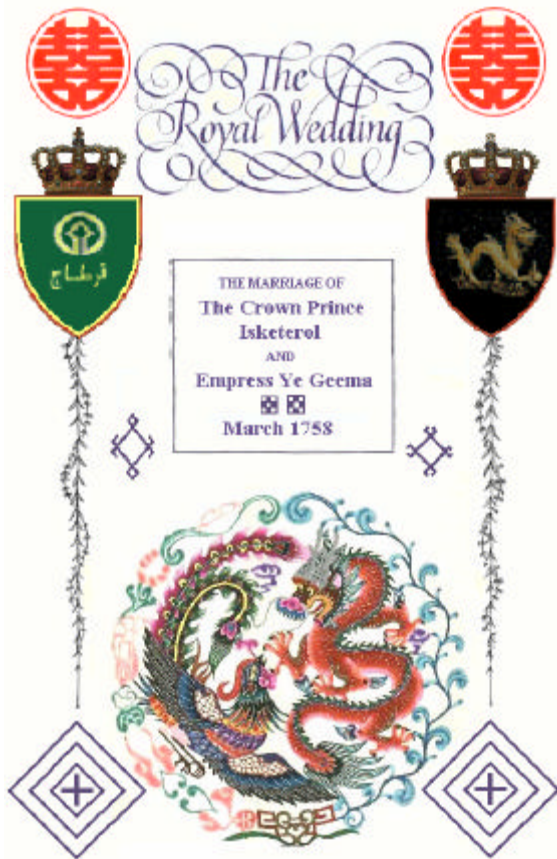
There, glowing like a false dawn, a vision. The luminous figure above her was the Saint Sayyida.

"Tireless servant of Libya -- behold!" commanded the glowing woman. The saint unsheathed her falchion; it shone with all the colors of the sun.

"There has been a great war in heaven" spoke the saint. "My angels and I have fought against the wurm, although we have not yet prevailed."

"The ancient serpent has been hurled down upon the earth, where he stalks all man with great wrath. Do not love your life so much that you shrink from righteousness!"

Awakening to her booming voice, and the unexpected dawn, many tribesmen rose from their tents saw the Saint filling the sky. Every heart rejoiced and was also filled with righteous fury. In this way the jihad began.



THE EMIRATE OF CARTHAGE

(Augustina in Tunisia)

Hamilcar Barca, Emir of Augustina, Sultan of Tunisia

DIPLOMACY None



Despite the heat, the Carthaginian engineers working in the western half of the country completed the rail-line between Nador in Cheliff and Oran in Algeria. Work then began on the Oran to Al-Rhemish section. Wild claims about every-three-days mail service between Augustina and Tangiers were made.

For such a peaceful nation, the armies of the Emirate were involved in many foreign adventures – Carthaginian soldiers fought, died and won on fields as far away as India, Asia Minor and the forests of Poland.

Among the many dignitaries who arrived to attend the wedding of Isketerol and Yee Geema was a Qing messenger with a heavy heart. He brought news of Empress Nimma's death and the end of the old Ming dynasty. Yee was distraught and locked herself in a room, crying for days on end. The Carthaginians – attempting to show their sympathy – held a memorial service for the dead queen.

The Albanian East India Company delivered a lavish array of gifts, along with two swift clipper ships and a promise of two steam-powered cruisers (though they had been unaccountably delayed in delivery). The Shawnee Empire sent two smelly crates, which – when opened – proved to hold the pickled heads of the two miscreants who had murdered the Carthaginian ambassador sent to the Faeroes. In comparison, the Great French Empire sent a large, empty crate with a lot of feathers and a very fat boa constrictor. Urp!

The Swedish ambassador (Omar Torstensson) in Carthage was directed to attend the wedding of the Ming dowager Empress. The Emperor's gift was an engraved set of fencing items, a rapier and a dagger for the left hand, with matching scabbards worked in amber, silver, and embroidery of rose vines. Both blades quenched in Holy Water for good measure, and all in a wooden case.

When eventually Yee Geema consented to appear in public, her marriage to Isketerol was a bit rushed, as all of the celebrants did need to return home eventually. Despite various dire warnings, no comets fell upon the happy couple, though there was a distressing event with one of the wedding presents. A pair of mechanical birds in a gilded cage had been sent by the Wazir of Saffirstan. Attempts to make the device work properly failed – the mechanism had been damaged in transit – so Knight-Commander Grizlowski of the Taborites, who accounted himself a handy fellow with a screwdriver, undertook to repair the damage. Which he did. The birds then sang a pretty tune, emitted a poisonous gas and instantly slew Grizlowski and nine of the palace servants.

No one else was hurt, but a pall fell upon the entire festivity. Word arrived the next day of the invasion of the Mauritanian jihadi into Zirid and points west. Hamilcar swore, Isketerol damned the gods and every Carthaginian officer dashed for the door, rushing to get to their regiments. This included President Draume of Ethiopia who was attending with six hundred of his finest riflemen.

