

# Lords of the Earth Campaign One

AN AGE OF AIR AND STEAM

Turn 215

Anno Domini 1759 – 1760

TURN 216 ORDERS DUE BY Friday, April 4<sup>th</sup>, 2003

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

A new Modern Era supplement has been released. The Notes have been adjusted to reflect changes to Lords One as a result.

You must read them both! Do so now!

[http://www.throneworld.com/lords/lot01/11\\_notes.html](http://www.throneworld.com/lords/lot01/11_notes.html)  
[http://www.throneworld.com/lords/players/loterule/lot01\\_mod\\_3\\_2\\_0.pdf](http://www.throneworld.com/lords/players/loterule/lot01_mod_3_2_0.pdf)

## NORTH ASIA

Mercenaries	Minimum bid listed in [x].
Condotierri	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 (^un)

Representatives of the Shogunate visited the airfields and machine shops outside of Edo to celebrate the launch of the first Japanese 'large' zeppelin – a milestone hailed as the maturation of their native airship industry.

"Never again will our divine nation quail at the threat of barbarian airships in our skies," the Minister of Aerial Transport declared to a cheerful throng of onlookers. At much the same time, enormous efforts continued in Nigata, Aichi and in the Kwanto to tidy up the last of the damage from the Ice War.

In the south, however, no effort had been made to repopulate the devastated provinces on Kyushu, like Kagoshima, which led to intense bitterness and hatred for the Shinto northerners by the Buddhist southlanders (those few who remained, at least.) Lord Doh's embassy, traveling in the still-desolate countryside, was often attacked and found no one to talk to.

An equally hostile reception awaited Lord Nobunaba in the far, far north, where the Windwalker-worshipping tribesmen of Tigil (along the newly-ice-free shores of Zaliv Shelikova) assailed his landing party, captured the ambassador and then roasted him alive for dinner. Not quite as tasty as young seal, but a nice change of pace for the needle-toothed nomads.

To the south-west, meantime, General Itichi had marched quite an enormous Japanese army up the coast from Amur and into Dzungur Coast. Once arrived at Drakenroost, the samurai embarked on a vicious and thorough campaign of religious extermination – the remaining Ice tribesmen in the province, plus any Buddhist, had to go! Shockingly (as Itichi was not exactly the brightest field commander Nippon had ever produced – prince Shinturo, one of his junior commanders, showed admirable skill, however) the army performed adequately in the field, routing the bands of tribesmen, flushing out Buddhists from under rock and

tree and establishing worship of the Shinto deities throughout the land.

**PACIFIC MANUFACTURING & TRANSPORT** (Shinto, Kryztn on Luzon)

*Juchen Agoi, President and Executive officer*

**DIPLOMACY** Anataya in Tolowa (^ci), Iruka in Aanx (^mf)

The Agoi clan continued to exercise their letters of credit, sending vast sums of specie, coin and bags of gold dust to the Ming, the Aztecs, and the Thai. "So many masters," whined Juchen, signing orders to decommission hundreds of smaller ships in the company fleet. "So little time..."

The vast numbers of discharged sailors found new homes in Kryztn on Luzon, swelling the city to size 6. Others were shipped overseas, to Nisei lands and to Iruka in Australia.

**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** Thaton (^ch), Ava (^ch), Annam (^mn), Kwangtung (^ch)



Mindful of the careless nature of the gods, the Realm priests began building an enormous sea wall and levy around Holy Fusan – at a considerable distance from the city – to protect the contemplative precincts from deluges, waves and giant krakens. In the same line of attempting to forestall future disasters by learning from more recent ones, several more airships were assigned to the Fusan-Kwangsi mail service which served the needs of the Wing Kung.

Having heard some disturbing rumors from the east, Wan Ho dispatched a delegation of high-order priests and monks to attend the court of the Manchu Emperor Zao Ma. Unfortunately, they were turned back at the Koguryan border, as the Emperor had launched into a spiteful campaign to drive the influence of the Realm out of his domains.

The enormous missionary efforts in eastern India proceeded apace, despite the tenuous thread by which they were launched. The monks in Rangoon were far overburdened by the effort of supplying and supporting so many firebrands on the edge of civilization... though there was no clear connection, the robbery and murder of Go Han, a temple elder, in Khemer did seem more than simple coincidence.

Back at home, the Council of Deliberate Deliberations continued to debate a variety of changes to temple practice, sutras and liturgy. Unfortunately for the young firebrands in attendance, the demand of the Great Master for 'practical solutions' foundered in the face of their theology. There was a lot of arguing, which turned into expectant silence when one of the younger priests – returning from washing floors in the pilgrim's quarters by way of the Shrine of Tears found a peculiar scroll sitting at the Buddha's feet. It was copy of the Orange Catholic bible, in flawless Korean.

"Ah... brothers? I found this sitting in the great temple?"

"Read it aloud," they all shouted, tired of arguing with one another. "Recite!"

"In the beginning," the youngest monk said in a quavering voice, "there was the Void. Then, the Mind of God moved upon the Nothingness and caused Light to be divided from Darkness..."

**THE MANCHU MONGOL EMPIRE** (Buddhist, Harbin in Shangtu)

*Jian Zhan, regent for...*

*The Dread Lord Manchu Tun Wei, 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 Bodhisattva, The Supreme Master of the Universe Before Whose Feet the Craven Qing 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, With the Skillz to Pay the Billz*

#### **DIPLOMACY** Khalaka (^a)

The economic revitalization of the Empire continued – Tungur in Bandaο, Amgar in Suifenhe, and Ulan-ude in Henyitin all expanded. Amgar and Adak had their public sewers rebuilt and new granaries, roads and aqueducts installed. The Emperor himself remained in the north, in Quaran, attempting to convince the local lords to bow entirely to his will.

As Zao Ma was absent from the capital, he presumably knew nothing of the shenanigans the ‘northern’ priesthood was up to. However, rumors were common on the streets of Harbin and Shenyang – the temple fathers were doing the Dread Lord’s work...

Ancient rancor between the old priesthood of the Mongol Empire and the southern, or Qing-born, upstarts broke to new enmity. After secret conclaves gathered those northern priests of a like mind together, the borders of the Empire were closed to the minions of the Pure Realm, any remaining possessions in Manchu lands seized, those priests and monks who did not avow loyalty to the new, reinstated *bonze* of the North were expelled in nothing more than a scrap of robe and perhaps their shoes...

Zao Ma was proclaimed Heaven’s Representative and the temple flags and banners of the Blue Jade sect once more flew above the stupas and monasteries of the north. The ‘prideful’ southerners were scorned and reviled.

Great Prince K’ang-Hsi, meantime, had come of age and now desired to prove himself a man. To this end, he besought a wife and determined the newly claimed lands of Khalaka held the best prospects. So he marched north in great pomp and ceremony, accompanied by a very large army, and actually surprised himself (and most other observers) by striking a fruitful marriage deal with the local nobility. The prince then pressed on to Quaran to meet with his adoptive father and present the blushing bride.

With his quick departure, the Great Prince missed the funeral of Empress Mi’an, who had taken sick of a summer flu and perished within days. Couriers carrying the news of the Empress death sped north.

Meanwhile, in the lands at the edge of the Ice, General Wai-Zhing-lu’s temper grew short in Khrebet and – instead of continuing to dicker and negotiate and dilly-dally – he ordered his troops to smash the locals, seize the city and reduce all resistance. Given his own skill as a commander, the surprise he held over the natives and their own paltry forces, the entire region was conquered within the year. A pliable noble was then found and installed as the Emperor’s *noyan* in the province.

Back to the south, prince K’ang-Hsi arrived in Quaran at the head of a substantial host and sought an audience with his esteemed foster father. The elderly Zao Ma was taken quite by surprise and had barely enough time to realize his adoptive son had ignored orders to leave the main army in Harbin before K’ang-Hsi burst into his chambers at the head of a gang of Khalakans. Zao leapt to seize a blade, but was cut down and then hacked to bits.

News reached Quaran within days of Mi’an’s death and K’ang-Hsi chortled with glee – “money well spent, I say,” – at the news. He went before his troops and the assembled potentates of the realm (quite a few of whom were in Quaran at that time, with this business and that) and declared himself Emperor.

This causes great consternation, particularly once news of a regiment of Judean troops present (and responsible for the murder of Zao Ma) circulated in the city. Fighting broke out amongst the various army regiments and Minister Jian Zhan attempted to restore order by arresting K’ang-Hsi – but the boy escaped, showing his own skill at intrigue – having suborned one of Zhan’s maids.

Zhan now declared himself regent for the eight-year-old Prince Tun Wei (the still living son of the former emperor Yung-Chen and the lately poisoned Empress Mi’an). K’ang-Hsi, forced to flee Quaran, sped south along the great road, but was forced to abandon the army which had so lately acclaimed him to the ministrations of Jian Zhan.

Luckily for that canny old dog, the recent confiscation of Pure Realm properties had yielded up large sums of ready cash which Zhan then used to secure the loyalty of the troops. A tidy sum of that ill-gotten loot then paid for the grisly murder of K’ang-Hsi as he rode south, trying to reach Harbin and secure control of the Imperial government.

And so ended Zao Ma’s short-lived dynasty.

Jian Zhan then prepared to return to the capital and restore *some* kind of order to the tomfoolery rampant there.

#### **KHANATE OF GURVAN**

*Baylak, noyan-khan of the Jihadi*

#### **DIPLOMACY** Hsia-Hsia (^a)

Expecting the Judeans to storm into the wasteland and hunt them down like dogs, the Gurvanites squandered their hard-earned loot on guns (imported at great cost) and seeing the Bulingir given fresh horses. While Bujek remained with the main body of the people, wandering about in the sere grasslands of Gaxun Nur, Baylak learned from his scouts that the Judeans were remaining within their own lands, watchful and alert, but showing no signs of essaying the desert.

Emboldened by this, the noyan-khan struck swiftly north, into lands tenanted by the Hsia-Hsia and their subordinates the Tangut. The Sunni tribesmen<sup>1</sup> there were surprised to find so many Moslem warriors riding up from the south, but when a herald came forth, khan Jargay listened to the words of the scarred, hard-bitten Gurvanite.

“There is much gold in the south, and fertile fields, and the Cross-men are divided and war among themselves...”

#### **THE KINGDOM OF PRESTER JOHN**

(Maclan in Tuhnwhang)

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

#### **DIPLOMACY** Spoiled by the Gurvanites

While Queen Megan took pains to train and hire more scribes, clerks and men skilled with the abacus, two of her nobles were sent

East to speak with the khan of the Tangut. Unfortunately, the wise and temperate words of Yissu-Temur and Ochigin fell on deaf ears – the Tangut and their masters the Hsia-Hsia wished to bring war and terror to the soft Christians living in the fat lands to the south.

Troubled, the embassy returned to the Queen in haste.

Megan was wary to learn this – the Gurvanite expansion had already cut the overland trade route to Judea – taking with it an enormous portion of the nations’ tax revenues. Further war would only lessen the prospect of restoring the caravan route... Prudently, the Queen ordered the city of Anxi, in Yumen, fortified.



<sup>1</sup> The map was wrong, the db has them as Sunni.

Another city, Kashi, was established in Kashgar, at the end of the Persian highway over the great mountains.

#### THE DIVINE KINGDOM OF JUDAH (Pienching in Honan)

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

#### DIPLOMACY

Despite spending his time on the frontier, plotting the destruction of the Gurbanite barbarians, the Hand of God did not neglect his realm. Though he was of surpassingly poor talent in actually administering so much as a troop of maidens in play-armor, the Celestial Emperor was ably served. As a result, massive amounts of money were poured into a huge, constantly expanding network of Church schools throughout the entire Kingdom. Chahi intended nothing less than a fully literate populace. At the same time, certain cities like Huang'hua in Yen, which had been as foul and dirty and disease-infested as any European bordello, were provided with every public amenity, even so far as to see running water piped into every house, and sewage drains installed in every building, at enormous expense.

At the same time, the cities of El Khudz, Beijing, Xiapin, Funiu and Bao Ding expanded at a reckless pace. However, the Emperor's astrologers and *naualis* assured him the dimming sky would continue to brighten and crop yields would return to normal.<sup>2</sup> Further, the ruined provinces of Anhui (0d8) and Kiangsu (0d9) were being resettled, bringing more land back into cultivation.

Unfortunately, it would be decades yet before any edible food could be grown in the area of the Blow.

Rumors of the Manchu sending aid to the Gurbanites proved unfounded, though various Judean frontier patrols did report seeing signs of some kind of non-nomadic army marching about in the Dzamin Uud. Oddly, what trash and debris the scouts did find indicated another ... Judean army(?) operating in the desert.

A diplomatic mission sent into the hills of Lanchou came scurrying back, carrying the arrow-pincushioned body of General Sete. Apparently the highland tribes had no love for the Catholics down in the valleys.

In the east, the Emperor waited until his scouts reported the nomads had withdrawn from the immediate frontier, then launched a cavalry probe in the north (commanded by General Aimi from Kin), a strong push along the Silk Route into Yanzhi by We Lu and his newly raised 'Army of Kansu', and the main effort by the Emperor himself directly against Wu Hai.

As the Gurbanites and Bulingir warrior bands were all away in the north, trading manly stories with the Hsia-Hsia, the Judean attack went unopposed in 1759. Wu Hai and Yanzhi were both reclaimed and the Bulingir garrisons scattered. The raid into Dzamin Uud yielded nothing save the mysterious signs noted previously.

His victory complete, the Hand of God withdrew to Ordos.

This did not please Baylak *at all*. As the snows of March melted in '60, the Gurbanite and Bulingir armies lunged out of the desert into Yanzhi, spoiling for a fight with the Army of Kansu. We Lu's forces were in motion as quickly as they could muster from their camps and swept towards the invaders for a week's quick march before We Lu suddenly realized he was probably outnumbered and the Hand of God was two provinces away!

The Army of Kansu recoiled, cutting north. The Gurbanites pounced, having advanced behind a deep screen of scouts. An almost-unheard-of cavalry clash developed at **Tennger Els**

between 15,000 Judean horse and 33,000 nomads. Despite being outnumbered, the Judean regulars fought with discipline and grit, repulsing two mass charges by the Bulingir.

Bloodied and clearly outfought, the Gurbanites withdrew in a vast cloud of dust. The Judean army had suffered six thousand dead, but held the field. General We Lu, however, had been killed in the closing hours of the day, leaving his army leaderless. This did not prove to be of enormous import, however, as the Hand of God and the main Judean army reacted with considerable speed, reaching Yanzhi only a few months later.

The Hand, as he had ridden south, had received certain intelligence indicating the oases serving as bases for the Gurbanites. Once his forces had reached Yanzhi and gathered up the battered remains of the Army of Kansu, he launched a second invasion of Lob Nor. This time, however, he sent his son Bandares in command of all the cavalry, zeppelins and light artillery at hand.

The Gurbanites were taken completely by surprise. Bandares and his swift-moving force pounced upon them as they were regrouping at **Huretin Sum**. Baylak had 26,000 men under his command as Judean airships suddenly appeared above the oases, raining fire and explosive bombs into the lines of his horses. 24,000 Judean horse stormed out of the desert with a wild whoop and a fierce melee was underway amid the palms and orchards.

The battle proved bloody for both sides. The Judeans paid a heavy cost to engage the nomads in close-order combat, but they hadn't enough light artillery to pummel the Gurbanites from long range. And the nomads were slaughtered in droves by the withering fire from the zeppelins blackening the sky. Baylak broke off at the first opportunity.

Bandares pursued. A second battle developed to the north-east, out on the desert flats. This time the Gurbanites were smashed, their corpses littering the salt pan for miles. Bandares finished off the survivors, captured thousands of horses, and then turned for home.

Meantime, while the Hand was waiting for his subordinates to return from their foray into the desolation, Aimi's force in Kin was ambushed by the Hsia-Hsia, who had crept up to the frontier and then launched a swift, dagger-like campaign to break past the border forts and into the heart of the Empire. When news reached Aimi (at El'Khudz) of the incursion, he marched out to cut off access to the Yun valley – and was encircled and attacked at **Huringer**. Despite a heroic stand by the Judean infantry, Aimi's army was smashed and a bare thousand horsemen escaped with the general to flee across the mountains into Bao Ding.

El'Khudz itself was sacked by the Tanguts (who spared few, if any, of the citizens) while the Hsia-Hsia swept south into Yun, burning and looting as they went. Shan'si was also pillaged before '60 ended, with the Hsia-Hsia swarming around the heavily fortified city of Tai-yuan, eagerly seeking a way in...

The Hand, meantime, had managed to march his massive army back to Kin, closing (he hoped) the trap behind the raiders.

#### GREAT QING CHINESE EMPIRE

(Wuhan in Hupei)

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

**DIPLOMACY** Wuliang (^t), Changde in Gang'de (^c)



His mood not improved by the lack of respect accorded the Great Qing and the general failure of his policies in India, Yu-Shen embarked on a vast number of projects designed to aggrandize his reputation as the *greatest Emperor of China ever!*

<sup>2</sup> Of course, the wise men had no idea the 'world' had been broken for turns, giving everyone agro-consumption free armies... oh well.

Efforts continued to return the provinces of Taiping, Chekiang, Fukien and Kiangsi to farmland – but that was a very, very long road to travel. Efforts to emulate the Western powers in the use of boiling water to power ships continued, as did the production of elaborately painted airships.

Pacifican engineers continued to laze about in the south, directing thousands of coolies toiling on the newest section of the Kwangchou to Hupei rail-line, which was now inching northeast from Wuzhou towards the mountains of Kienchou province. The first planned section of iron road, however, from the port of Kwangchou to Wuzhou was *still* not finished, as various failures of funding, allocation of corvée labor and outright corruption had stymied its completion.

A Pure Realm priest, Wang Tung, became embroiled in this sordid bit of business and attempted to inform the Imperial authorities in Kwangsi about the dreadful conditions the railroad laborers were forced to endure, as well as the corruption. Unfortunately, before he could find an *honest* Qing official, he was kidnapped by thugs and tortured to death.

Large sums of gold and grain were dispatched to pay off the Persians. A substantial army composed of Imperial regulars and levies out of Lingsi was dispatched into the desolate mountains of Om'chu as an escort for a very large number of lowland Chinese settlers. After scattered fighting, the Imperial army drove out the native tribesmen and saw to the settlement of 'loyal' citizens. The fighting and settlement continued the next year as well, in Tz'uk'an.

Back in Wuhan, Qianglong demanded a cavalcade of beauties to be brought before him – he needed another wife! After a great deal of dickered and bribery, he selected the beauty Xiao Xian, from a rich merchant family in Kwangsi (part of the same corrupt network as were diddling about with the railroad) and married her. Despite strenuous efforts on the part of the Empress, no children were forthcoming by the end of '60.

## SOUTH ASIA

Mercenaries	Minimum bid listed in [x].
Condotierri	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** No appreciable effect.

Growing quite fat and considerably pleased with himself, the "Red Hand" attempted to begat some more heirs – and again the curse which seemed to dog his house claimed the life of Lady Miu, who died in childbirth. Morose and bitterly angry, Blajakay closeted himself in the palace and refused to see anyone for months. In his nominal absence, things went on much as they had before. The generals looted the new north-western provinces and carved out vast estates for themselves, the Pacifican merchants controlled all shipping and grew wealthy as a result.

The Red Hand bestowed many favors upon the fawning Pacifican merchants, including the right to handle all trade between Mighty Thai and the pitiful domains of the Hosogawans on Borneo. The Emperor's divine favor did not prevent two Pacifican captains – Yasuhiro and Shimura – from being murdered while they were on their way to meet with local businessmen in Monorom. The bodies were found decapitated and mutilated in a cheap hotel room. Rumors of ritual markings and a peculiar smell were discounted by the police.

Garrisons in the north-western provinces of Bengal were increased, given the level of religious violence on hand.

### HOSOGAWA BORNEO (Kozoronden in Sabah)

*Hosogawa Suenaga, Daimyo of Kozoronden*

**DIPLOMACY** None

Expecting the squadron on 'peace-keeping' duties in India to return at any time, Suenaga turned his attention to other matters close to home. The university of Kozoronden received a variety of grants, allowing it to expand the student population and build a number of new classroom buildings. The busy industry in and around the port continued apace. Very large sums to were dispatched to the south-east, to distant Aotearoa, where the various Oroist kingdoms were conspiring ... no, *collaborating* in a massive project. General Yamashita returned to the capital from his campaign against the southern tribes.

### VERY PLEASANT JAVA (Sunda in Pajajaran)

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

**DIPLOMACY** None

The entire nation was gripped by the despondency of the Great Kahuna, who spent all of his time brooding and surfing. Some efforts were made to encourage emigration to the colony in Austral, but little came of it. Even the fleets stayed home, in port, and the sailors went about their business quietly.

The city of Singapore (previously in Safavid hands, and now owing at least nominal allegiance to the Javans) declared itself a 'free city' and repudiated even the slightest alliance with the Persians. The city fathers also warned 'all nations, great and small' to leave them alone, 'though merchants of all kinds are welcome.'

### THE SUPREME PRIMACY OF ORO (Fukuzawa in Irith)

*Horoku ne Muuta, High Priest of the Shark*

**DIPLOMACY** None

Horoku gritted his teeth, scribbled his name on a sheet of rice-paper and sent off every last *kooku* the Shark-priests had lately gained in tribute to the Bakufu, who – one hoped – had a good use for so much coin. Penniless, the Shark-Priests did very little, though efforts to restore good relations with the Javan temples continued.

Of course, none of them knew how little time remained...

From the west, where for long years nothing in particular had happened, came troubling news out of the desert. A man named Tongu – a half-Japanese/half-Aborigine hermit who had been meditating for nearly twenty years in a sea-cave on the coast of Yaralone roused himself from observing the inner eye of the Shark – and set out to reveal to the common people what had been revealed to *him* in the sea-cave, when Oro had risen from the deeps, glistening and black, pale eyes burning with the colors of the surf under the moon, and spoken to Tongu, revealing the proper wave-way and surf-song to sing.

That these revelations were little in line with the teachings of the priests of Oro or their liturgy or had any use for temples and vestments and tithes was self-evident. Tongu called to the people to return to the sea, and embrace Oro as the surf embraces the land.

Small crowds gathered in Yaralone to listen to him speak, and they were greatly impressed. Old Tengu could speak wisely and well, and around him there seemed to be an aura of an indefinable kind – something which drew the eye and the mind and made everything he said seem fresh and new, unblemished sand revealed by retreating waves.

The priests of Oro were vigilant, however, and quickly drove the prophet from Yaralone and into the wasteland of Irana<sup>3</sup>. There Tengu walked north and east, finding solace in the empty land (though the birds and the beasts of the land and air were troubled and tried to speak to him, warning him of some unnamed danger) and he reached Pilbarra after many months in the desert.

There too he spoke to the people and the priests and while he found a warm welcome among the Javan settlers, they too did not pick up the tooth he laid before him. They had their own heterodoxy and found it sufficient for their needs.

Tengu continued north and east, entering Broome at the end of 1760. A small group of followers had attached themselves to him by this time, begging by the road and cutting wood for their dinner. Soon the prophet would reach Fukuzawa and everyone expected miracles to follow.

Some said the tsunami which ravaged the coast of Oanx and Dolak was sign of Oro's Messenger arriving from the east, but others did not believe any such thing, blaming undersea convulsions instead.

#### **THE BORANG BAKUFU** (Sakuma in Borang)

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

#### **DIPLOMACY** Failed

The daimyo clenched his teeth, stared longingly at the wagonloads of Oroist gold being put aboard ship in the harbor of Iten in Nokama, and then waved sadly goodbye to an enormous amount of his *own* treasury, which was all shipped off to Aotearoa, where a momentous undertaking was underway. Along with all these doings in the south, the critical southern port of Iten was strongly fortified.

Pacifican ships arrived from the north, made landfall at Iruka in Aanx, and began building their own district (which eventually accounted for a full third of the city). In doing so they missed being deluged by terrible flooding which afflicted Camoweal in '59, ruining hundreds of acres of crops and washing away at least two villages. City building was, in fact, all the rage along the northern coast – the Bakufu saw to the establishment of a town – Tazeh-ko – in Arukun just between the Coral Sea and the Gulf of Carpentaria.

Still further east and down the coast, the province of Tih-Ar-Dha grew to 2 GPv. Though arrangements had been made with the PM&T to develop new trade routes in the region, nothing seemed to have come of such grand plans. In any case, Jemmu was more concerned with suppressing the student revolt in Fukuzawa...

Despite the assurances of his *ninja* advisors, the first attempts to split the Student Committee into rival factions and incite the 'revolt' to collapse failed miserably. A plot to poison the leader of the Zengakuren was exposed, as were two blackmail plots. Assassinations followed and these failed as well. Prince Kunisada was recalled to Sakuma to face his brother's ire.

The army remained outside the city, unwilling to intervene directly, and general Kahwazi kept his samurai on a short leash. The daimyo had directed things be settled peacefully... or someone would pay in blood! Lord Shiguro arrived to replace the clumsy Kunisada. Unfortunately for the glib diplomat, any chance of a peaceful solution had been spoiled by the underhanded methods already employed.

Following the collapse of talks, the Zengakuren established direct administration over the city, put armed students on the walls and worked feverishly to expand the already formidable

<sup>3</sup> Though they did not mean him well, the priests actually saved Tengu from being murdered by driving him out so quickly.

fortifications. Rumors of letters dispatched to certain foreign powers, seeking aid, abounded by no one seemed to know who, if anyone, the Student Revolutionary Council, had contacted.

#### **NANHAI WANG'GUO** (Rabaul on Bismarck)

*Sugawara Te Anu, Daimyo of the Southern Seas*

#### **DIPLOMACY** Failed

"We have waited long enough," Te Anu declared, emerging from his palace in Rabaul on Bismarck. "Let the sea fill with ships, numberless as the stars in the night sky."

The Javan raid into the great southern ocean had shown Sugawara the fatal weakness of the Maori. Now the Seaholders would reclaim their lost possessions... a great fleet, crammed with warriors and guns, was dispatched south to finish off the 'Black Fleet' and reclaim Aotearoa for the Nanhai. Though prince Te Kahata was nominally in charge of the expedition, true command devolved to general Watamati. Te Kahata spent most of his time keeping his idiot brother Nu Henho out of trouble.

Elsewhere, the daimyo toured the dirty, polluted streets of Rabaul and was sickened that his people had fallen to such a low level – such squalor was not in keeping with the tidy, even fastidious nature of the Maori or the Japanese. Enormous sums, therefore, were spent to improve matters in the capital.

#### **TE NIHO O ORO** (Kenehold on Dajarra)

*Hatipi, Spear of the Order of the Teeth*

*Takotokino, Lord of the Fleet, Emperor of the Maori, Blessed of Oro, The Big Kahuna, Grand Captain of the Teeth of Oro*

#### **DIPLOMACY** None

The Maori, meanwhile, had struck on a new plan to resuscitate their crippled kingdom in exile. With the connivance of the Borang and the Priests of Oro, Hatipi had decided to abandon the remote islands of Aotearoa and decamp to a more central location. Further, by assuming the mantle of the 'Teeth of Oro' – the Te Niho o Oro – and the protection of the Bakufu and the Shark-priests, the last remnant of the Black Fleet would find a new purpose, as a religious military order dedicated to spreading the word of Oro to the four corners of the Earth.

The regent, therefore, had packed up everyone onto the remains of the fleet and set sail from Joetsura to Austral by the time the marauding Nanhai arrived on the cold southern shores. The disruption of the invasion was not without cost, however, as Hatipi found himself almost overmatched at the mighty task of founding a new order at Kenehold, in central Austral.

Luckily, his able lieutenants were able to pitch in, and an Order Fortress was established at Kenehold, in the old Imperial Capital and palace. Order estates were also granted to the Te Niho in Borang, on Sarawak and Timor. Efforts to expand into Eha-rana and Wewak failed.

Watamati's invasion – as the Black Fleet had fled to Austral – was more of a police invasion, as both islands were systematically occupied and garrisoned. Even in the cities, where the Fleet held the greatest loyalty, there were no fortifications or garrisons to resist the Nanhai. In the countryside, the old gentry welcomed their 'proper' lord's return.

## **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

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)*Kubman Singh, prince of Bundelkhand, Lion of the North***DIPLOMACY** Pundra (^t), Polonarva on Seylan (^t)

With the Southern League weak and divided, and the Arnor licking their wounds and Baluchistan engulfed in war (again), Singh took a peaceful two years to shuffle armies about, repair damage to the countryside and do some long-needed diplomacy.

**SHI'A IMAMAT** (Yathrib in Kosala)*Rhemini, Ayatollah of the Shi'a, Voice of Allah***DIPLOMACY** Chola (^ab), Pandya (^ab)

Rhemini's failure to establish the Imamate as a going concern, and the indolence (in religious matters) of the Chandellas, let the Buddhist clergy pressing their faith in eastern Bengal have a clear field of play... Assam and Gaur became Buddhist, while the last Shi'a were driven out of Palas. Only ornery Samatata and the isolated provinces of Gtsang and Manipur remained a bastion of Moslem faith in the east.

Truth be told, Rhemini was struggling just to keep the mosques open and his imams and mullahs paid at home.

**THE SOUTHERN LEAGUE** (Amon Hen in Karnata)*Robert of Kakatiya, King of the South***DIPLOMACY** No effect

Lucky that the Chandellans decided to stay home, the League counted the bags of gold delivered by the Albanian legate in Fornost and tried to keep their heads above water. Shiploads of grain, raw cotton, finished textiles, lumber, dried bananas and spices departed in turn, to feed the ravenous hordes of Europe.

Some Hussite preachers from Arnor bothered the citizens of Dahala, but managed not to provoke a riot or revolt, which was really pretty good once you think about it. The Carthaginian army which was encamped in the region moved off north, into Arnor lands, but not before the commander Qalaf had fallen prey to a Moslem assassin (a southerner, out of the old Yasarid lands) and Major Le Blanc of the Frankish Foreign Legion had arrived to take charge of the army.

More civil servants were put in the employ of the League and most, if not all, of them were former employees of the Albanian East India Company. The Moslem citizens of Mozul, in the south, were surprised when the League decided to clean out the sewers in their battered city, but didn't complain. The wise men of the city where concerned, however, by reports by fishermen working the deep waters south of Seylan of strange lights in the sky.

No one, however, could offer a suitable explanation.

**THE REALM OF ARNOR** (Schwarzkastral in Edrosia)*Peregrin von Hessen, Rajah of India, Duke of Delhi, Grand-Duke of Aballach, Prince of the Black Tower***DIPLOMACY** Chitor (^ea)

Strangely, war had lifted its bloody hand from the Arnor realm as well as from Chandella. The oft-reviled Peregrin was, therefore, able to draw a breath and begin rebuilding the horrendous damage his provinces had suffered. The new port of Somnath on the coast of Surashtra grew



a level and Varanasi and Kaunaj were graced with ditches and a bit of a firing platform around their outskirts.

Rather morose at the drubbing his realm had received, Peregrin withdrew from public life in the Realm to live quietly, attended by some servants and his wife, Sarah von Buwald, Duchess Gwalior. Ah, quality time!

By dint of dispatching the lords Kahterstahl, Hakanson and Nehru to negotiate with the Duke of Chitor, the Realm managed to fill in the 'hole' and open a route to the coast. This news actually managed to bring a smile to Christian von Hessen's face (as he was acting Duke in his father's convalescence).

An even happier event transpired near the end of '60, when Raquel von Hessen, Peregrin's daughter, was married to Robert Clive, the newly dispatched Albanian East India Company 'viceroy' for the Arnori provinces.

Apparently – and this was news to everyone, including the various Arnori lords and ladies in attendance – the Grand Duke had struck an arrangement with the Company for the Albanians to take over day-to-day administration, including the collection of tax receipts and military affairs, from the House von Hessen. A very large sum of gold changed hands. Down Calicut-way, Prince Baalshamin of Carthage complained loudly “but... but... I was supposed to marry that hottie Raquel! Bring me another mint julep!”

What this meant was anyone's guess, but Robert Clive was now king in Bharat<sup>4</sup>.

**SCHWARZCASTEL**

He stands and strikes the wall with his fist. This is where his brother died. Even now, after so much, it was hard, hard for him to believe Tim was truly dead. Timothy, his brother, his friend, dead, killed by a... a... a statue? The world has gone so bonkers of late new religions, gates, orange monks, ray weapons, all bumping into this and... and... so confusing... he strikes the wall again, and notes the brown stains left by his brother's death. Dead, dead and for what? No one will ever really know, the tales spread, misinformation is given out by all. The truth is out there he thinks, Timothy died saving the lives of many with Clive. A hero they say, he died a hero. *What would Jon Huss do?*

This rock wall is real, his hand hurts, as is the damp darkness that closes down around him with a cloying sense of despair. He reaches into his pocket and takes out a locket, a locket that was his brother's contains a small piece of shaped greenish stone, now his star stone.