EAST AFRICA: FRONT DOOR

The palace front doors crash open and a man is tossed out onto the street. The doors slam shut and the man lays sprawled upon the cobblestones.

"Ras clot!" he exclaims. "da King be bag-o-wire to his people. Bamba yay, da End Days come, and yu do no-ting to save the people! Yu tan deh, bungo King!"

A plume of heavy smoke drifts from the shadows of a building across the street. "Da king be hiez-haad, Victor, da dreams mean no-ting to him, mon." An old man emerges from the shadows and helps Victor to his feet.

"Coo yah, Victor. Listen to I. Dey be here. Dey come a mash up de Earth. Yu haffi step quickly now and gather de 12 tribes, gather de scientists an gather de Niyamen. Dis time be crucial. Seen?"

Victor regarded the old man and shivered. "Raas! Shepherd, I a go", Victor exclaimed and took off. "One love, Shepherd!" Victor shouted back to the old man.

"Jah love, Victor, Jah love," the old man replied softly.

Victor ran down the street, yelling at the top of his lungs. "Armageddon! Armageddon! Come dung! Armageddon!"

CHRISTIAN SHARIFATE OF MAURITANIA

(Sayyida Ifni in Idjil)

Ameur bin Skikda, Governor of the Azores, Scion of Lybia, Protector of Denmark, Sharif of Mauretania

DIPLOMACY Arguin (^f)



Scrambling to catch up with their southern rivals, the Mauritians (with certain technical assistances provided by the Albanian East India Company) undertook to begin construction of a large telescope and observatory complex on the slopes of Mount Agua de Pau in the Azores.

In May of '58, a pair of Islamic Union airships arrived at Sayyida Infi with a crew of hung-over airmen (still recovering from the wedding celebrations in Augustina). After providing the locals (why were they wearing those orange robes?) with the aircraft and

training manuals, the Union men took ship back for the east. These ships now joined two *Viking*-class airships lately provided by Norsk Aer.

Similarly, the Albanian East India Company delivered another pair of *Racer*-class clipper ships to the Sharifate naval base at Noor al Senussi on the Azores. The two new ships joined a previous pair which was also undergoing sea trails and working up crews.

Adrar and the city of St. Athanasius are ceded to the Sharifate by the Emperor of Swedish-Russia in exchange for a general peace treaty in the region, but only once the Swedish citizens were evacuated. At the end of '58, the battered 'militarist' government announced the lapsing of the Exarchate of Inner Afrika. A small monument in St. Georges went up; a schmaltzy statue of a family pulling a handcart with an angel watching overhead. Rump administration will be maintained to continue occupation of the Neymoskva fortress. As the Swedes withdrew, Mauritanian settlers under Ameer's direct command entered both Bir-El-Khazaim and Adrar, settling them to (1/6) and (1/3) respectively.

A lone emissary of the Jesuit Order arrived in Sayyida Infi in early '57, bearing letters and gifts from the Vicar-Lieutenant in London to the sharif Ameer. Unfortunately for his mission, Father Odrade had arrived too late. Events had already swept past any hope of control. He was lucky to slip out of the city alive, given the near-hysterical fervor gripping the Mauretanian public.

The news of the vision experienced by Magda and the three Sheykh in Idjil rippled across Mauritania like a cleansing breath of air. Everywhere, copies of the Book (recently discovered by the Three Prophets) appeared, and in those pages the common people found laid out the truth of god, stripped of conflict and unclouded by age and poor translations. Here was a faith appealing to Moslem, Catholic and Hussite alike, a unity where there had been only rancor, a path to God through darkness.

By the end of '58, borne up on a blazing fire of renewed faith, all of the provinces directly controlled by Mauritania had embraced the new 'Orange' Catholic Ecumenical church.

Not all of the zealots were content to remain at home, however, the hosts of the Wadan and the Arguin turned north. Peaceful relations had long obtained with the Vastmark in the south and the Swedes in the north (particularly since the Swedes were abandoning their Afrika possessions and returning home). The Carthaginians, however, were widely reputed to be behind the destruction of the airship *Muad'dib* and the trouble down in Dakar. They, then, would be the first to feel the martial fire accompanying the purification of the soul...

The eruption of the Mauritanian hordes into Zirid caught the local government by surprise. 80,000 rabid Berbers stormed across the mountains under an unfamiliar religious banner and proclaimed that the 'true emir' had returned – Ameer of Lybia reclaimed his lost patrimony – and a new faith was borne in the world, one to reconcile the division of all churches.



Zirid – undefended and unfortified – fell with barely a shot. The *jihadis* swept east at top speed into Cheliff. Hamilcar's government in Augustina, meantime, had hurried all of the wedding guests out of the country and gathered all the troops they could to hand. Captain Ahqat was dispatched to gather up some garrisons in Egypt and everyone cursed the wild foreign adventures which had sent the vast bulk of the Carthaginian army overseas...