“Bastable? I say Bastable, terribly sorry about Tim, he was a friend, a good man, I shall pray for him.” said Father Lorne, a Taboric Knight, and the squad's medic, as he walked up with a hand torch. “This is a gloomly place, a-what?”

“Here now”, bellowed Sgt. Ravston, “Men stike up some more torches”. Sgt. Ravston of the Legion, Artillery, and light is brought forth. The gloom recedes. The squad, 10 heavlily armed men, rolling a light piece (6lb Empress Oniko) for jollies are not happy to be underground either. Sgt Ravston is not pleased, no not pleased at all to be in these tunnels. Too many tales have been told.

Oswald looks at them, as if seeing them for the first time. “Okay survey team, time to earn the Company's paycheck let's move out”. The Company has set us task, let's be about it.” stated Bastable. Having said his piece he brushes by Father Lorne and heads down the side tunnel. The gloom recedes before the light.

<sup>4</sup> Bharat is what the Indians call India. Mostly.

"Gawd's there is friggen miles of these tunnels Captain Bas, ah... sir", complained PFC O'Casey. "No, more like ARFEN miles that's it, ARFEN miles of them."

"Oh come now O'Casey we have only been at this for what 2 hours" sighed Bastable.

The troop had been mapping the tunnels for maybe three hours, with no end in sight. The ancient workmanship still quite remarkably serviceable, the silence was deafening. Down, always these tunnels sloped, Bastable estimated there were at least one hundred meters below the surface by now, that was just an idea though. Periodically side tunnels would open, and two squad members would be detached to wander down them apiece, most ended after 50 yards or so, others stretched out for what seemed forever to the disgruntled grunts.

"I dare say Captain Bastable, but who do we think built these warrens?" asked Lt. Gillon.

"No one knows, we're to investigate the location, and come up with answers, that's according to my orders from Thess", stated Captain Bastable.

"Hello, what's this? The squad comes to a halt before a intersection and a large set of double doors. While the team had come across other doors earlier, this one. This door has mystery writ large upon it's very being. What could be behind it?"

"Wow will you look at this" exclaimed O'Casey as he walked up to the barrier, and..... died. Horribly.

As the young man stepped closer to the door a pair of giant spears transfixed him from either side then withdrew casting the soldier to the pavement where he rapidly bled out his life. There was nothing his friends could do but pull him away.

"Whoa, did anyone see where Rus stepped before the spears gottim," asked Lt. Gillon. "Careful, don't go anywhere near that thing Captain".

Bastable had stopped about 10 feet away from the door, doors now that he looked closer at them, also he noted amongst O'Casey's blood that there were several squares marked on the floor. Clearly Rus O'Casey's final step had triggered the monstrous trap which killed him. This door was going to be opened, but how? He snapped his finger, and called out.

"Bring on the Empress boyos she's going to open this for us." A trained artillery crew is a marvel to watch, soon the 6lb. was readied to fire. "Nothing left but the crying", thought Bastable, as he gave a nod to Sgt. Ravston, who stuck the match to the firing hole. With a deafening roar the cannon fired at point-blank range and....did nothing, it did not punch a hole through the doors, the ball struck a something, a force and ....well, rolled back towards the shocked squad.

"What in bloody hell was that." cried Lance Coporal Goodkin.

"Never seen anything like that before, even back in the deadlands around Venice when we was there," declared Gillon.

"Okay, fine that didn't work, thoughts, anyone?" enquired Bastable. "Right, this door has killed one of us, I mean to have it opened. "Sgt. Ravston, speaking of the deadlands, let's break out our toy shall we?"

A look of happy anticipation descends upon all the men as Sgt Ravston undoes his backpack and pulls forth the Deadlands weapons. During the campaign in Europe, where record breaking amounts of ammunition was expended, some trophies were taken. This was one them, a warty ovoid device is made of some unidentifiable black metal covered with bizarre circuitry that almost appears to be laid out in an arcane pattern.

"Oh yeah Captain Bas, time to rock" exclaimed Private Paladin Blake.

"Stand back lads," warned Ravston.

With that, the wily Ravston stepped up about 20 feet from the door, clutched

the space weapon in just the right way, it began to glow, as did the stone around Bastable neck, not that he noticed, a high pitched whine began to growl from the gun, and before your say, "Bob's your uncle". A bluish bolt of sparks lept from it and smote the valve before them. A desparate spray of electrical discharge flowed along the force protecting the doors causing the squad to duck back, but the force guarding the doors blinked out.

Moments later with a mighty roar the Empress Oniko crashes again and this time the doors are laid low. Beyond the now ruined doors a large chamber stretches out, a staircase rises into the inky blackness on the left side. This chamber is also occupied with boxes, brick and brack and cases, and cans, aisles of them.

"Careful where you step, let's see what we've found here". as Bastable orders the team forward.

"Funny, no one. else found this before hand, what with all the work the Company spent on the underground pool area, and the submarine works, eh Captain?" impined Specialist Sor Teb.

"Who knows, Sor?" "Doesn't look like anyone has been here in years, replied Bastable".

"Okay, let's look alive squad, this looks like a place to do some work, break off in pairs, but everyone stay in sight and hearing of another team. Let's try and get an idea what's here and not lose anybody to more traps.

Walking carefully around the squares that caused the death of the young trooper O'Casey they entered the chamber and spread out amongst the clutter. Weapons, from firearms to ancient armor all carefully stored away for future use, who did this? Several of the boxes seem to hold ancient weapons, some of Greek origin, maybe Alexandrian, or the Bactrian Kingdom. There is the odd piece of crossbows, bows, arrows, and bolts, some which to the eye held an inner glow. Father Lorne takes up a crossbow and bolts. Everyone helps themselves to a choice weapon, with swords and cutlass' being preferred. Lt. Gillon finds a firearm which looks to be a shotgun of sorts and some ammo.

Gee, maybe there will be real treasure as well? With renewed vigor they spread out with dreams of a maharajah's crache just waiting for them.

Sgt. Ravston and Sor Teb, branched up the stairs abit but returned when it's obvious that the chamber and stairs ascend a long ways. From their high vantage point they direct the adventurers towards round set of doors set in floor of the room. A set of doors with something laying upon them. As the team nears these inlaid round doors they discover a statue laid out on the floor, over the large circular doors, with outstretched arms. The statue, some sort of Runic Guardian depicts a humanoid figure of an armed and armored monkey, it has a bluish glean to it.

"Shit, another of these," bemoans Oswald as he comes near. As he nears the reclining statue his green stone shines forth with a burst of light, and as if called by it the statue begins to move. A well trained fire team, Bastable's boys unleash fire upon the hapless combatant as it begins to move towards them with a slow methodical purpose.

Round upon round strike the monkey and hurl it backwards only to see it rise up again as their fire. Lt. Gillon's new scattergun has placed a large hole, to his surprise in the creature's side. They back away from its menacing approach. The shots have ripped its armor up, and several rents can be seen, but on it comes.

Thinking quickly Sgt. Ravston unleashes the spark gun and the stream of electricity leaps forth and sprays on it. Stunned, the monkey stands there as the current runs over, around, and through,

with a blurt it falls forward landing hard in front of the startled group, as sparks continue to play along its frame.

"Thank you Sgt. Ravston, that was well done". compliments the Captain. "Satchel charge I believe is in order now Private Blake."

"See to it," orders the Sergeant.

Immediately Blake draws forth his kit and rummaging for the charges he has brought. "Do you think that will bring down the doors the monkey was sleeping on, Captain?" asks Blake.

Gillon looking at the doors, replies, "Try to set it so the blast will strike down mostly, these doors would seem to open that way."

"Beggin pardon sirs, but how about just pushing this button here, maybe that will do it?" questions Coporal Goodkin.

Crowding around the team look at the button in question is attached to a small pedestal standing up from the floor. A thing that had not been there before the defeat of the Runic Guardian. Nothing else would appear to be an opening mechanism. So with a hunching of his shoulders Bastable directs Goodkin to go ahead. Which he does.

At first nothing seems to occur, then with a slow rumble the doors begin to slide into the flooring revealing a large dark pit, the team's torch light just barely illuminating below. A craft of sorts is seen standing on the floor below, something akin to a small scout zeppelin, but without the apparent gas sack. The floor now continues to rumble as an elevator system rises the vessel to the now hastily scattering team.

The obvious door, with a 3 step ladder is near the rear of the vessel and is slightly ajar. As if beckoning, the hatch looks tantalizing easy to open and enter. Lock and loading, the team surrounds the opening, and Captain Bastable indicates that Goodkin should be the first to enter. Proving once again, that no good deed goes unpunished.

The Corporal inches his way to a towards the ladder and using his rifle opens the door as he leaps back. Nothing happens. The cliché 'silent as the tomb' comes to mind as peering inward Bastable and company scan the interior of small entry room, say 5 by 5 with another hatch beyond. Nothing for it then, Goodkin still in the lead advances then to the second door and finds it unlocked. Nerving himself, he reaches forward, edging closer, he then jumps with fright as he stepped on a panel and the door slowly recedes into the wall, lights come-on throughout the part of the craft in which he stands. A slow small trickle of liquid appears on the floor next to the corporal.

"Sir, I don't think I can go any farther", bemoans the startled kid. "That's okay Paladin, come on out, someone else can take point from here," directs Captain Bastable.

#### **KINGDOM OF BALUCHISTAN** (Multan in Sukkur)

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

**DIPLOMACY** Multan (^a), Punjab (^a)

Bolstered by a paltry smattering of foreign aid, John Abraham managed to set things aright enough in Schwarzkastral to see about instituting a new census and getting some public services up and about. A few merchant ships dared the port, bringing in some desperately needed trade as well. A trade agreement was signed with the Albanian East India Company (whose tenacious fingers were digging ever deeper into the Indian economy), granting the 'honorable gentlemen' concessions in cotton and pepper. Substantial aid was received in turn.

Having seen their peace-keeping effort fail utterly, the Qing forces in the Persian Gulf (at Mei Guo in Muscat) picked up their shoes and went home. An undisclosed number of ships were 'lent' to the House of Tewfik before the fleet departed. At the same time,

four swift frigates were sent west to Carthage, carrying an honor guard for the Empress Ye Geema, whose husband was in something of a pickle.

John Abraham also betook to reduce the immediate pressures on his government by granting the town of Multan a charter as a free city and reducing the alliance with Jats and Ajmer to merely non-paying tributary. After dealing with these matters, the King marched his army north (accompanied by Prince Solomon) and invaded the Punjab, intending to root out the last of the Iranians loitering about there.

Soon after John Abraham had left Schwarzkastral he received news a very dusty column of Carthaginians had marched up from the south to New Dehli and encamped there.

The Baluchistanis, meantime, had punched into Punjab and found the province defended by a very strong Iranian garrison – and one which now found itself on its own, as the Iranian shah had abdicated his throne (see Iran, below). Sadly, no matter how strong their fortified cantonments were, barely three thousand Iranians just could not withstand the fierce assaults of 24,000 Baluchis.

Punjab was reduced and then Und. The Hussite populations of both provinces were 'liberated'. Prince Solomon, in fact, found himself married to a likely Punjabi girl. Then John Abraham raised his eyes to the rampart of the Hindu Kush, to the narrow valley above Peshawar which formed the mouth of the Khyber Pass and he said:

"Advance! On, to the roof of the world!"

So did the Hussite Baluchis open their war against the Durrani dynasty in Kabul.

#### **SHAHDOM OF AFGHANISTAN** (Kabul in Afghanistan)

*Ahmad Durani, Shah of the Afghans, Lord of Kabul*

**DIPLOMACY** None

For his part, Ahmad Durrani had been very, very careful to keep out of the wars in India. His



mountain kingdom was more than enough trouble for him – what with the feuding clans and the restive Hazaras and the Persian refugees and all of the strange religious groups creeping from cave to cave in the mountains. He had, however, joined the various kings and shahs of Persia, Iran and Prester John in settling the matter of Al'Qadir and his fate by establishing the Knights of Tamerlane.

As part of that, Akhmed Bahulan, the Afghanshah's uncle, had been sent south with the entire Royal Army (as opposed to the various tribal warbands owing Ahmad fealty, as will become apparent) to secure the province of Carmania and the city of Al-Harkam, which would now be an Afghan possession.

Ahmad, in fact, had marched his Kabul City Rifles and the artillery battery down to Baluchistan (the province, not the nation) to reinforce Akhmed's forces in case Al-Harkam had to be taken by siege. While the shah was away, then, the Hussite Baluchistanis (the nation, not the province) came swarming up the Khyber and besieged Kabul.

The only notable in the city was Queen Zuhra, who found herself defending the capital with a thousand militia and various household retainers against 12,000 Hussite infantry commanded by John Abraham. Prince Solomon took the rest of the Baluchi army (all cavalry) and set about subjugating the countryside.

After only a month of shelling (and some fancy mining work by the Hussite siege engineers) in the spring of 1760, the Baluchis broke into **Kabul**, slaughtered the defenders and hung Zuhra from a palace window to choke her life out.



The next month (with the winter snow finally clearing from the roads) Ahmad Durani stormed into Afghanistan at the head of an army of 16,000 crazy-mad Pashtun horse and jezailmen. Prince Solomon's cavalry army engaged the relief column at **Kowt-e-Ashrow** with 12,000 Hussite lancers, scouts and hussars.

Confident in the ability of his men to defeat some ragged tribesmen, Solomon plowed into the midst of the Afghans, who scattered like a cloud of dust, and his heavy horse charged directly into a hidden ditch. Durani's jezailmen raked the confused cavalry with volley-fire worthy of the Swedish Imperial Guard and shattered the hussars. The hussars, furious, fought their way out of the ditch and clove into the jezailmen at hand-to-hand. Unfortunately for them, the rest of Solomon's army broke, now attacked on all sides as the Pashtuns swept back in from the hills, and fled for Kabul.

The hussars, abandoned, were butchered.

Durani looked upon Kabul from a distance and listened to the reports of his scouts and others who had fled the fall of the capital.

"We will wait," he decided, seeing the strength of the enemy. "They will find the winter in Kabul is cruel as a knife."

Durani then withdrew into Hazarajat to bide his time.

In the south, meanwhile, Akhmed Bahulan and the Royal Army had marched out of the hills and into Carmania – all ready and willing to shoot it up – and found the Iranians waiting for them with a key to the city. Having turned over the province, the Iranians (now Knights of Tamerlane) rode off to the north to their new fortress near Bukhara.

Bahulan was quite pleased to accept the fealty of the city fathers, to leave some troops around, taste the local cuisine and then receive news from the north of the Baluchi invasion.

"What?! Stinking Baluchi pig-dogs. We'll teach them a lesson!"

Bahulan's army invaded Edrosia in the spring of '60 (wait... this is starting to sound **very familiar**) and had advanced to within sight of the miniscule (but now present!) walls of Schwarzkastel when, from the north, an exhausted Carthaginian army came marching at all speed (some elements had started '59 in Pandya...).

Major Le Blanc (of the Frankish Foreign Legion) commanded the Carthaginian force. He led 14,000 European troops (and even eight zeppelins) into battle against the 18,000 Afghans at **Nazimabad**. As it turned out, the far-more-capable skill of Bahulan offset the Carthaginians' advantages in the air, and (for a wonder) the Afghans had more and better artillery in the field... the result was a stand-up slugging match which lasted two full days of smoke, steel and carnage under the blazing Indian sun.

After losing far too many men, Le Blanc elected to break off – covered by a screen of his Berber light horse and the airships, who plagued the Afghani cavalry with a rain of caltrops and gunpowder bombs. Unfortunately, Bahulan scented blood and his own Hazara scouts might lack eyes in the sky, but were not to be underestimated in any terrain... a second ferocious battle erupted a week later, within sight of **Schwarzkastel** itself.

This time the Carthaginians managed to throw back the Afghani attacks and Bahulan decided to withdraw himself. Like ghosts, the Afghani force withdrew into the mountains. Le Blanc, counting himself incredibly lucky to have survived with any troops at all, limped into Schwarz and began digging in. They had 3,600 men left who could be counted on to fight.

**KINGDOM OF THE KUSHANS** (Astakana in Kush)

*Bujayapendra, Blessed of Vishnu, prince of Astakana*

**DIPLOMACY** No effect

While the vigorous and middle-aged Bujayapendra continued to rule the quiet, peaceful 'flower kingdom' beneath the ramparts of

heaven, his son Mujehendra managed to recover his senses enough (he had been previously laid low by the unexpected death of his beloved wife Yasmine) to marry again, this time to an eighteen-year old girl named Rudisana Baktiar.