While Hamilcar regrouped, the *jihadis* roared through Cheliff (and were welcomed into Nador with open arms) and into Algeria. Oran would *not* surrender – as it happened there were a huge number of railway engineers and their work-crews in the town, and Captain al'Hus had dashed from the capital with a squadron of men-of-war to secure the town. Those worthies taunted the *jihadis* and threw trash over the walls. Ignoring the resolute city (other than to leave a screening force to watch the garrison), the sheykh of Wadan and Adawara pressed on into Kabilya by the end of '58. Still, they met no resistance.

Hamilcar had too few soldiers to hand (only slightly more than five thousand) to stand up against the *jihadis* in the open field. So he sent newly-married Isketerol to command the garrison of Al-Rhemish and prepared to defend Tunisia itself with fresh levies. The only troubling note came with news many provincial leaders had acclaimed the 'return of the emir' and wide-spread conversions to the faith of the Book were occurring.

THE PRINCIPATE OF VASTMARK

(Chihuahua City in Takrur)

William Casimir, Stadholder of Takrur, Prince of Vastmark

DIPLOMACY No effect

The ringing of hammers and the hiss of cutting torches continued to fill the byways of Eichstatt and Chihuahua City – the stadholder had a great interest in a modern aeroforce. William also undertook to build a large, modern Skywatch tower (and support complex) in Marampa province – Jagdschloss.

The cities of Bakani, Minden, Xuichitlan and Dakar all expanded a level as rural populations flocked to the urban centers to earn a better living.



Vastmark Times – Mystery object spotted by Jagdschloss Telescope.

While being tested prior to the official opening, the new Jagdschloss Telescope in Marampa Province has spotted a strange object believed to be some kind of vessel capable of traveling through the Outer Dark in the same manner as an Airship moves through the skies.

The object was soon lost to sight, though during the next nights observing a bright light was observed between the Earth and the Moon.

Observatory Officials have stated that they have no idea where the craft came from, but that it was too small to have contained a man.

Daniel Casimir, commanding a Vastmarki squadron operating off the coast of North Amerika, ran afoul of the denizens of Pennacook, who attacked him and his galleons and destroyed two before the Afriqans fled to safety at the Aztec port in Micmac.

The stadholder announced he had struck an arrangement with the Sharif of Mauretania to secure the borders of the principate. He hoped this arrangement would give both nations time to build in peace and to, one day, play a leading role in the defeat of the last remnants of the Ice. This announcement was followed, within a few weeks, by a variety of disturbances in the northern provinces. Attacks on garrisons and government offices were laid at the feet of the Carthaginians, who (according to reputable government sources) were seeking to destabilize Vastmark in preparation for invasion.

Vastmark Times - Meteor impact on moon observed by Jagdschloss Telescope.

Last night the Jagdschloss Telescope made history by observing what is believed to be the first meteor impact on the moon in historic times, the bright flash which lasted for only about a second was located right on the lunar terminator and was easily visible. It was followed by a spectacular atmospheric display believed to be similar to the Northern Lights.

The resulting crater is under a half a mile in diameter, it has been decided that it will be named Henry, in honor of Prince William's father.

THE MALI AX EMPIRE (Ax Mixtlan in Mixe)
Tenoch, 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, Dark Lord of Africa

DIPLOMACY Xuicaxl in Zerma (^f), Onogui in Teke (^f)

The general economic expansion of sub-Saharan Afriqa continued with the Mixtec cities of Brass, Timbuctu and Ax Mixtlan growing. Vast new state-of-the-art fortifications were also built ringing Timbuctu, De La Roche and Ax Mixtlan. Veritably besieged by Lencolar missionaries, the Catholic city of Xuicaxl in Zerma finally succumbed and became Lencolar.

A careful watch was maintained on the northern frontiers (considerable sums were wagered, lost and won on the matter of which way the Mauritians would go...) and everyone breathed a sigh of relief when the war-storm broke to the north rather than the south. The cozying up of the Vastmark with the Sharif did not go unnoticed, however, and was cause for considerable grumbling.

The Lord of the Blue Cloak returned from a diplomatic mission to the jungled hills of Douala – much to the surprise of most of the favorites in the court, everyone had expected the particularly vicious Moslem tribesmen there to have lopped off his head as soon as he arrived – and made a brave showing of his failure to temper the choleric attitudes of the southerners. The reason for his return was soon revealed, however, when the Blue-Cloaked one managed to surprise Emperor Tenoch at a garden party and nearly cut his throat with a tecpatl of antique design.

There was a huge ruckus, guards swarmed all over the party, Blue-Cloak was forced to kill two of them, Tenoch escaped blubbing, and then the murderous lord was gone over the garden wall. An extensive search in the city failed to discover his hiding place but everyone agreed the Emperor had been gambling a bit too much...