## **NEAR BOKHARA, CENTRAL ASIA**

Bukharm waited on his horse in the morning's building dawn. A strong, melodic voice called the faithful to prayer in the mosque across the square that sat outside the old walls of the city, ancient walls that predated these difficult times. Pensive, he reflected on the recent years, the civil war and his father's unshakeable fascination with India. "A new Moghul Empire," Al'Qadir had promised. No dawn that dream; more like a sunset. *No*, thought Bukharm, *a nightmare*.

A cacophony of hooves yanked his attention back to the empty square. Riders, numbered to match his own bodyguards, carefully filled the far end of the square, eyes darting rapidly and alertly about the structure. Bahram followed them in and the two sovereigns approached one another, stopping by a fountain near the center of the structure. All others had been blocked from the market this morning. The two men greeted each other, warmly, but guardedly.

"Peace be upon you," Bukharm mouthed ritualistically.

Bahram paused and arched an eyebrow.

"Peace," he repeated, a speculative tone belying his thoughts.

"Will there be peace for Iran?"

*He gets to the point quickly*, mused Bukharm. But he said nothing. What he could say about *that* question was still terribly unclear. Iran's prospects for retaining, really regaining, any control in the cesspool that was India seemed remote, at best. No one had suggested testing Persia, who had begun to grow strong again, even as Iran's empire in India had crumbled under the impossible weight of the Indian dream. Besides, few could even remember the reasons for the war in the first place.

The sound of the morning prayers from the nearby mosque saved him from trying to provide an answer he did not possess. "It's time," he said, glancing at the now clear Eastern horizon. Bahram nodded agreement, and each man drew a rug from his horse's riding gear and spread it on the ground, facing west and a bit south. Side by side, they knelt and prayed the ritual prayers near the gurgling fountain. As they finished, Bukharm was ready for what he was certain would come next. *He can only want to discuss reconciliation*. Bukharm wondered if should have come; he was not ready to stop being a Shah.

"What will it be, back into India?" asked Bahram, although his eyes betrayed that he knew the answer already. *Clumsy*, though Bukharm, *he never did have the polish of a true diplomat*. Still, Bukharm could not help find himself amused by, and even drawn to, the energetic young Shah: his face never failed to speak volumes, and he was difficult to dislike. Bukharm had known the younger King at court, then a prince, years before the war. *Even then*, mused Bukharm, *he charmed them all*.

"You have a better idea?"

"Few good choices seem to be available to you," responded Bahram carefully. "You're considering Africa, no doubt," he dangled the hook. Bukharm's silence was cut by an appraising look. "Yes, I agree," said Bahram. "You think India was a powder keg? Just give Africa a try!"

"Fah! I've told my advisors the same thing a dozen times. They're fools to look there for our future."

The two Shahs walked through the East arch of the square, serious riders securing the path ahead of them.

"It all seems a waste to me," offered Bahram. "Chopped to bits in India, or Africa, or even Asia. To what end? What will men say about you, about Iran? That you died for pride?"

"But still an independent country!" shot back Bukharm. "Not one that went crawling back to Persia, begging to be taken back or protected!"

"We both know the time for that is past. Iran has a life of its own, now, however little is left of it. But we are all Persians at heart. All Muslims. Can we not find important work to be done?"

"What, the Hussites?" Bukharm spat *Hussites* as if it were the foulest profanity ever to issue from the mouth of Shaitan.

"Are the Hussites really our most important work?" Bahram shot back disdainfully. "Can you name even one Hussite nation that you have reason to fear today? No, not a single one," he continued artfully. "Besides, the Hussites still have an important part to play in the work ahead of us, and have yet to prove themselves to be our enemies."

"But someday..." countered the older Shah, wearing his foresight on his sleeve. "They say they covet the lands between India and the Mediterranean. And India may yet be the launching point for such a move."

"And you will forestall them by attacking them now?" Another meaningful pause emphasized Bahram's point. "We must look to our own house, and let someday take care of itself. Look around us. To the West is the Union, from whom we must buy grain to feed our people."

"Foul heretics." Bukharm's distaste was plain.

"Muslims, still... if barely," Bahram reminded him. "More importantly, our lands are infested by those who practice abominations. Our ally in Europe has been cleaved in two, and asteroids shower the earth in fire and death. We cannot allow ourselves to bicker each other into oblivion, like the idiot Europeans. We must strengthen our own hand, be our own allies, and draw together the people of faith. We dare not repeat the mistakes of others." Bahram could see his counterpart struggle with his reasoning. *He sees the wisdom of this, if only he can let go of his hate*, he noted, as they passed a stand of trees, a small mosque coming into sight before them.

"How do you propose to do this thing? This thing that has not been done in three and a half centuries of Persian history," Bukharm reminded him, pointedly.

"Not me, brother. **You.**"

"How can the Shah of a bare two million accomplish all this?" Bukharm turned to look at Bahram, challenging his seemingly insane statement. The mosque was emptying, and the street, although remote, filled steadily with people. The privacy of their conversation, though, was guarded by the menacing stares of the dozens of elite horsemen who occupied the grounds.

"As a Shah, you can't," replied Bahram slowly. He paused to allow Bukharm a moment to gather himself. "But as a Prelate," he went on, "as the leader of a Sunni order, with your army," he gestured at the elite Iranian riders, many of whom he'd known when they had guarded *his* family, "you could be a formidable tool of Allah. Measure that against the slow wasting, or the sudden violent death, of all Iran." His stare glanced from Bukharm to his riders, and he could see that he was beginning to win them over, too.

"Persia" he continued, "cannot do that, not alone. She can be the voice of Sunni Islam, as she has, but her hands are weighed down by the administration of government. You can be the free hand that advances our cause, and that binds together those of our faith in action, and that eventually bridges the gaps between us and our wayward brothers." Bahram knew that his companion would

understand: *peaceful reconciliation between Sunni and the Shia...perhaps even the Kharadjites; it was crucial.*

Bukharm paused, but Bahram saw in his eyes that his mind was made up. Bukharm knew that he was right: those eyes held a hope, a hope and a purpose that was not there before. He had not misjudged the character of this able and battle-scarred leader; he would rise to this occasion as any other great man of purpose and faith would. It would be a start. Bahram smiled a broad smile that broke down the last wall of reluctance in Bukharm's heart.

"And what will we call this order of yours...of ours?" he corrected himself.

The mosque whose doorway they were now nearly standing in was small, and little known to those who lived in the city, now or in the past. It was not among the most beautiful in the city, nor the largest. Its tiles had long since faded from their original bright blue patterns, and many were missing, lending it a sad, scarred character. It had been built centuries before when the city was much smaller, and far from the city's center. Its outside was unremarkable, except that in the courtyard to the side of its humble arched entrance it kept a modest stone statue of the ruler to whom it had been dedicated so long ago. "I suggest," said Bahram the Bold, Shah of Persia, indicating the statue with a sweep of his arm, "that we call it ***The Order of Tamerlane.***"

The message was clear. The mission was bigger than Persia or Iran. It encompassed the soul of a whole people, the urgency of their survival and prosperity, and the legacy of the hundred thousand horsemen who had followed Tamerlane out of the steppes into the lush civilization of Persia centuries before, and in doing so had created a new order in the Middle East. Now the rich morning light seemed to breathe the appearance of renewal into the worn marble horse and rider. Bukharm Al'Qadir, Shah of Iran, studied the enormity of the mission that the grimacing, mounted stone Tamerlane laid before him...and with a moment's hesitation, judged himself worthy of it. He signaled silently to his groom for his horse. "I'm going back to Al-Harkam. There's much to do," he said, without fully recognizing the prophecy of his words.

Bahram nodded, and reached for his own mount. *Much to do, indeed.*

**THE KNIGHTS OF TAMERLANE** (Bukara in Turkmen)  
*Bukharm Al'Qadir, Grand Master of the Tamerbadeen*  
**DIPLOMACY** All devoted to Order foundation.

Bukharm accepted his fate, bitter though it seemed, and turned his face to the future.



*In this late hour, I realize that holding together the Shabdom of Iran is hopeless. The Hussite Kingdom of Baluchistan cannot be held, and my remaining provinces are too weak to stand alone.*

*Throughout the lands, memory of the civil war with Persia grows dim, hastened by Persia's recent aid, both that which was visible and that which was not. Bahram's emissaries have told me also of Babram's lament of the failed experiment in India. They say he laments the loss of good Persian blood, which has been shed too easily and too often in recent decades.*

*What future is left for Iran? The dark continent of Africa offers few prospects for my people and little reward for my armies. India is a dark hole into which blood and gold seem to endlessly fall. All that is left is our faith, so it is there we must turn. With my lieutenants, I shall form a holy order. **The Knights of the Islamic Order of Tamerlane.** There is much good work to be done.*

*Riders approach, bringing word from the far reaches of the Islamic world. Persia and Prester John will help found the order, and Tewfik sends word of its recognition of the order and welcome gold.*

*Then it is done. I shall renounce my crown and go forth with my faithful elite, trusted advisors, beaurocrats, and a cadre of intelligence agents and spies to a Sunni stronghold deep in Central Asian Persia. There my men and I will find purpose, for there is much that needs to be done.*

After much discussion among the Iranian lords and holy men in attendance upon the shah, the following tenets were adopted for the Order of the Timurhadeen:

- 1) To be the caretakers of the Sunni faith and protectors of the welfare of Sunni people
- 2) Serve the Light and protect it from abominations
- 3) Advance the just causes of peace and prosperity throughout Islam and the Middle East
- 4) Form a bridge between Sunni and Shia, seeking eventual reconciliation between the two sects

The Timurhadeen resolved to observe the rights of any non-heretical strain of Islam in a country recognizing the Order. They foreswore seeking to sow discord between Sunni and Shia, but rather to seek reconciliation. Agreements were struck to return the province of Bandar and the city of Ormuz to Persia, while Carmania and Al-Harkam were granted to Afghanistan.

Bukharm marched his remaining troops north, into the heart of Persia, where a great estate had been granted by the Safavid Shah to house the knights near Bukhara. Mahmoud al'Basrah and Subir Al'Jawzi remained prisoners of the Hussites in Multan. Indeed, al'Jawzi did not last out '59, dying of pneumonia in a dirty cell.

Other allotments and gifts were made by the rulers of Persia, Afghanistan, the House of Tewfik and Prester John, including lands and revenues in Samarkhand, Merv, Kophat Dagh, Rayy, Khiva, Dzambul, Ufra, Tabaristan, Transoxania, Bokhara and Sinkiang.

### THE NOBLE HOUSE OF TEWFIK

(Al'Harkam in Carmania)

*Tenfik Saul, Purveyor of Hand-lettered Korans in velvet*

**DIPLOMACY** Kuwait City (^ci), Recife in Palicur (^ma), Zaragoza in Caete (^ma)



Hoping to foster peace in the region (ah, what folly!) the House contributed a substantial amount to the formation of the Knights of Tamerlane. They also welcomed the new political masters of the thriving port of Al-Harkam, who proved to be a grizzled old set of hill-men laden with a multitude of daggers, kindjals and pistols one and all. The workshops of the city remained in constant, busy use – day and night.

Captain al Durayd, who was supposed to be busy on house business in the Mediterranean contracted some kind of heaves and spent two full years being hauled unceremoniously from port to port, horking up his guts at each stop – and not dying. He did not, however, get anything useful done in the whole time.

In old Mecca, the imams and mullahs who consider and debate the *shari'a* (the religious law) for the edification of all Muslims throughout the world, sat in grave and concerned assembly. A shepherd in the bare, dry hills above the city had come upon a *book* sitting on a stone exposed to the sky and – being curious – had lifted it up and carried it down to one of the learned men among the faithful.

This *book* held revelations of an uncompromising nature. It spoke of Mohammed and Abraham and many other figures well-

known to those sitting in the hall of the al-Haram mosque with the voice of one who might have seen the prophets in the flesh.

“We must decide,” the eldest said, “what to do about this... about this *arif* book and what it tells. If these are the words of God revealed, then we have been mistaken in many things, while correct in others.”

An angry murmur rose from the assembled priests. The eldest shook his head, white beard jutting out.

“Do not be so quick,” old Pir said in a sharp voice, “to believe yourself *righteous*. We are only men, and liable to imperfection. Have you even read all that is within these pages?”

The Book was heavy in his hands.

Pir searched the faces of the imams. Many were fearful, while others – ones who had actually considered the elegant writing on the samite-white pages – seemed almost transported, as if shadow had fallen from their eyes. A few had hard, closed faces.

One of the angry men – a Syrian with a robe of silk and gold – stood up and looked about, sneering at his fellows. “Are you all mad? If we take this path, a thousand years of the Prophet’s word will be thrown into the trash, forgotten, abandoned? What kind of Paradise awaits those who turn their back upon the Lord of Heaven?” He stabbed a well-manicured hand at the Book. “This is the work of Shiatan!”

“Not so!” Replied another, younger man, a mullah from the high deserts of Al'Bayad with a robe of homespun, the dust of the desert graven into the cracks of his face. “This is the Truth!”

Pir settled back on his heels, worried and concerned, to see which road the council would travel.

The deliberations of the Ulema were interrupted only weeks later when an attack was made upon the Holy Ka'ba. Men in desert robes attempted to shatter the black stone (the *Meethaaq*) and cast down the pieces. The guards at the site leapt to seize the men, but it was too late – the Stone had shattered into six pieces and then – to the horror of all; a noisome black cloud rolled out of the shattered artefact and the nearest guard screamed endlessly as his body was pierced by a forest of waving tendrils, each tipped with bony mouths.

The attackers squealed in fear and most fell dead on the spot. Others were driven mad and even the guardsmen (drawn from among the most devout warriors in all Islam) quailed away. The *thing* from the stone boiled out, slaughtering the pilgrims in the shrone. Bullets and fire failed to pierce its amorphous skin (oh, the creature had grown fat and strong in long years of worship!). Pillars toppled – fire spread through the chambers of the mosque – a black pall spread over the city.

The senior mullahs approached the scene of devastation, hearts filled with fear – all save Pir, who held the Book in his hands – and they looked upon the loathsome thing which had crawled forth from the uttermost pit, which indeed the Daemon Sultan had long ago set in the Ka'ba to tempt and sway the faithful and draw up all their piety and turn it to evil, all of those holy men save Pir fled in horror and fear, unable to face the crawling horror which was wading in the blood of the *hajji*.

“Peace be upon you,” Pir called out, raising his hand against the monstrous creature and reading from the Book, “O foulness, find Allah's mercy and blessings. Peace be on us and on all righteous slaves of Allah . I bear witness that no one is worthy of worship except Allah. I bear witness that Muhammad (peace be upon him ) is his slave and Messenger.

You, I cast out. You unclean thing. You I ban from the eyes of men, from the Sun, from the Earth itself!”

A light seemed to come into Pir's face and the Book itself shone like gold. The *afrit* – what else could it be? – made a horrific

screaming sound and the very rays of the sun pierced the dome of the temple and tore its immortal flesh, rendering it unto dust.

Silence fell.

Pir stepped among the ruins and drifts of ashen corpses and found the six pieces of the Black Stone. He saw it was hollow and corrupt, filled with sickly black ooze.

“We have been deceived, as by a master deceiver.”

Pir cast the broken bits of obsidian to the four quarters.

“We deny you, lord of the pit! We need no physical thing to remind us of the old covenant! We are constant, we abide, we remember – so it shall be forever!”

### THE SAFAVID PERSIAN EMPIRE

(Semnan in Khurasan)

*Safi Bahram “the bold”, Khan of Khans, Shahanshab of Persia, Prince of Bukhara, Caliph of the East*

**DIPLOMACY** Bandar/Ormuz (^ea),  
Singapore (^un)

With the economy sustained by massive infusions of Asian gold, Bahram forged ahead, working to repair the damage to specific provinces, while also brokering a political settlement to finally (he hoped) put the civil war and the ill-fated invasion of India to rest. In that, at least, he was successful. The Iranians slunk home, tails between their legs, and set up shop in the old capital at Burkhara. The army was expanded too, as the Bold Shah figured you couldn’t ever have too few troops under arms.

A reason for having all those soldiers under arms was becoming apparent in the south-east, where the heretical Karidjite sect of Islam had found thousands of adherents in Hahmar and Media. The state clergy attempted to roll back this invasion through gentle persuasion – and had reasonable luck in both provinces, though the city of Nasiriyah (a hotbed of Karidjite thought) pelted the mullahs sent to convince them with stones and drove them out of the town. The border with the Islamic Union, meanwhile, was closed to all but ‘approved merchants’ by the deployment of Al-Maqdisi and a small army.

The Honorable Afrika Company, which had lately taken over several trade routes to distant lands, also began selling the Imperial army a variety of different kinds of blasting explosive and artillery shells.

Back in Khurasan, work began on a railroad line from Semnan north to Merv in Kophat Dagh, and then one south from the capital south to Rayy in Dash’t’e’Kavir. Both efforts threatened to be enormously costly due to the lack of ready timber to lay ties across the desert. Still, the Shah was determined to be a ‘modern’ and forward-looking nation.

Fragmentary reports from the port of Ufra in Gurgan related an apparent attack by Danish Imperial Marines upon the town. Arriving unexpectedly in a number of merchantmen, the Europeans stormed the docks of the port, brushed aside stunned resistance by the city watch and garrison, and obliterated several blocks of the trader’s quarter before returning to their ships.

Efforts to convince the emir of Persia to rejoin the state failed miserably amid scattered fighting in the countryside between Persian landowners and their personal retinues and ‘Safavid infiltrators’. Al-Siribi, the Safavid ambassador, protested that these ‘gangs of ruffians and mercenaries’ were not the Shah’s troops, but the Persian nobles did not believe him.

In the north, Ice tribesmen raiding into Bactria caught lord Da’ud dallying with a milkmaid and gutted him before leaving the hapless fellow scattered about the steps of the governor’s palace.

### THE KARIDJITE IMAMAT (Baghdad in Mesopotamia)

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

**DIPLOMACY** Mesopotamia (^ab), Carhae (^ch), Syria (^ab),  
Levant (^ab)

While the *kalifa* struggled to draw the volatile and zealous Karidjite communities into some kind of cohesive whole (and the gains recently secured in the east were under attack by the Safavid orthodoxy), the power of the church spread into the west, riding on the coat-tails of the Union’s war against the idolatrous Hussites.

### THE ISLAMIC UNION (Ar-Raqqah in Mosul)

*Ali Adin, Sultan of Ar-Raqqah, Prince of Mosul*

**DIPLOMACY** Aleppo (^f), Petra (^nt)/Aqaba (^f), Levant (^a)

Reminded by certain dreams of the cruel and unforgiving death of his grandfather at the hands of the Hussites, Ali Adin mustered new regiments at Baghdad, as well as freshly fitted airships, and set out for the west. To his advisors – weak fools that they were – Ali said he intended to worship at the Al-Aqsa Mosque, the second holiest of holies in all Islam.

“But great Sultan, the Al-Aqsa lies within the domain of the fearsome Dane! He will not...” The advisor swallowed nervously, seeing a fey and deadly light in the sultan’s eyes.

“I will say the death prayer for my grandfather within the Dome of the Rock.”

Ali and his army marched forthwith for Palmyra, where the sultan’s little sister Benazair was married off to the emir of Aleppo, securing the alliance of the critical coastal state. The wedding dowry for emir Izzat al-Ayyubi proved to be nine thousand Union horsemen and gunners.

Amid all of the trouble in the region, a small squadron of Pacifican merchantmen managed to reach Aqaba, where they unloaded a plentitude of locked iron boxes and took aboard a large number of substantial wooden crates covered with ‘Baghdad’ post stickers. Then the merchants fled, fearing they would be swept up in the wars raging around them.

Ali Adin struck into Levant from the north, along the Damascus road, aiming to seize the fortress at Oniko’s Tomb first and then turn on Akko. At the same time, a strong airfleet (the Daemon Sultan’s factories in Baghdad had not laid idle all these years) ranged ahead of the army, and al-Ayyubi’s cavalry force poured across the Jordan from Petra to cut the road to Egypt.

As it happened, the Danish garrison of the Holy Land was encamped at Akko itself (with the fortress of the **Empress’ Tomb** overlooking the bay from the slopes of Mount Carmel) and was swiftly besieged. The Sultan offered the defenders of the city terms while the Tomb was bombarded relentlessly.

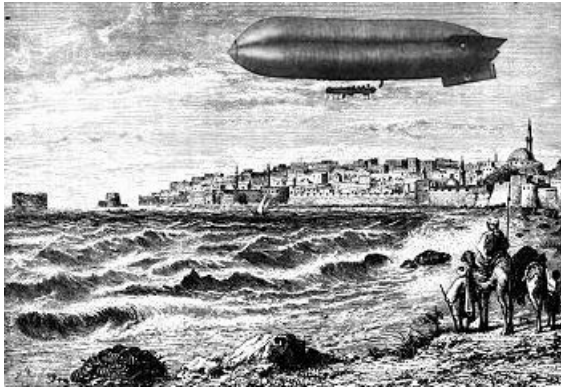
Lacking the ships to escape, the Danish mayor of Akko refused to surrender and the Union army turned their full attention upon the city and the fortress alike. The Karidjite forces assailed the defenses with great zeal and the emir Izzat proved a cunning and resourceful commander – even when faced with far superior siege-craft (as the Dane owned) – he overcame every obstacle with a deft use of artillery and airship-borne troops pouncing upon an undermanned bastion. The city and the Tomb fell within the month.

With this victory – netting, as it did, thousand of Danish prisoners of war – the whole of the Levant rose up in rejoicing, liberated at last from the hated Christians. A cheering throng greeted Ali Adin as he marched into the city in victory.

He followed up this victory with an equally glad welcome in Jerusalem, where the crowds of the faithful lined the roads for miles, pressing flowers into the hands of his troops as they marched



past. Numberless young men flocked to his banner, pledging themselves to the Union and the Kardijite cause.



## EUROPE

<b>Catholic Mercenaries</b>	<b>Minimum bid listed in [x].</b>
<b>Condotierri</b>	10xea,11hea,20i,20t [2gp each]
<b>Captains</b>	General Xho (M936) [5gp]
<b>To hire, please contact</b>	Norsktrud
<b>Quality Ratings</b>	c12 i16 a13 w18 s18 z6

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

### THE KALMAR SENATE (Cerkes in Abasigia)

*Lars Vilbuna, Governor of Georgia, Prince of Cerkes*

#### DIPLOMACY None

Under gray skies, the remaining members of the Kalmar Senate gathered in Kherson, seeking consensus over the dire and irredeemable question of civil war. A haggard-looking King Solomon addressed the assembled Senators and declared “the nation must not be divided in these cruel times – the people and the land cannot stand another war and our enemies are everywhere. Therefore, I will abdicate in favor of my son Kjell—“ **Bang!**

The Tsar staggered on the podium and the entire room fell hushed as five hundred Senators, guards, clerks and newspaper reporters stared in horror at Solomon’s bodyguards. One of them lowered his pistol, a curl of gray smoke drifting away to the ceiling.

“You will all die,” the man proclaimed, grinning insanely. “My master will consume th—“

A blaze of gunfire from the other guards drowned out his words and threw the assassin’s body against the podium, riddled with bullets. Prince Dagmar shook himself awake from a terrible dream and felt himself rushed away by frightened guardsmen.

Bishop Issak Greycow, the sole remaining authority (save the prince) in the city, rushed to secure the gates and prevent any more assailants from entering or escaping. The arrival of an Albanian Airways aeroliner within two hours was unremarkable, save for the two Royal Swedish Air Corps *Baldur*-class zeppelins who turned to intercept the merchantman.

Signals were exchanged and the Albanian ship was warned away and directed to seek landing at the airfield of Stevastopol. The Albanians signaled their acquiescence, turned upwind of the city and labored to gain height. Just as the airship disappeared into the clouds, a hatch opened on the bottom of the cargo bay and a black dot spun downwards, plunging into the northern district of the city.

The plague bomb smashed through the roof of a warehouse and burst, sending a dusty black cloud gouting out the fragile windows and open doors. The warehousemen, stunned by the impact, began to putresce with bulboes within minutes.

Dust, carried on the cold Russian wind, drifted south across the city. Within sixteen hours, nearly three-quarters of the population was dead. The Swedish fleet, in harbor, fled in panic, warned by the crewmen aboard the Baldur-class zeppelins, who could see the wave of death sweeping across the city.

Greycow escaped, though his orders to close the gates doomed thousands, while prince Dagmar, attempting to command an orderly evacuation, did not.

Two months later, a stunned Kalmarite fleet regrouped at Stevastopol. Eventually, in the fall of 1759, Dottski’s northern fleet from Halland would reach the city and find Greycow and his officers completely demoralized and the few surviving Senators waiting for Kjell’s hangman to arrive.

## AERONAUTICAL RESEARCH & FABRICATION

(Rostov in Levedia)

*Solyom Pasternak, Captain of the East*

**DIPLOMACY** Cahokia in Michigamea (^mf),  
Debrecein in Moldavia (^ma)



Some actual mercantile trade occurred, with a steady stream of transports leaving Rostov for London, laden with Russian wheat, potatoes and corn. Construction began on new airship factories in the economically depressed city of Astrakhan, as the available worker pool in Rostov was sorely taxed already.

In Urst-Urt, Captain Hallestrom of the Royal Swedish Academy continued his investigations in the ruined city of the Hasturites, and – by dint of careful research and cross-referencing – made a horrible discovery. Unfortunately, by the time he did, there was no one to report to (and he certainly did not trust the ARF scientists and soldiers crawling all over everything) so he slipped away into the night for parts unknown. Within days, security at the site was increased enormously and no one could get in or out.

A whole crowd of Iroquois soldiers being trained in the latest techniques of aerial warfare made the social scene in Rostov a little more interesting as they showed a penchant for the ladies, and vice versa. Lord Cassatengo was particularly notorious for his ‘hunting skills’.

In the northern seas, Captain Orozco took her fleet out of harbor in Liverpool and braved the ice-berg infested waters to reach the Shetlands and the Nisei city of Ukiyo-ye. She had intended to improve upon a long-standing economic arrangement with the city fathers, but instead found Nisei Republican officers in complete command of the city. Orozco was politely turned away.

Disgusted, she ordered her fleet back to Cortez in Granada (the nearest company offices), but fell ill on the voyage and by the time her ships reached Spain, the glorious Jessica was dead. She was interred in the city cemetery in Cortez, in a rather garish white marble tomb.

Panic seized Rostov in the late summer of ’59 upon word being received of the approach of a Danish steamship squadron – and indeed, within days, four steam cruisers under the Republic banner were at the mouth of the Volga Canal. Under their menacing guns, a small number of Danish sailing ships – laden with troops and guns, from what the watchers ashore could see – entered the canal and sailed off east at all speed.

After seeing their compatriots on their way, the Danish cruisers loitered about for a few days, thinking about shelling the

city into ruin and then left. Later reports had the Danish merchantmen passing down the Volga itself and into the Caspian.

#### PRINCIPATE OF KIEV (Debreceen in Moldavia)

*Anna Kournos, Queen-Regent for...*

*Boris, Prince of Kiev, Master of the Holy Rivers*

#### DIPLOMACY None

With Prince Boris still missing, the Queen-Regent ordered all security doubled for her other sons and the more reputable generals. At the same time, the cities of Debreceen and Nikolayev expanded to handle a steadily growing foreign trade. Work also continued in repairing the damage done to Kiev province itself.

Anna did summon the patriarch of Kiev to her, along with all of his advisors and theologians and she challenged those white-bearded old men to rectify the emergence of supernatural forces upon the Earth with what was foretold in scripture.

"Is apocalypse upon us?" She asked. "Is this the end of days?"

But the holy men had no answer for her.



Figure 1. Marshall Belanus' Cossacks on the Move

The failure of the religious establishment to deal with the new realities of the world was punctuated by the absolute collapse of an effort to convert the Hussite peasantry of Wallachia to adopt the Greek rite. The presence of the bull-headed Marshall Belanus and ten thousand of Cossacks in the province didn't help anyone's peace of mind though. There were rumors of arrests and 'dissapearances'.

As prince Boris had not returned from wherever he'd been taken, and no demands had been made by his kidnappers, Queen-Regent Anna declared her younger (handsomer, brighter) son Ivan Prince of Kiev and heir. Ivan immediately married a rich Moldavian girl and got her preggers.

#### PEOPLES REPUBLIC OF BAKLOVAKIA

(Komarno in Slovakia)

*Wysowski, First Citizen, Protector of the Workers and Peasants*

#### DIPLOMACY No effect

Despite the fiscal woes continuing to plague the worker's paradise, the senate managed to allot sufficient funds to continue the iron road north to Polish territory and to keep the banging and crashing and general ruckus in the woods behind Mrs. Toporosky's shed. Otherwise, there was a lot of thumb-twiddling and staring drunkenly at the ceiling.

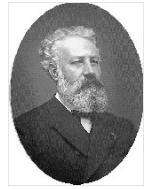


#### ALBANIAN EAST INDIA COMPANY

(Thessaloniki in Macedon)

*Nikolas Argir, Senior Partner in the AEIC*

#### DIPLOMACY Somnath in Surashtra (^ma), Takari in Colon (^ci)



Determined to support a good customer in dire need, Nikolas opened his purse strings and poured out a mighty stream of gold to support the Carthaginians in their war against the Catholic dogs! The Company also leveraged it's control of the Hussite Legion mercenary companies to provide Robert Clive (soon to be the Raj of India) with bodyguards and some thugs for 'necessary work' as well as sending a goodly portion of the European force to Afrika to fight the Al-Haggar jihadis.

Sir Thomas Musgrave, commanding the European mercenaries not dispatched to Afrika, found himself overseeing the construction of a fortress on the Hellespont termed "New Troy." The guns of Navarone, I mean, New Troy, were ranged to cover the lower end of the Dardanelles and protect the approaches to Constantinople. The garrison, later reinforced by Argir himself, kept a close eye on the Moslem populace, as Polish, Commonwealth and Taborite missionaries were hard at work preaching to the heathens.

Close by, the Mixtec governor of the Shrine of Mary at Ephesus was reported to have suffered a fatal heart-attack while hunting wild boar on the slopes of Mount Prion. He was carried home and buried with honors in the cemetery of the massive new temple of Mary, Mother of God.

The grain market at Naxos was also very, very busy, handling transactions between Mauritania, Carthage, the Southern League, Arnor and the Knights of Mount Tabor.

#### THE SWEDISH EMPIRE OF RUSSIA (Riga in Latvia)

*Kjell Torsson, King of Sweden, Tsar of the All the Russias*

#### DIPLOMACY None

Despite pressure on the Crown Regent to invade Poland, Kjell did not neglect maintaining



The Royal Observatory at Madeira, or the nascent Skywatch program spreading across the northern part of the realm. Indeed, the young prince kept a close eye on a wide variety of issues which might have otherwise been lost in the war fever and the issues of the 'family disturbance' with his father. New regiments of troops were, however, raised as Kjell intended to 'thrash the Duchess within an inch of her life!'

Certain diplomatic messages had been received from the south, indicating his father's loyalty to the State outweighed the mealy-mouthed pandering of the Senate. Though Kjell devoutly wished for such a simple end of the affair, the Crown Regent had no illusions – there would be fighting ere the southlands were reclaimed!

Swedish clergy attempted to pursue reconciliation with the patriarch of Kiev, but even as the prince of the south had failed to get the quarrelsome and reactionary priests to agree on *anything*, so too were the Swedish overtures rejected. Missionary work in the Polish city of Stralsund met with more success, though such events were almost immediately overshadowed by war.

Discussions in the new "military council" ruling from Riga determined action was necessary against Poland, above and beyond their abuse of the Catholic minority, to expunge the Leczinski government's ties to the old "Bone Mother" cult, as well as the notorious Students Revolutionary Council, a prima facie anti-religious and therefore pro-Evil cultic organization, as well as attempts to turn Baklovakia to an anti-Swedish-Russian state.

Torrson and his advisors hoped that going after the Polish government would act against the most egregious Hussite power and aid the global effort against the cults as well.

To clear the way for military action, however, the situation with the Kalmar and the Emperor had to be dealt with. Kjell, in a long letter to his father, suggested:

*That Solomon abdicates in favor of his son so that the Empire may go on undivided. The Emperor would be offered an important role managing research into the so-called Orange Catholics and their possible integration with our churches. Furthermore the royal succession will not pass to Kjell but to the offspring of prince Dagmar, if any. Local Jarls, elected or appointed, of the various provinces, cities, and other entities, would be confirmed in their current posts until 19 April 1763, when the next set of elections would be held. Terms of office will be reduced from 12 years to 6 years in order increase the power of the Senate.*

As a partial counter to this set of reforms, and to guarantee the nobles (i.e. the military) a direct voice in the new reunified government, the Regency Council would take on an expanded role as the “upper house” of the Kalmar. Their sole role would be to advise the Emperor, and also veto legislation on a 2/3 majority. To some extent, the Altkansler would be to the Senate as the Tsar is to the newly-constituted Regency Council. Membership on the Regency Council would be a complex mix of nobles, royal family, guild presidents, and other grandees.