THE WESTERN SARHARA, NEAR TAMARANSSET

As she sat and pondered, looking back on her life and the last few years, one passage from that Book kept coming to mind...:

"Know this: the Word has been spoken to mankind many times. And each time the Word brought not only truth, but warned of the anti-Word, the corruption, the dark-hate...but when the Word spoke from the sky, mankind heard the sky not the Word. When the Word came as fire, they saw fire, not the Word. When the Word came from within, they saw themselves, not the Word. When the Word came as the sun, as the wheel, as the cross, as the star, as the wave, as the shape, each time mankind could not understand and the Joining failed... Many are the forms, but single is the Word... and while the Word is scattered, the Corruption will always prevail." ~ 2 Adriana:33

THE REPUBLIC OF ETHIOPIA (Soba in Funj)

Fredik Draume, President-For-Life of Ethiopia

DIPLOMACY Nubia (^ea),

The Draume regime continued to grapple with the pernicious famine situation in the Sudan, this time by expanding cultivated lands, irrigation networks and granaries in Cilicia and Nubia. The President, meantime, left day to day business in the hands of his son Josiah while he hared off to Carthage to attend some wedding or another.

The tense political situation which had developed in Cilicia (over control of the port of Tarsus and other matters) was resolved by Swedish-Russia taking possession of Tarsus from the Ethiopians, then building them a Port Area in Cilicia, then handing the city itself over to the Astronautical Research company by the end of '58.

Spice traders traveling in the highlands of Hadramuht reported (upon their eventual return to Semerang with caravan loads of myrrh, frankincense and pepper) a strange tale – some Arabs had come out of the deep desert with camels heavily laden with burnt, blackened metal. This they sold in the markets, for Hadramuht was a poor province and even the fire-twisted lengths of iron and light steel were worth *something*. When questioned, the scrap traders reported they had been making a daring crossing of the Rub al-Khalit when they came upon a valley filled with miles of twisted wreckage, bleached bones and scattered debris. Some great army, they opined, had tested the will of the Gods of the Sand and had failed. Not a single survivor was seen.

EAST AFRICA: GROUNATION

Twelve thousand warriors stood in the clearing, encircling an old man, chanting and stomping their feet in rhythm. The old man raised a weapon, and a bright green light shot into the heavens.

The warriors banged their weapons upon their shields in a constant rhythm, and began marching quickly north.

A young boy awoke and screamed, "Daddy, Daddy!"

"There, there, young one. What wakes you this night," the father replied, trying to comfort his son. "What wakes you so?"

"A train, a train is coming! I can hear it!"

The father listened for several minutes, "That be no train, son, that be no train."

THE MAASAI KINGDOM (Mbeya in Kimbu)

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

DIPLOMACY None

Not wanting to be entirely left behind by the Sud Afriqans, the Maasai completed their first section of railroad (far behind schedule and way, way over budget) from Mersa Fatma in Danakil south into the plains of Djibuti. Of course, it didn't actually go anywhere...

Considerable improvements to roads, mills, granaries, irrigation systems, bridges and public drinking houses were made in Danakil, Djibuti, Brava, Zeila, Chilwa and M'beya (which also expanded a level). Implementation of the Lisbon Accords was also completed (in stark comparison to the railroad it was on-time and on-budget). General Decks, who had long commanded the armies in the north, died of a heart attack.

Slow and steady missionary work continued in Kongo.

REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA (Great Zimbabwe in Rozwi)

Izinduna, Protector of the Senate and the Republic

DIPLOMACY No Effect

By pressing the work crews until they dropping and spending lavishly (and causing the bean-counters back in Great Zimbabwe a coronary) the Afriqans managed to push their iron road through to the sea. In the fall of '58, the Iusalem to Iesuwayo railway was completed – three thousand miles of rail through jungles, across grassy plains, through swamps, more jungle, rugged mountains, from the Inhambane Sea to the Sea of Kongo. The first train rolled through to inaugurate regular service in December of that year.

(Doh! GM error from last turn...): Rumors reached the Sud Afriqans of an outbreak of the plague in the pest-ridden fortress maintained by the French at Leutetia in Herero province. Scouts sent to check on the town found everyone dead – and did not enter! – later, enormous flocks of carrion birds were observed fluttering over the town.

The Afriqan Catholic church (yes, real Catholics...) continued to press their missionary efforts in the north – afflicting the natives of SHaba, Mbandaka and Likasi with their constant sermonizing.

THE HONORABLE AFRICA COMPANY (Iusalem in Karanga)

Numeke Tikumbay, President, Master of the Great Southern House

DIPLOMACY Mt'wara in Mombassa (^mf),
Karratha in Yaralone (^ci),
Aqaba in Petra (^mf),
Chamonix in Charrua (^bo)



Company engineers continued to build irrigation canals and dams in Xhosa, trying to jumpstart cultivation in the desolate province. Foundations were broken for even more airship sheds, fabric drying plants and machine shops in Goana, which bade fair to become the center of the aershship industry in southern Afriqa. Grain continued to be imported from the Islamic Union and from Spain, even though harvests in the south had been improving for some time.