After receiving encouraging letters in return from the south, Kjell’s foreign ministry released this statement:

Inasmuch as the recent history of Poland is a litany of conspiracies against Swedish-Russia, the Church, and the civilized world, the Empire finds action to change the morally repugnant regime in Warsaw unavoidable. Abuses of the Catholic population are egregious given the long history of Swedish-Russian friendship towards Hussites, if not the Hussite Church. It is our hope that other nations will recognize this is not a war against Hussitism as such, but against the junta in Warsaw, and annexation is not necessary.

In concert with this, S-R military commands in the north were ordered to leave local churches of all denomination alone, but that Taborite and Evil cultic (not Red Cross) sites were valid targets.

Only weeks after this missive was dispatched to the crowned heads of Europe, the attacks on Kherson essentially annihilated the Kalmar and Solomon’s faction, leaving the south in chaos and Kjell with a free hand – and the only possible line of succession to the throne. Kjell immediately declared himself Emperor of Swedish-Russia, ordered General Teukolsky to ready his troops and the whole lot of them, Emperor included, dashed off for the south.

Meantime, two Swedish armies (under Prince Borisov of Kur and Yellowhawk) opened operations with a coordinated attack on Poland itself, while the fleet was busy at sea. Allies were coming from overseas, and while they would take some time to arrive, the port of Stralsund in Pomern was their target... (see Poland)

Kjell and Teukolsky had raced south with an all-cavalry army, making good time on the old Imperial roads, until they reached Chernigov where the good, hard-surfaced roads suddenly became muddy tracks through ice-shrouded forest. Still, with the Kalmar leadership in flight or shot in the head or withered from the corruption, the Emperor advanced south without meeting undue resistance. His authority was restored over Chernigov, Pereyaslav, Levedia and Polovotsy.

Reaching Kherson, Kjell found the city mostly abandoned and filled with the dead. Local militia had fired most of the buildings and the surviving citizens (less than a third of the pre-attack population) were living in a squalid tent-city far from the walls. A little to Kjell’s surprise, the arrival of his army was met by weeping,

vastly relieved crowds. He detached several cavalry troops to maintain proper sanitation and order, then pressed on south into the Crimea.

At Stevastopol, the Emperor found the remains of the Kalmar cowering in the city and the military forces there under the newly-arrived command of the Count of Effernovich, Pyotr Dottski. Kjell dispatched an embassy, offering terms of amnesty to the fleet. Dottski dithered for six days, plaguing himself with doubts and eyeing the small cavalry force escorting the Emperor... would a swift airship raid seize Kjell and deliver the Empire into Dottski’s hands? In the end, however, the counsel of Bishop Greycrow convinced the admiral to surrender and accept the Emperor’s terms.

Dottski and the fleet ‘surrendered’ on June 12th, 1760, and the centralized resistance to Kjell’s ascension ended. There was still great confusion in the provinces, however, and due to the difficulty of movement in central Russia, Teukolsky was only able to restore Imperial authority over Patzinak by the end of ’60. Kjell remained in Stevastopol, seeing to the loyalty of the fleet officers.

This left the Kalmar faction lands in Sweden itself and Anatolia in local hands – they had not been secured by the Militarists, yet they had no leadership or central authority. For the moment, inertia held them together...

## THE GRAND DUCHY OF POLAND

(Krakow in Bochnia)

*Frieda Lecziński, Duchess of Poland*

### DIPLOMACY No effect

Despite the threat of imminent war, the Duchess sought to maintain peace and order in her domain, including a long-planned expansion of the port of Stralsund, which was begun – by tearing down the city walls. Missionaries were dispatched to the Anatolian province of Bithnia, now under East India Company authority and General Tobiasz was sent into the field with the Ducal army to resist any Swedish aggression. A desultory (and late) effort to fortify the Eastern Road was begun.

The mood in Warsaw grew tense through the spring of ’59, as news of the horrible disaster at Kherson percolated up the trading networks on the rivers, and the realization dawned that the bully Kjell was now in full command of the Swedish Empire. Princess Brunhilde of Stralsund, in fact, took sick with worry and died in March, leaving her husband, prince Vladimir bereft.

Maksutov’s army of 26,000 men crashed across the border in May of ’59, supported by 40 zeppelins. Tobiasz’s force, deployed to screen Warsaw, numbered slightly less than half that, and he only had 10 airships on patrol. The Polish army attempted to retire in good order to Warsaw, where the Ducal engineers had been busy throwing up a ring of fortifications around the city.

Unfortunately, Maksutov’s force advanced with such reckless speed that Tobiasz and his Ducal troops were forced to give battle at **Wyżskow** in late June. The Swedes first concentrated on driving the Polish airships from the sky, which they did by dint of blasting them to ruin in the first hours of the day. Maksutov then closed in on the Poles behind a rippling wall of artillery fire from her heavy guns and the usual rain of death from the skies.

The Poles suffered under the barrage – they possessed only two batteries of their own artillery – and waited for the Russians to close to melee... but their lines broke before the first Swedish hussar slashed in among them. Unable to stand in the face of aerial and artillery attack, nearly surrounded and outnumbered, the valor of the Poles failed. Tobiasz was killed, prince Vladimir lost on the field and the Ducal army annihilated.





Maksutov pressed on towards Warsaw unhindered.

Duchess Frieda, learning of the disaster when Swedish airships appeared over the city and began dropping leaflets demanding her surrender, realized that there were *no city fortifications or garrison of note* to withstand the Catholic onslaught. Her engineers had been digging trenches for Tobiasz's troops to fight from – and that army would never reach Warsaw. She fled immediately by train to Berlin. Mikhail Dobryio, the exiled King of Wallachia, snuck off to the south, seeking to find his Duke's Own Curaisers, who were last seen roistering in Silesia.

The Swedish army entered a sullen, quiet **Warsaw** in July. After garrisoning the city and province, she pressed east along the railroad. Kauyavia was overrun by the end of August.

In September of '59, a Swedish fleet (under Admiral Nikolaevna) arrived at **Stralsund**, carrying a paltry two thousand Iroquois troops under the command of Cardinal Villar. They found the province defended by some 1,800 Polish militia and regulars led by Prince Walsea. Determined to come to grips with the enemy (and informed by the Swedes that the city populace would rise in revolt at his landing), Villar put ashore while the four SAC zeppelins supporting his foray bombed the town.

Prince Walesa, commanding the defense, attacked the Iroquois on their beachhead, exposing his troops to the direct fire of the Swedish frigates offshore, as well as the zeppelins. The Amerikan cavalry chopped up his infantry (again, the Poles had no artillery of their own), and then scattered the survivors. Stralsund surrendered a week later, having no walls to defend it.

The same month, a Shawnee army of 19,000 men (the Imperial Eastern legion) under the command of Lord Farspear disembarked in Koningsborg, Prussia. While Maksutov was rampaging around central Poland, they advanced along the coast, conquering Danzig and laying siege to Sopot. For a change, Sopot was fortified and garrisoned, which entertained the Shawnee fanatics for the winter of '59-'60 before they breached the walls in spring of '60 and captured the town.

In Lausatia, Maksutov's forces advanced cautiously, expecting to encounter Danish forces intervening in the Polish War, but they did not. Instead, Berlin was undefended save for some paltry redoubts lately erected by the Knights of Tabor. Again, sullen crowds greeted the victorious (and incredibly smug) Catholic army. Interrogations revealed the Duchess had waited for the Danes to come – but they had not – and she had decamped for Krakow in the south to establish a temporary capital.

Maksutov's forces secured Lausatia and Yellowhawk's cavalry force occupied Miessen. The Shawnee overran Pomerania before marching into Berlin as well to reinforce the main Swedish army. The Iroquois force under Villar remained in Stralsund as a garrison.

## THE KNIGHTS OF TABOR

(Mount Tabor in Bohemia)

*Jucarl Kassowitz, Voice of Huss, Grand Master of the Order of the Knights of Mount Tabor*



**DIPLOMACY** Ulm in Swabia (^ab), Heraklion on Crete (^ab), Crete (^ch), Macedonia (^ch), Thessaloniki (^ab), Constantinople (^ch), Denmark (^ch), Copenhagen (^ch), Slovakia (^ch), Komarno (^ch)

Expecting the storm to break in the east, the Knights lent what aid they could to the Poles – fortifications were built at Warsaw and Berlin – but they proved too little, too late to stop the Catholic juggernaut. Taborite fathers also labored at Constantinople to build defenses at that ancient city. Mount Tabor itself expanded and the public hostleries and churches there are clean and inviting. Though of late, Catholic tourists are not welcome.

The holy fathers on Tabor suffered a sick, sinking feeling as the Swedish army stormed across Poland, obliterating Taborite monasteries, abbeys and other sites with abandon. Kjell had to pay for his war somehow... luckily, Von Metz had launched a massive wave of expansion and – thanks to the ability and devotion of his lieutenants – much of it succeeded. Efforts in France, however, met with a steadily rising anger on the part of the citizens against clergy of any kind, and failed.

Von Metz, however, did not live to see the success of his grand plan. He managed to reach Tabor at the end of '60, but had fallen ill on the road and died in his own bed before Christmas. His secretary, Father Kassowitz, was elected head of the Order before the New Year.

The dungeons of Mount Tabor were not cold dank cells. They were warm, well heated by numerous fires set at each guard station. The cells were widely spaced, though few in number. Each chamber with a bed, a small table, two chairs and a chamber pot. The Knights seldom had need of these facilities and the guards definitely wished they were empty just now.

It was not the Prisoner they minded, though he prayed constantly. It was the Interrogator they wanted to get shut of. There was something cold and distant about Theresa Voltaire that left a man chilled to his bones and nervous.

She exited the Vicar-Generals' cell without a word. Looking grim, she paced away as the guards locked the door. Her deep alizarin cloak shadowing her face, though the dungeon was not badly lit.

A young Guard new to the post shook his head in disgust. "They let a Women interrogate the prisoners? What a joke! What's she supposed to do? Seduce him?"

The Sergeant turned and looked at the kid; not much over nineteen with less than a year in the service. "Hines, my boy, you are the dumbest oinker I ever had serve under me. That includes my brother, who once stabbed his own foot for surprising him in bed."

The sergeant squared himself, moving right into the kid's weak face. "First off you don't torture the Head of a religious Order."

His cigar had gone out, so now he was getting really mad. "Second, if you want to find out what a man knows; seduction is a pretty quick way to find out. Once a man starts thinking below the belt he's done for."

The sergeant paused, tapping the cold end of his cigar into the boy's chest. "Third, that woman is the most dangerous person you are ever going to know. And if she heard you mouth off right now you would be feeling her nails shred your still beating heart, and that isn't an exaggeration.

"I've seen her do it back when they had that cultic business in Bern. Thing about that is, you're screaming so much you can't get out the words to let her know you're ready to spill your guts."

The sergeant relit his cigar and got the kids disbelieving face out of his with a heavy cloud of smoke.

"Hope you like the heat, boy," Sergeant Ravston announced as he turned away. "I'm having you transferred. My brother is a Sergeant in an artillery company. You'll spend the rest of your tour in the Kuch Islands, keeping India a safe place to get dysentery."





Figure 2. The Notorious Voltaire

Coming out of the dungeons, Voltaire came face to face with the only man in all of Mount Tabor she would rather avoid, including the fanatical Jesuit Grayhame. She was dissatisfied to have to spend hours with the Papist and leave him still breathing.

“Voltaire! What answers do you have for me?”

Theresa was quite pleased. Her hand had not even flinched, let alone drawn a knife and gutted the pompous cleric before her.

“Answers for you?” She snarled, looking over the food stained robe of the portly and unkempt Kassowitz. “You have no concern with the Jesuit matter or my progress. Focus your attention on the Laundries, perhaps that way you could manage a clean robe.”

Kassowitz purpled with rage. “You will not address the clergy in such fashion! You are an employee and will answer – urk!”

After three hours matching wits with Grayhame and his inexplicable refusal to explain his forged documents and his flight from the Polish Authorities, Teresa’s temper was on a short fuse. Now her knife blade was at the fat Priests’ throat.

“The only reason you will live out the day is because I couldn’t drag out your death long enough to get any real satisfaction. Speak to me again and I’ll go to the bother of finding out.”

Abruptly she was gone, leaving Kassowitz gasping for breath, pudgy fingers at his throat. It was several minutes before he realized the danger had passed and a few more to realize he had stained his robes even more. Then his face turned nearly black with fury and he shuffled off towards his office in the Grand Master’s residence.

#### UNITED KINGDOMS OF GREAT BRITAIN (Kingston in Northumbria)

*Oliver V Cromwell, King of England, Scotland and Wales*

**DIPLOMACY** Man/Tynwald (^ea)

Massive construction projects were set underway in the south London docklands, where the Royal Navy had authorized the development not only of expanded capacity to build steamships of standard size, but also a planned ‘battleship’ which to judge from the size of the slipways, would be nearly twice the size of a cruiser.

The docks of London were busy with ARF merchantmen unloading grain and other goods from Russia; supplies which kept the bakeries in the city open and rolling in rolls. This, coupled with the constant influx of food from the Amerikas, proved a fine weapon for the Catholic priests preaching on the streets of Anglia and Wessex, where they could offer the faithful bread for the body as well as the soul. Coupled with a very quiet government-sponsored effort to drive out the Hussite priests, this very nearly recaptured London from the continental menace.

A Nisei embassy arrived in Kingston from the north and set about opening a new embassy. Though it appeared the Japanese were supposed to go onward to other nations on the continent, the threat of war there kept them in merry olde England where they acquired a taste for heavy dark beer.

The cities of Stormgard in the Orkneys, London and Yarmouth all expanded a level. The defenses of Stormgard and Yarmouth were repaired as well. Despite the rise in industrial production and the steadily tightening tension on the continent,

King Oliver continued to roister in London and on his estates, drinking too much, spending too many late evenings playing cards in the company of his ‘knights and grooms’ and generally leaving the day to day business of the realm to Prince John.

Who, in turn, has roused himself enough from his black depression over the deaths of his wife and child to show some interest in a German princess (exiled of late by the trouble in the Danish territories) named Caroline, of the house of Ansbach. After a year’s courtship, they were wed, and the entire nation breathed a bit of a sigh of relief when news circulated she was pregnant.

#### THE SOCIETY OF JESUS (London in Sussex)

*Gustarus Grayhame, Vicar-General of the Society of Jesus*

**DIPLOMACY** None

The Society remained quiet, still waiting for God to deliver the Vicar-General from his captivity.

#### THE FRANKISH COMMONWEALTH

(Paris in Ilé De France)

*Louis Alphonse du Maine, Archon of the Commonwealth*

**DIPLOMACY** Brabant (^f)



Demonstrations in Paris and Brest startled Commonwealth officials – the common people came out in throngs to protest the clergy and the religious tensions which threatened to plunge France into the same kind of hell as Germany and Poland. Taborite priests were hounded from the pulpit, as were Catholic missionaries in the south – they were met by thrown rocks, bricks and offal.

“Let there be an age of reason!” The students at the Sorbonne chanted, casting the religious tracts of the Papists and Taborites alike into bonfires blocking the streets.

The usually carefree cafes of Paris were the scene of unbridled tragedy in late ’60, when (as the leaves were turning) a gang of ruffianly ‘easterners’ with enormous fur hats, bad accents and enormous archaic pistols attempted to do in a nattily-dressed Swedish man (later revealed to actually be a Rostovite named Desrey) in broad daylight. A gun battle ensued, many bystanders were killed, an entire block of cafes were set afire and the police arrived to late to catch anyone save two undercover police-men who had fallen down a coal-chute while trying to arrest the perpetrators.

Brest expanded and Cherbourg (in Sinai) was fortified. The Paris to Metz highway was finally finished – which would have improved trade with the Danes, if they weren’t still trying to suppress the rebellion of various provinces on the trade route. Given the war spreading from the east, the Archon was wise to raise several new regiments of riflemen and hussars. Arrangements were also made to purchase two steam-powered cruisers from the Albanians.

Louis Alphonse read the dispatches about the diplomatic mission to Holland with growing frustration. The effort in the Low Countries appeared to be failing badly and now the Duc de Brabant had been killed.