A small fleet sent to Sud Amerika under the command of Halsfield failed to reach Chamonix as scheduled and was assumed lost with all hands.

NORTH AMERIKA

Non-Denominational Mercenaries	Minimum bid listed in [x].
Condottieri	30c, 29i, 57ht [1gp each]
Captains	Jomon Kei (M 944) [5gp] Axacayatl the Wolf (M934) [5gp]
To hire, please contact...	(No one)
Quality Ratings	i15 w17 s18 c12 a12

Catholic Mercenaries	Minimum bid listed in [x].
Condottieri	5hei, 9xea (AA guns), 10hea (rocket batteries), 10i, 23xea, 20t [2gp each]
Captains	General Xho (M936) [5gp]
To hire, please contact	Norsktrad

KINGDOM OF TZOMPANCTLI (Tzompantlan in Tutchone)

Tizoc, Baron of Hûkar-on-the-Plain-of-Bones

DIPLOMACY No effect

Eager to restore the ancient fields and orchards of the Tatar people to cultivation, the Baron subsidized a variety of schemes in Ahtena and Han. Still, a great harvest of reindeer and elk hides was sent south to Aztec markets.

THE NISEI REPUBLIC (Usonomiya in Yokuts)

Prime Minister Yeemi, Commander of the Armies of the Republic, Protector of the Emperor of All Japan, daitoryo of the Diet

DIPLOMACY None

After months of hacking roadway out of rugged mountains and toppling enormous redwoods to make way for Highway Ichi-zero-ichi, the royal road between Usonomiya in Yokuts, through Pomo, to Mito in Yurok was completed. The timber market was glutted for months after the road workers floated all the redwood they'd cut out to sea and then by barge either north or south to the big markets. Troops continued to be raised and drilled, which was a good thing, because the Republic would need them soon...

In the far east, many settlers took up residence in Igashi, Dakota, restoring some semblance of direct Nisei control over the central plains. A Japanese fleet, after visiting the outpost of Takari in Colin, then proceeded up the coast to found a new trade station in Caranook – a town called Nagara. This same force then made the dangerous passage (icebergs, you know...) to the Shetlands, where contact was re-established with the Nisei inhabitants of Ukiyo-ye.

An effort by the representatives of the Pacific Mercenary and Trust corporation to round up the 15,000-odd Javanese, Malay and Moro mercenaries loitering in New Yedo failed miserably. In main part due to the failure of the company to *pay* the mercenaries their salaries – this made the piratical band very unhappy, and led to the PM&T officers being stripped naked, tarred, feathered and thrown into the bay. Two of the hapless fellows then perished of pneumonia.

The situation in the port then turned quite ugly ... Axacayatl the Wolf managed to keep the angry troops from completely wrecking even the pitiful shacks and log-huts of New Yedo (the city had still not recovered from the Ice Lords attack). Instead, he sent his men out to patrol Chemakum province and collect taxes and began styling himself King of Amerika (or at least prince of Chemakum).

Upon hearing of the foreigner insurrection in New Yedo, Prime Minister Kiyotaka suffered a heart attack and keeled over at his desk, adding a parliamentary crisis to the military one. The Diet convened in a hurry and, after some bartering, elected Yeemi as the new PM. Tasho's III Corps was dispatched to the north (after being reinforced with the fresh levies) to crush the 'invasion.'

After a long march (much of it along the new road) Tasho and his regulars arrived in Chemakum and found the province held against them by 16,000 mercenaries. Though the III Corps numbered only 12,000 men, Tasho was not concerned. These rabble would soon learn the error of their ways... under brave banners and heralded by the peal of trumpets and the roar of drums, III Corps marched directly on New Yedo.

Axacayatl responded vigorously and the new armies met in open battle near **Coquitlam**. The mercenary captain was surprised to see his enemy deploy solely infantry and artillery, and was happy to unleash his Turks on their flanks... and then he found that a modern army didn't necessary have cavalry with four feet...

The Nisei aerocorps pounced as soon as the mercenaries advanced into the open, sweeping up over the trees and unleashing a terrific barrage of gunpowder bombs, plunging naphthene and the rattling roar of light cannon. Axacayatl's force was stunned and seriously mauled. They withdrew in haste, setting the nearby woods on fire to gain smoke-cover. Tasho pressed them, chasing the foreigners back to New Yedo.

There, Axacayatl loaded his surviving troops onto the huge PM&T merchant fleet in port and they fled by night out into the strait and down to Budokan on Nootka island, where they once more set themselves for hire. Tasho was not impressed.

THE HIGH KINGDOM OF COLORADO (Three Crosses in Navajo)
Fredrik Grosse, King of the Ute, High King of Colorado

DIPLOMACY None

Missionaries dispatched to Comanche to try and convince the Catholics there to accept female priests failed miserably and were whipped out of the province with sacks on their heads. Only the presence of a strong Colorado garrison in the region prevented outright revolt. After this sorry state of affairs, in an attempt to improve the religious prowess available to the High Kingdom, Fredrik granted the Knights of the Flowering Sun official recognition and set aside certain lands and properties for their maintenance in the kingdom.

Then, of course, the Sisters of the Rose missionaries arrived and the entire province was Lencolar by the end of '58. Haw!

Back in Three Crosses, lord Paudron arrived with a cavalcade of horses, wagons and carriages from Hohokam, escorting prince Gunthar's bride. A huge wedding followed (one not afflicted by poisonous birds or other calamities) and then the High King stepped aside to let his son take a direct hand at ruling the kingdom. Unfortunately, within the year the new princess was dead of complications of birth. Gunthar was outraged and complained to his father, who had no answers.

THE GHOSTDANCERS (Fushige in Missouri)
Geshin Azurama, Prince of Fushige, War-Captain of the Ghost People

DIPLOMACY Some

The Prince traveled about his small domain, speaking with the Shinto landlords in Pawnee and Ponca and generally ruling. No one really noticed, but the realm became Lencolar in practice of faith.

ARAPAHO TEXAS (Shawnee Protectorate)(Ayoel in Atakapa)
Kegemai Arrowwey, Chieftain of the Arapaho, Liegeman of the Stormdragon

DIPLOMACY

More outhouses were built in Atakapa province, resulting in a generally cleaner-smelling countryside for everyone. Missionary work continued in Caddo as the Benedictines attempted to reverse the gains of the Lencolar priests there.

Arapaho merchants with buffalo hides and salted meat to sell in New Orleans goggled in amazement at the huge new steamship works recently completed there. Workers from Norsk Tek swarmed over the steadily-rising hulls of two steam-powered river boats which had already been laid down.

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

DIPLOMACY Elmerland in Faeroes (^a)

Far in the east, the Shawnee fleet based at the Faeroes occupied itself by building a powerful fortress adjacent to Elmerland. Back home, the citadel of Infi in Quawpaw was also expanded and made even more mighty. An extensive police investigation into the murder of the Carthaginian ambassador bore

fruit, at last, and two local fishermen (Grivjass and Lumbur) were tried and executed for the heinous crime. The heads were dispatched to Afriqa along with extensive documentation.

At the end of '58, a small Papal squadron arrived in Jarlstad to deliver a great cargo of mysterious, heavy crates to the Empress as a gesture of reconciliation for certain suspicions during the 'transfer of power' which had raised Valeria to the throne.

Missionaries (though not exactly the most vigorous or effective ones) were dispatched to Infi in Quapaw, Anglia in England, Caddo and Natchez. General Running Bear – attempting to extirpate the last of the Lencolar believers in Infi – was killed in a brawl with penitents as he waded in to break up their demonstration against his policies.

On the eastern seaboard, Nakos Iron-Hand and his 3rd Infantry (the 'Damascene' Legion) stormed a series of remote locations in Chatot, slaughtering hordes of cultists who had recently been discovered there. After seizing every scrap of paper they could find, the ghoulish insect-like idols were toppled and the heretics marched off to an internment camp for 'processing.'

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

Lucas II Stormdragon, Lord of the East.

DIPLOMACY Poctumtuc (^ea)

The Iroquois continued to resettle the Ice-ravaged lands of the north. Delaware became a (1w5) province. More land was put back under the plow in Mohawk as well. In an effort to scrape up a few more coins to pay the bills, Cassatengo himself stepped down to allow King Lucas to rule and the regent took up service with the Aeronautical Research and Fabrication company. The old man was accompanied by an honor guard of riflemen (equipped and paid for by the Norsktrad, in fact). This neatly removed the regent from the young king's domain and avoided any unpleasantness.

The arrival of a large Swedish fleet on the coast of Poctumtuc was met with suspicion by those few natives farming along the shore, and by a cap-doffing Iroquois embassy. King Lucas was very pleased to allow the Swedes to rebuild the abandoned city (now filled with a huge crowd of sun-burned Russians, Balts and Norwegians who liked the weather in Amerika *much* better than that in Saharan Afrika) and to cause an immediate boost in the local economy – all those sausage-eating northerners had to eat!

Further north however, the Pennacook militia was called out to repel the depredations of a 'dusky set of sea-wolves' who were preying on the coastal villages and stealing away good red women for the 'hareeems of the Sooltans'. Two galleons were sunk by the coastal patrol and set afire.

Missionary work continued in the hard-scrabble valleys of Appalach, where the patience and piety of the Iroquois priests was beginning to have a pervasive effect.