“An unmitigated disaster!” The Archon said to no one in particular. “It would appear that if I wish this done right I must do it myself”. With this, the Archon began to hatch a scheme to resolve the northern diplomatic issues once and for all. The Archon needed a wife and the heir, while his brother Jadot needed a wife as well. Elegant, flattering letters were crafted to the royal family in Brabant and to the merchant houses in Holland. The letters proposed marriages into the house of du Maine and all the benefits associated with it to the royal household of Brabant and to the

merchant houses of Holland. The letters also promised that seaports would be built in each of these lands over the next five years so that they might prosper and grow. The letters further promised the protection of the Commonwealth against the growing troubles in the region and against the intrigues of secret empires such as the Golden Dawn. These letters were dispatched with haste and the diplomatic mission followed with all due speed. The Archon then made plans to depart Paris for the trip.

However, before he departed he prepared to secure the Commonwealth. The leader of the Secret Police (the Surete) Mssr. Poirait was summoned to the palace and in lengthy discussions assisted in formulating assurances that the government would not be...well....disrupted in the Archon's absence.

The Archon returned to the court and chaired a meeting on the Commonwealth's foreign holdings. The briefings and dispatches were grim.

"Is there no peace on any frontier?" The Khardjites are prowling around Cherbourg and although kindly worded diplomatic notes had been received from the Islamic Union, the Archon felt little choice but to bolster the garrison at Cherbourg and expand the city walls.

"India... ah, India". The Commonwealth had sent troops and airships as requested, but those troops were now returned to the Med and the Archon was glad that this move had been made.

The strong walls and garrison at Tangiers had apparently deterred the "Orange Jihad" and the city had been by-passed. Strongly worded letters were sent to the leaders of this mob to warn them not to meddle with Tangiers. However, the Archon had little choice but to send Princess Margaret and her well traveled troopers once more into the fray. Hussite Carthage also needed the Commonwealth's support. The Archon assessed the determination of his ministers through hard, set and unflinching eyes. Clear action and leadership was needed! Now...at this moment.

"Dispatch the fleet under the Princess to North Africa and may God and Johann Hus be with her. Alert the fleet in Brest to dispatch reinforcements to Tangiers. The future of the Commonwealth's overseas trade policy and the lifeblood of our allies has been put in harm's way by these careless actions and I will not allow all the blood and sweat spent by the house du Maine, the people of the Commonwealth and the Hussite faith to go down in the flames of Africa...not while I am Archon!"

The Archon held the gaze of each of his inner circle in his own. Before he left each face he gauged the commitment and loyalty of each. Contented with the results he left the chamber. "Now...just what in the name of Hus am I going to do about Poland and those damned Swedes?"

The Archon departed Paris, accompanied by his bodyguard of approximately 8,000 men and ten airships, to travel to the rural province of Brabant, where his borther Jadot had arranged a marriage between Alphonse and the Lady Claire du Brabant, the daughter of the late Duke. When, eventually, all of that was done – including an inconclusive foray into Holland in search of a diplomatic alliance – the married couple returned to Paris, where Claire then gave birth to a son ten months later. Alphonse was very relieved.

Duchess Claire was a little nervous about entering a royal household firmly controlled by the dowager-Archoness Angelique and her daughter Maria, but managed to get along.

The lord Germain was dispatched from Brest with a convoy of troop transports and two frigates to reinforce the garrison of Tangiers, but he never arrived. His entire force of four thousand men simply... vanished. Princess Margaret and her Indian Legion, however, sailed from Thessalonika and directly into battle...

### THE POLYTECHNIC LEAGUE (Athens in Attica)

*Harold Hasselhoff, Chief Technologist*

**DIPLOMACY** None

Under the stewardship of the League, Athens expanded a level. Many instructors were dispatched to the Danish university at Thessalonika to 'beef up' the curriculum. Continued rumors of 'dark influence' upon the League led to the arrival of the Hussite bishops Johner and Grunfeld in Athens to audit the organization.



**Figure 3. Danish "Dust Ranger"**

### THE DANISH REPUBLIC (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 (^nt), Hainaut (^a)

Even with the state battered and distracted by a maelstrom of attacks on their allies, Venizelos kept his eye on the king, plunging ahead with wide-ranging plans to restore the Republic (a recent decision of the Senate had changed the official title of the realm) to something like it's old power and capability. The shipyards in Thessalonika and Augusta continued to bang away day and night, expanding the fleet. In provinces the length and breadth of the Republic, work continued on laying track – the first section of the planned Thessalonika to Copenhagen railway was completed, between Macedonia and Serbia.

Efforts began to return human habitation to Illyria, Bakony and Slovenia, all under the protection of General Bogoljubow's 'dust ranger' corps. As part of this, the Republic reiterated their claim to *all* lands wrecked by the Blow, including the formerly-Baklovakite province of Bakony. Special offices were established in cities near the wasteland to process prospective settlers – a program which was made open to all, including persons of foreign origin (or even, shudder!, Catholics) who agreed to become Danish citizens.

The First Minister kept close to home, riding herd on the Senate, overseeing many projects abroad and taking a direct and personal hand in the consideration of certain copies of a certain Book which had been acquired by Danish agents in Afriqa. Though unsubstantiated, there were rumors Venizelos had carefully read the entire tract himself.

**NÖRSKTRAD** (St. George-the-Defender in Morroco)  
*Sir Charles Bond, Mäklareväldé of the Nordic  
Trading Company*

**DIPLOMACY** St. Genevieve in Gronland  
(^bo), Estremadura (^mf),  
Andalusia (^mf), Merrakesh  
(^ma), Graasland (^bo),  
Morroco (^mf), Old Castille  
(^a)



Stuck in a fiscal situation more common to primacies that presumably profit-making companies, the Company purse dispensed substantial funds to Vastmark, the Swedes, Spain (did they ever stop crying?), even the Pope! Grain was imported from Spain and from the Union – though with events in the middle-east progressing as they were, the clerks down in ‘agricultural commodities’ didn’t expect to see many more casks of fresh oranges and lemons coming their way.

The factories and shipyards of St. Georges continued to belch vast clouds of black smoke in the clear blue Morrocan sky as hundreds of shiploads of iron, timber, cloth and the thousand other things which went into the procession of steam cruisers, airships and artillery being churned out in countless workshops, foundries and working slips in the vast metropolis. “Th’ very sinew of war,” commented one of the watchmen, observing the sleek, iron bulk of the *Emperatrix Anna* roll down the launching ramp and into the water. “Like a beatin’ heart, th’ city is...”

From outside came the piercing whistle of *La Emperatrix Oniko* as the Olsson triple-expansion engine of the new Spanish cruiser was fired up to a full head of steam. Delgado turned from the window where he had been watching the plumes of smoke rising from the funnels of the ironclads and sat at the head of the boardroom table. His old battered chair, marked by fire and flood had been rescued from the Maklarevalde’s office in Lisbon.

He picked up the first of a pile of letters and grimaced with distaste. “Hear the words of this Emir: ‘Never let it be said that the House of Barca ever dealt less than fairly with either friend or foe,’ he says. Go tell the widows and orphans of our clerks and longshoremen, the victims of the mayhem in Lisbon in ’39 his own brother masterminded of this *noble* sentiment. And later, how many innocent Norsk and Spaniards died to satisfy the ideology and ambitions of these self-proclaimed revolutionaries and their little Green Book? How many Berber *students* were sent northwards to kill Catholics by him, when all other Sunlanders were off fighting the Dæmon Sultan? Do we allow the politic acceptance that it was the crime of an individual, and not the state?”

The Maklarevalde ran his hand over the patched leather upholstery. “True, the old imperial regime of Occitania sided with Libya in the war of liberation, but *we* provided materiel to Carthage. *We* shall not accept the token *mannbaetr* this Emir suddenly offers us in compensation. Will it buy the dead out of their graves? Some scorn us as mere merchants, but *we* know some things cannot be weighed in pieces of silver.”

Jorge leaned forward and regarded the members of the Board. “Mark you the name of this Emir, Hamilcar, none other than the namesake of the father of the ancient foe of Rome. Hamilcar, ‘Friend of Melcart’ in the Punic tongue. Melcart, ‘king of the city’, a title of that Baal of the Canaanites the prophets of Israel strove so mightily against. Baal the thunderer, the thrower of lightning, from which comes the name of this dynasty – Barca. And the Hussites call *us* pagans for naming ships for the tales of the lost Norska homeland. Bah!

“If they had quietly spoken to us, instead of blazing their demands over half the newsheets of Europe...” He shook his head

sadly as he examined another letter. “And he commands us cease trade with Mauritania, when our Factor reports that their own Hussite companies traffic so eagerly with the remnant of Libya. In the guise of Al’Hagggar does Libya ascend like a phoenix from its immolation upon a Carthaginian pyre. It is as though Queen Dido herself were reborn from the sacrificial flames to sail with Aeneas to found the second Troy.

“These neo Carthaginians once attired themselves as freedom fighters and idealists, and we approved of their abolition of the heinous institution of slavery. But what is a Revolution save a Turn of the Wheel? Now they act as bloated autocrats, setting themselves above the common man, meddling in Catholic affairs, urging Catholic states to wage war upon their neighbor on their behalf, and at the same time loudly trumpet this an ‘internal Hussite affair.’ I am almost half minded to say that Ameur is the legitimate heir to the North Afriqan realm. *He* merely takes the Arabic title *sharif*: exalted or noble.”

Jorge set the letters aside. “These self-proclaimed Orange Catholic crusaders with their Book may indeed be heretics, but that is for His Holiness the Pope to decide. Have House Barca forgotten that their own jihad began with a mystical vision in the desert? For the duration of this conflict between the Chalice and the Grail, all shipping to Mauritania and Carthage is to be set on other routes. All offices and vessels are to be prepared for assault, covert or overt. All Norskwarden leave is hereby cancelled.”

Quietly he sighed. “So it begins...”

Amid all the threat of war (and the conflagration in North Afriqa close at hand), the newly-minted Löjtnant Tukachevsky maintained his sanity (difficult for a junior engineering officer on one of these beastly new steam cruisers, which were constantly losing pressure, rupturing steam lines, maiming men and occasionally exploding and being lost with all hands) by correspondence with his childhood sweetheart, the Dona Anna Maria Enriquez de Castille.

Unbeknownst to the young man and woman, their friendship and love had not escaped the notice of the Company (or either of their mothers). A trusted Companyman – Sir Charles Bond, recently of Kingston in England – was riding north to Old Castille even as Sebastian was struggling to keep his section trim and his gauges clean.



**Figure 4. Sebastian Tukachevsky**

Bond rode up into the Castilian hills in company of a hundred-odd Marocain riflemen and found a very cold welcome indeed – until he made it clear to the haughty, ill-tempered noblemen that he was not, in fact, *Spanish* at all. Then he was warmly greeted, feted, and escorted to the Enriquez estates by a bonny company of five or six hundred knights.

Once presented to the curmudgeonly old Don Diego de Castille, Bond made a very eloquent case for the lord of the mountains to seal an alliance with the Company, to accept membership in the Norsk Commonwealth, as the barons of Friesland had done, both to better his people not only through new machines, skills and technologies, but also by partnership with a moderate and progressive power.

“This alliance,” Diego said, scowling like a thunderhead, “would involve my daughter, Anna, I suspect? Your Delgado, this wise captain of yours, the maklarevalde of your Company, he is looking for a sweet young wife?”

“Ah, sir, you misunderstand...”

“I won’t have him!” Dona Anna leapt up from the table, hurled down her meat-knife, which then barely missed Sir Charles (who leaned a little to one side as it flew past), and stormed out of the dining hall.

“You see?” Don Diego’s face crinkled into a smile. “I think you have come a long way, for nothing.”

“I do not believe so,” Bond replied, dabbing gravy from his cravat. “I *have* come to arrange a marriage for miss Anna, but not with the esteemed Delgado, who is well equipped with a formidable wife of his own!”

“What are you saying?” Diego started to scowl again.

Bond produced a letter packet with a flourish. “From the young man’s mother, to you, my Lord. I believe you are familiar with her personally and with all she has meant to Spain in the past. There is also a note to your daughter...”

Don Diego perused the letter slowly, brow wrinkled. Then he looked at his long-suffering wife and nodded slowly.

Anna was dragged, kicking and screaming from her room (where she had been making a rope of bed-sheets) down to the dining hall by her (grinning) brothers and forced, at knife point, to read the letter from Natasha Tukachevsky, Reina la Espana (in the hearts of many), requesting that Anna do her the very great favor of marrying her son, Sebastian, long may he live.

A Company lecturer and librarian, Laurent-Marigny, was attacked in Lisbon itself by an unruly crowd who had learned the man was seeking certain ‘pernicious volumes which ought not see the light of day.’ Marigny, however, was more than a match for some drunken workmen and wielded his walking cane with considerable skill for such an elderly man.

In the fall of ’60, Delgado fell ill – no, not the plague – but a wracking cough and high fever. Despite the best efforts of the company doctors he did not live out the winter. In his place, the Company board elected Sir Charles Bond, who had so recently risen to the prominent position of *Orlogskaptan* in the Fleet and done such good service in Old Castille.

#### **THE REPUBLIC OF SPAIN** (Lisbon in Portugal)

*Largo Cabellero, Commandant of the Imperial Guard*

#### **DIPLOMACY**

A tidy trade in Russian wheat began, providing the cities of Spain with bread and the Kournos dynasty in Kiev with ready cash. Formal recognition of the Al-Hagggar Confederacy was also extended, and their merchants welcomed in Spanish ports.

Efforts to secure the loyalty of the eastern coastal provinces led to the settlement of large numbers of loyal Portugese in Granada and Valencia – and the violent revolt of the Valencians. The Republican garrison fled into Tortosa, where they are mewed up by very angry bands of landowners, ex-Royalist veterans and Aragonese volunteers. With Spain nearly severed, a lot of talk began to circulate about the ‘return of the Queen’ and the restoration of the monarchy.

The Senate of the Republic of Spain passed a new law by a landslide vote, stating ‘Any Swedish citizen, leader, or soldier who does not want to live under the cruel, unjust, and illegal government of the Militarists shall be offered asylum in Spain’. In a move supported by the President of the Senate, Largo Cabellero,



the Republic of Spain recognized the Parliamentarians as the only true government of Sweden.

“As Spain has learned in the past 40 years Civil War can be a hellish event to have to live through.” Juan Cabellero said, “While we should do all we can to back the rightful and legal rulers of Sweden, we must also not alienate the Militarist branch, if for no other reason for the Catholic workers under their rule. It is for them that we should open trade with the Militarist’s, likewise by having open communications might we be able to prevent another full-fledged war in Europe, along religious lines. In other news a Swedish naval fleet to play some Naval war games will visit southern Spain. The intent of these maneuvers is for Spanish Engineers to see how these new advances of ships work against the old style of ships and perhaps give our smartest men some ideas on how to improve our ships”

While the Kalmarist ships never arrived, the Republican fleet was very pleased to take delivery of two modern, fresh-from-the-yards steam cruisers – the *Emperatix Anna* and the *Emperatix Oniko* – from a Norsk delegation led by master Marschal. A sizable Norskwarden squadron (six steam cruisers and twelve men-of-war) accompanied the delivery, to make sure there was no funny business. Shakedown cruises were planned for both new ships.

Prince Juan returned from Leon and settled in with his wife, keeping her up late with his penchant for reading old novels, and – eventually – with the cries of a baby girl.

#### **THE BLACK HAND** (Gibraltar)

*Rhys Deverill, Master of the Order*

#### **DIPLOMACY** None

The Order kept its head low, save for commissioning a fleet of nearly forty frigates from a shipbuilding company in Narbonne.

#### **THE DUCHY OF THE ISLES** (Valetia on Malta)

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

#### **DIPLOMACY** None

In the aftermath of Aetna’s eruption, the Duchess was swift to allot funds to rebuild the shattered towns, villages and cities around the volcano. Sicily itself was resettled to 2 GPv, while enormous improvements were made to rural infrastructure, as well as cleaning up ash and debris in Catanzaro. Valma on the Baelerics also got a new coat of paint and other amenities. Missionary work continued in Epirus and Groza on Cyprus as the Catholics tried to eradicate the last traces of the Greek rite.

International tension over the looming Hussite-Catholic war (already underway, of course, in some parts of the world) inspired a series of violent demonstrations in Archimedeia, where the local university students (inspired, some say, by either the Orange book or the Green book) took to the streets in protest of ‘blind religion’ leading so many to their deaths.

Ducal security forces broke up the riots violently, killing hundreds and setting several squatter’s camps afire. This only served to inflame the town citizens, however, and a counter-attack by the more violently-minded students drove the Duchess’ men out of the city. With the government distracted by the war in North Africa, there were no men-of-war or troops to respond to the unexpected insurrection, which led to the establishment of a student-led Commune in Archimedeia by the end of ’60.