THE ORDER OF THE FLOWERING SUN (Tenochtitlán)
Chikietl, Master of the Order, Shield of the Sun against the Ten Thousand Enemies

DIPLOMACY Náhuatl (^oo), Belem in Tairona (^oh), Aruba in Timote (^oh), New Hiquito in Caquetio (^oh), New Colorado in Comanche (^oh), Morgana in Apache (^oh)

While there were successes to be had on the diplomatic front (gaining the patronage of the High King of Colorado and the continued support of Malinal of Caquetio), Chikietl also turned his attention to expanding the capabilities of the central authority and raising a new regiment of Order Knights.

VICEROYALTY OF ZACATECA [Aztec Protectorate] (Gorea in Zacatec)
Ilhuicaimina, Viceroy of the North

DIPLOMACY None

Rioting broke out in Zacatec when a large body of settlers from the south arrived and attempted to move into homes still occupied by Zacatecan peasants. The viceroy was forced to intervene with his own troops and suppress both factions.

THE AZTEC EMPIRE OF MEXICO (Sion in Huave)

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

DIPLOMACY Boruca (?ea)

With peace reigning o'er all, the Empire continued to mind its own business (more or less). Work on the Incan Road continued, with surveyors and engineers still crawling all over hill and dale throughout Cuna, Choco, Valdivia, Chimu, Moche, Chavin and Inca itself. Apparently the plan was to complete each section simultaneously so as to have a grand unveiling of the entire passage all at once. Generous subsidies were granted to all of the various feudatory states maintained by the Empire.

Despite unexpected trouble up north, the arrival of a Pacific Mercenary and Trust fleet at Mexicalli was met with a warm welcome, a parade and the Aztec governor having Juchen Agoi himself over for a small, intimate dinner for six hundred. With the latest fleet came a very large number of craftsmen, shipwrights, workers and sailors – all of which expanded the port of Mexicalli considerably.

Princess Thiua – tiring of Nimulana's boorish ways and sour body odor – fled the capital for a rest cure in Cuernavaca. Once out of the palace, she did not return, finding the company of her favorites and courtiers much preferable to her husband. Nimulana's younger brother, Xezhin, also blackened the family name with cruel behavior towards his wife and family, as well as unadulterated roistering in the bordellos and pulque-dens of the capital.

Prince Kehuehuel of the Tzompanctli arrived in Sion via Norsk passenger ship (the Company had begun a regular service from St. Georges in Morroco via New Orleans via the Canal to the Imperial Capital) and was feted by Emperor Trákonel, who expressed delight at the good health of his cousin, despite such near-legendary adventures and misfortunes.

Fighting continued in the south, where the Red God and Sword of Empire Legions attacked the mountain principality of Ataura. Unlike the Wairajikirans (who had been surprised by the Imperial attack), the Ataurans were on guard and had mustered every able bodied man in the province to resist... Atziapan, the commander of the Red God Legion, was not impressed. He had 31,000 men in the field, plus twenty attack zeppelins of the latest model. The Ataurans held the passes against him with barely 11,000 militia. A ferocious battle ensued – the alpine valleys roaring with artillery and the sky black with the smoke of bombs and anti-airship fire. Three times the Aztecs stormed the passes, and three times the Ataurans repelled the attack. Atziapan responded by sending his airships in to bombard the Atauran positions directly.

Even this was not enough. Worse, the Red God commander was seriously wounded by an Atauran sniper – and then he died in hospital, still trying to direct his forces against the enemy. General Tangaxoan (the Sword commander) now took charge and rallied the troops. Though he was not so brilliant a leader as the dead Atziapan, he did think the enemy had suffered hideous losses as well. Aztec reinforcements, meanwhile, were close at hand, having marched up from the coast.

Tangaxoan launched a series of probing attacks along the entire frontier. Unfortunately, the prince of Ataura was more than a

match for *him* and each foray was met with a rain of stones and bullets. Now the reinforcements *did* arrive and the four Legions now deployed against Ataura were able to attack, in overwhelming strength, along the entire mountain range. This time, hammered from above and constantly pressed on the ground, the Ataurans cracked and fled. Aztec legions swarmed into the province, and the city of Huari was leveled by artillery and airship bombardment by the end of '58.

THE SISTERS OF THE ROSE (New Jerusalem in Quiche)

Kelly Davias, Holy Mother of the Lencolar Christian Order

DIPLOMACY Valdivia in Quito (^ab), St. Pauls in Canary Islands (^ab), New Hiquito in Caquetio (^mn), Gagnoa / Ax Aztlan (^ch)

Worldwide, the work of the Sisterhood pressed ahead, undaunted by the Ice, or the <others> or even the Corruption which plagued many of their enemies. Missionary work in Comanche, Quapaw, Tres Lagos and Guahibo had great success. Efforts to establish a cathedral in Popoluca, however, met with ever more government paperwork, contractor malfeasance and general failure – even with the Holy Mother herself trying to push the project to completion!

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)

Malinal, Queen of Caquetio, Captain of the Order of the Flowering Sun

DIPLOMACY Ponta Grossa in Cumangoto (^ea)

Despite numerous problems with acquiring proper materials and tools, the Royal Air Corps continued to expand.

Queen Malinal was very pleased to grant an audience to Lord-Captain Sixteen-Mountain of the Knights of the Flowering Sun – she had known the grizzled old warrior since she was a baby and met him with a glad smile as he bowed before her. "Your majesty – a long road you've trod since you sweated as an aspirant in my care. No longer are you a junior officer. The master of the Order has sent me to bring you this news – you have been promoted, Subaltern Malinal, to the rank of Captain of the Order."

The Queen was touched by the gesture, for she took her duties as a Knight of the Invincible Sun very seriously. Almost as seriously, in fact, as she believed in the teachings of the Sisterhood. And there lay a problem of considerable scope... not only was a goodly portion of Caquetio still Roman Catholic, but a strict caste system obtained at every level of society and slaves were still held in the great landed estates. The Queen, young and idealistic as she was, set herself to toppling all three of those structures...

Malinal took to preaching on the streets, surrounded by a phalanx of guardsmen, trying to convince the merchants, nobility and great lords to voluntarily abandon their sinful ways. No one listened to her and the council of advisors began to mutter, wondering if her heedless desire to fix all the wrongs under the Sun would drag them all into civil insurrection and war.

Missionary work – successful even – was undertaken in Cuyuni. Rumours out of the south, of a Lost City, discovered in the



jungles near Tres Lagoas were proven true! Apparently the locals had found an abandoned Incan-Minoan city in the deep green and, at great personal cost and labor, disassembled the entire town and dragged the stones to Tres, where it was reassembled.

THE PRINCIPATE OF BOLIVIA (Trischka in Karanga)

Ramon Mascate, Prince of Bolivia, Duke of Trishka

DIPLOMACY None

Peace reigned in the south, and the Duke took pains to improve the lot of his people, building public parks, churches and markets throughout Aspero city and in the province of Quillaca.

THE KNIGHTS OF SAINT JOHN (New Granada in Acroa)

Humphrey of Toron, Regent for...

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

DIPLOMACY No obvious effect

Though Prince Eluterio had come of age (at sixteen), he was not yet elected to the post of Grand Master of the Knights of Saint John. Indeed, the bylaws of the Order indicated he could only assume the white and red mantle on his twenty-first year. Still, the boy was vigorous and energetic, so he was allowed some duties. In truth, Humphrey of Toron was beginning to think of becoming Grand-Master himself...

The city of Araguari in Camacan expanded. The Regent devoted most of his attention to paying off a long list of debts incurred by the Order in the recent debacle with Great France. Despite the economic benefits it would bring, the Knights still refused to re-open trade with their southern neighbor.

An arrangement was struck with the Swedes to share the city of San Salvador on Hymirholm (Bermuda) between the Order and the (by then) 'militarist' faction of the Swedish-Russian government.

GREAT FRANCE (Versailles in Calchaqui)

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

DIPLOMACY

Great France, rather grudgingly, continued to send reparations payments to the Knights of St. John. But don't think Francois was happy.



The cities of Salamonca (in Gueren), Chamonix (in Charrua), New Brest (in Chechete) and Leutetia (in Herero) expanded. The province of Guenakan was settled to 2 GPv. Faced with the unpalatable truth that old-style *draken* were hopelessly outdated in this modern era of war, the French Balloonists were disbanded. A long, tearful, alcohol-drenched wake was held At Verdun, attended by nearly three thousand people.

The clergy throughout Great France was put on notice that the Emperor would not countenance *any* Lencolar activity of any kind. Such transgressions against God would be punished by death. The fleet, dispatched to Afrika to carry a fresh batch of colonists to their death... I mean, to the settlement at Leutetia, returned in fine fettle, having made the passage in record time.

General de Bussy was promoted to Marshal and set to reorganizing the army, which had grown somewhat scattered and divided during the recent war. Many lessons had been learned and the Marshal and his staff hoped to learn from their mistakes.

Finally, certain commercial arrangements were made with the Honorable Afrika Company to carry French trade to both Vastmark and Persia.

BANK LIST

Bank		GP	Rate
Aztec Empire of Mexico	Tenochtitlan Teocali	2,176	40%
Chan Mongol Empire	Uncle Wu's	799	40%
Emirate of the Chandellas	Mutaib Mercantile Lending	212	40%
Free Republic of Ethiopia	Funj Gold Reserves	491	40%
Principate of Kiev	Royal Bank of Khitai	142	35%
Coptic Kingdom of Maasai	M'Beya House of Credit	1,401	20%
Mali Ax Empire	Mixtec International Fund	1,404	34%
The Nisei Republic	New Yedo Matsuma Bank	842	40%
Empire of Swedish-Russia	BUX	611	40%
The Kingdom of Java	Sunny Sunda Savings	919	40%

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