At sea, meantime, the Ducal fleet (under the command of the aged, but still redoubtable Barsaki) sortied into the Bay of Tunis and blockaded the coast, turning back all non-Carthaginian or Hagggarite shipping. The Duchess declared, in an open letter, to the various mercantile powers in the Mediterranean, that “the conflict

in North Africa is a domestic matter and should be resolved without foreign interference.”

This immediately brought Barsaki’s 128-ship fleet into conflict with the Commonwealth relief force under Princess Margaret which had sailed from Thessaloniki only a month before. The Frankish squadrons – eighteen airships, forty men-of-war, two steam cruisers and a variety of frigates and transports – made for Augustina with all speed and Barsaki’s ships of the line put on full sail and heeled over to intercept in the **Bay of Tunis**.

After the first Islander shots had shrieked across the bow of Margaret’s flagship, the *Ville de Paris*, the Commonwealth commander ordered her airships to engage and “all guns run out!”

Shockingly, when the zeppelins made their first run at the archaic-looking Islander ships, they were met by a hail of high-angle fire from hundreds of specially-mounted anti-airship guns. Four zeppelins immediately blew apart, their undercarriages shot to bits and set afire. Barsaki’s fleet closed, showing considerably superior seamanship and seaworthiness to the French fleet.

Margaret tried to respond, but the failure of her airship attack had taken the wind out of the out-numbered Commonwealth ships. The Islanders swept in, their gunnery fiendishly accurate, their bravery unimpeachable. The French airships made a second attack run and this time the Islander gunners had their range. Within six hours, the entire French force had been sunk, captured or so heavily damaged the ships had to be scuttled.

Princess Margaret was lost in action. No relief would reach Carthage from the east... Old Antonio did not live to savor his triumph either – he had been hit by shrapnel in the closing hours of the engagement and died horribly of gangrene before the fleet could return to Valetia.

The blockade of the Carthaginian coast continued, however, and scooped up a Red Kross leader, Amil Hamilcar, and four merchantmen on their way to Provence. Amil was tossed into a Valetian prison cell and his ships impounded.

### 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 Aŕzteca, Soldier of Light*



### DIPLOMACY

Though a little stunned from the ‘breath of evil’ which had slain so many holy men, Benedict came back punching and filled with ire for the enemies of the Church. A new regiment of Swiss guards were raised, and the Templars granted authority to raise a fortress (the citadel of St. Michael) in distant Kama Bulgar, from which they could launch raids upon the Ice tribes beyond the frontier. Work resumed on the massive basilica of St. Peters and the sewers in Vatican City were unclogged.

In his first message to the World and the City (Orbi et Urbi), Benedict called for peace and restraint between the Militarist and Kalmar factions of Swedish-Russia, condemned the use of ‘infernal devices’ against Kherson by ‘unknown parties in league with Satan himself’ and consecrated a chapel in the new St. Peters to the memory of Empress (soon to be Saint) Oniko.

### AFRIQA

Non-Catholic Mercenaries	Minimum bid listed in [x].
Condotierri	30i, 15a, 10c, 6hc, 3xc [1gp each]
Captains	Bey Senghor (MB96) [10gp]
To hire, please contact...	None

Quality Ratings	i16 w16 s18 c11 a12
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Catholic Mercenaries	Minimum bid listed in [x].
Condotierri	23xea [1gp each]
Captains	None
To hire, please contact...	Norsktrad
Quality Ratings	I15 w18 s21 c11 a12

### AN ANCIENT CRUSADER FORTRESS, ATLAS MOUNTAINS, AD 1759

The nuptial chambers were vast. Candles broke the darkness, and the sudden cry of a lady broke the silence.

“Oh!” whispered Chani.

Her fingers traced an old scar upon the Prince’s back.

Ameur pulled himself upon an elbow. “What is it?” asked the Prince.

“The brand -- on your back.”

Ameur scowled. “Oh that. I’ve always been ashamed of that.”

Chani’s elfin features grew cloudy and she pulled away.

Owning slaves, there’s the shame. Not being branded like one.”

Rebuked, the Prince nodded his head. Moments passed in silence.

Finally overcome by curiosity, Chani continued -- “Why a cavalry mark? Why a *Danish* cavalry mark?”

The Prince shook his head pensively. “I don’t know. I can’t remember.” And then with sadness “I don’t even remember my parents.”

Chani said, forgivingly “Whatever they’ve done, it’s not too late to make amends.”

“You always were the strong one,” said the Prince.

### THE INTERNATIONAL RED KROSS (Alexandria in Egypt)

*Tabarqa the Elder, Dean the School of Alexandria, Governor-General of the Society*

**DIPLOMACY** Augustina in Tunisia (^oh), Krak-de-Chevailers (^oh)

The troubles in the central Mediterranean nearly engulfed Taharqa, who had set sail for Augustina in Tunisia to render aid and assistance to the embattled Carthaginians in the capital. Unlike the hapless Amil, he managed to sneak through the blockade and reach safe harbor.

### THE EMIRATE OF CARTHAGE

(Augustina in Tunisia)

*Hamilcar Barca, Emir of Augustina, Sultan of Tunisia*

**DIPLOMACY** None



Embattled, Hamilcar ordered a mass mobilization of the entire country to fend off the onslaught of the Al-Hagggar. Large numbers of mercenaries were hired and nearly 23,000 men put under arms. Leaders scattered in all directions, seeking to gather up garrisons to march to the defense of Augustina. The appearance of Islander warships off shore, however, caused a panic in Tunisia, as everyone expected an invasion force to follow...

Missionaries dispatched into Kabilya were met with unceasing and unrelenting hostility on the part of the newly convert Orangists. The same could *not* be said of OC preachers and holy-men slipping the other way in Tunisia and Augustina. Even as Hamilcar was struggling to muster an army to clash with Al-Hagggar, Tunisia itself became Orange Catholic and the religion was spreading like wildfire in Augustina itself.

Late in '59, four Qing warships managed to evade the Catholic blockade and reach Al'Rhemish with a troop of Chinese cavalry to act as Queen Geema's honor guard.



Figure 5. The Frankish Legion in Augustina

#### CARTHAGINIAN OFFICERS MESS, NEW ORAN, AD 1760

"Ingrates!" spat Colonel Harko. "Why can't the blasted Berbers leave well enough alone?" His jowls quivered with indignation.

Hasdrubal, the uncle of Harko, had been implicated a few years back for his seditious activities against Spain. Despite the dishonor of his family, Harko found more than a few listeners among the officers in the hall that day. Although coarse, he said what some officers believed but none would say out loud.

"We freed them from slavery – what more could they possibly want from us?"

Harko ate richly, and with his fingers. He stuffed a whole roasted songbird, with saffron, into his mouth. He wiped his greasy fingers on his shirt, leaving a yellow smear.

Crunching delicate bones between his teeth, he continued further: "They should eek what ever meager living they can find out of the pan and graben. It's a far better life than they ever had."

Harko's red mustache bristled with indignation. The hall was briefly silent with discomfiture.

#### THE AL-HAGGAR CONFEDERATION

(Sayyida Ifni in Idjil)

*Ameur bin Skakda, shariifa of the Faithful*

**DIPLOMACY** None

Sometimes a brilliant plan can fail because the tools at hand are too weak to

bear the stress of execution. While Ameur himself remained in the desert fastnesses of the south, moving like a ghost among the dune seas, his messengers took orders to the sheikhs of the Wadan and the Adawara, who were then in Kabilya, preparing to assail Tunisia itself – and they were ordered to vanish into the south, slipping over the Atlas into the great desert, leaving Hamilcar's modern army grasping at air.

Unfortunately, the Wadanite sheikh refused to abandon the rich lands he had so recently seized and the Adawaran chief remained to argue with him. So they were still bickering and arguing and their troops were starting to insult one another when the Carthaginian fleet and army stormed out of Tunisia, determined to smack them a hard one in the head.



Almost immediately the Carthaginian fleet was intercepted by the Islander blockading force and Hamilcar (who was in direct command of his ships) was engaged in a vigorous gun-duel with the Ducal ships under Barsaki off **Ras-el-Hadid**. This time the Carthaginian crews were slightly superior to the Islanders, but Hamilcar's sixty-odd ships were *still* outnumbered by the Islanders (who didn't have their captured Frankish steam cruisers in play, those had been sent back to Malta for crewing) but still had 116 ships of the line to batter the four Carthaginian cruisers into scrap metal and trash up the rest of the Hussite fleet.

Admiral Saarkabal was killed and Hamilcar badly wounded. The emir only barely escaped in a steam-launch back to Augustina.

At the same time, general Eshmenuzar's forces clashed with the *jihadis* at **Azzaba** and (particularly with the Wadan and the Adawarans still quarreling) smashed the Al-Haggar army. The nomads fled east and Eshmenuzar pursued vigorously. With his airships quartering the sky, the *jihadis* were forced to battle again at **Siqad** and defeated again. Then they scattered and the Carthaginians started hunting them in earnest. By the end of '59, Kabilya and Algeria had been recaptured. In '60, Eshmenuzar plowed through Cheliff and Zirid and into Merrakesh.

Which was Swedish territory. The war suddenly got bigger. At the end of the year, Eshmeuzar's army had thrown up siege lines around the city of Grassland and were shelling the port on a daily basis.

#### CATHOLIC SHARIFATE OF MAURITANIA (Sayyida Ifni in Idjil)

*Magda, Governor of the Azores, Shariifa of Mauretania*

**DIPLOMACY** None

More *jihadis* gathered in the south, where Magda had her hands full just keeping the Sharifate on an even keel. The Sisters of the Rose set up shop in the capital, opening a Hospital to tend to the sick and infirm. They did not seem fazed at all by the tenets of the Orangists, accepting their claims with equanimity.



Figure 6. Jihadis forces on the move

## THE PRINCIPATE OF VASTMARK

(Chihuahua City in Takrur)

*William Casimir, Stadholder of Takrur, Prince of Vastmark*

**DIPLOMACY** Senegal (fa), St. Laurent (^a)

The ancient stadholder (his son often wondered if the old geezer would ever die) attempted to wash his hands of the Senegalese problem by granting the province to Lord Uwe Anderson, who had long and faithfully served the state. Of course, Anderson soon found he was now the master of a great number of recalcitrant and almost-rebellious Orange Catholics. Still, the general was not without some wit of his own, so he became an Orangist as well.

William, meantime, found himself often at odds with his son Jason, who had returned from the devastation of Sankarani a little *strange*. Various of the stadholder's councilors urged the old man to disinherit his son, which William (as yet) refused to do.



## THE MALI AX EMPIRE (Ax Mixtlan in Mixe)

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

**DIPLOMACY** No effect

Having managed to get enough machine tools, skilled metalworkers, craftsmen and silk weavers together, Tenoch christened the first airship factory in his realm. Everyone breathed a big sigh of relief – the Emperor was very testy these days, seeing plots and assassins everywhere. Of course, he was right... the diabolical Lord of the Blue Cloak was lurking somewhere, plotting and planning to destroy Tenoch and bring ruin upon his family. And why not? Hadn't Tenoch sent the Blue-Cloaked One into certain danger, hoping his rival would perish?

After hiding in his palace for several months, Tenoch finally agreed to attend church services at the Lencolar cathedral and take confession. The Blue Lord was waiting (aided, indeed, by several of the late princess Luwa's brothers, one of whom was a priest) and as Tenoch knelt in the confessional, the Blue Lord stabbed him through the grate, transfixing the Emperor's throat. Tenoch choked to death and the Blue Lord made a swift escape.

Confusion followed. Luwa's brothers attempted to form a regency council to rule in the name of Prince Eyahue. The young prince himself defeated this effort, driving them into exile. There were arrests and the appropriate executions and disappearances. The Blue Cloaked Lord was not among those seized.

Word came by packet boat soon afterwards that the Serpent Lord had been assassinated in Lydia by a Moslem agitator. Eyahue considered punishing someone – but there was no one in reach who seemed to be at fault. Efforts in the east to obtain the allegiance of the Catholic tribes in Kam failed miserably, with Lady Xochiquetzal fleeing for her life and the tribesmen swearing undying vengeance on the Empire.

Further south, in the wilderness of Douala, the Moslem tribesmen there (who had previously attempted to eviscerate the notable Lord of the Blue Cloak) were flattened by a massive Mixtec army of 43,000 men who overwhelmed the scattered tribes, shot a lot of nobles out of hand and suppressed the Moslem priests.

Kieta was interested in what might have turned the Blue-Cloaked Lord against the Emperor, but soon learned the truth. And in any case, by that time, Tenoch was dead.

## THE REPUBLIC OF ETHIOPIA (Soba in Funj)

*Josiah Draume, President-For-Life of Ethiopia*

**DIPLOMACY** No effect (drat!)

Tensions between the Republic and the Islamic Union remained high, despite Draume's announcement of a 'tribute' to be paid by the Moslems. When nothing faintly resembling a tribute showed up, the government was forced to borrow heavily from the local bankers to finance a massive expansion of the army.

Missionary work continued successfully in Aden, but failed to convince any of the Hadramuht tribesmen of anything at all. After a long and (now) dangerous journey, the President returned from Carthage and was immediately confined to his sick-bed in Suakin. His son Josiah immediately went to his father's side and made sure the army itself was under his direct command. This included stripping Lord George of all of his troops. Fredrik was very old... and everyone expected him to die soon of old age.

They did not expect him to be attacked in his garden while tottering among the flowers and cut down by a Adenite Moslem fanatic. The man was tackled by the guards and subdued before being dragged off for questioning. Old Fredrik was, however, quite dead, his wrinkled throat slashed wide open.

Josiah became President. There was no further trouble.

## THE MAASAI KINGDOM (Mbeya in Kimbu)

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

**DIPLOMACY**

While everyone else to the north were losing their heads, the Masai kept an eye on the Afriqans to the south and trundled ahead with their various public infrastructure projects. A royal road was pushed up the coast from Rotai in Mogadishu through Scembali and on to Eyl in Ras Hafun. Further south, work also began on a railroad over the mountains between Arusha in Masai and Mtwara in Mombassa. Because of this, work on the northern Mersa Fatma to Aseb line slowed down. Throughout the realm, considerable advances were made in many provinces on agricultural production, land clearing and the use of steam-powered tractors and mills.

The nascent aerocorps was finally provided with a commander (lord G'kar) and a mixture of home-built zeppelins and airships provided by the Polytechnic League of Athens. The capital at M'beya expanded.

## REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRIQA (Great Zimbabwe in Rozwi)

*Izinduna, Protector of the Senate and the Republic*

**DIPLOMACY**

Missionary work in the north – paused for a bit as a result of massacres – resumed, even in Bandundu. A Senatorial delegation visited the villages, seeking news of the perpetrators, but none was found. The men from the capital began to wonder if the preachers hadn't simply gotten mixed up in some kind of local feud.

Mindful of the lifeblood of the nation, the RSA Engineering Corps began work on a massive expansion of the harbor facilities at Iusalem, including building a massive breakwater and nearly double the amount of warehousing and wharf space. All of this was modeled on the (now abandoned) Norsk Tek project at Lisbon, which had been so vigorously destroyed by the great earthquake.

The fleet also expanded, including a new raft of specially-fitted anti-piracy frigates which were immediately dispatched to patrol the Asian routes, which had (of late) been suffering from the predations of unknown parties. Railroad work continued apace – a spur line was started from Rozwi north over the mountains into Bassa, while the great terminus at Matopos reached out south towards Goana in Vaal.



A naval squadron was dispatched to the west, in company with certain Honorable Afrika Company ships, to visit Sud Amerikan ports and to lay claim to the islands of St. Helena, Ascension and Ilhas Martin Vaz. (Too bad there's not going on the map, huh?)

The steadily rising possibility of a general Hussite-Catholic war led the RSA fleet to send two squadrons and an 'expeditionary' force forward to their base at Socotra to be on hand in the likely event of hostilities in the region.

### THE HONORABLE AFRIQA COMPANY

(Iusalem in Karanga)

*Numeke Tikumbay, President, Master of the Great Southern House*

**DIPLOMACY** Zimbabwe in Rozwi (^ci), Mt'wara in Mombass (^bo), Arungtane in Kedah (^bo), Aqaba in Petra (^bo), Cuaiba in Paraiba (^mf), Chamonix in Charrua (^ci)



Did the masters of the Southern House ever sleep? It seemed not as settlers continued to pour into the province of Orange, which was now a (0/3) region. Numerous arrangements were made with other trading houses and foreign powers to improve the bottom line. The acquisition of transport airships from the Islamic Union and *Belisarius*-class 'fast' zeppelins from the Polytechnic League allowed Company technicians and overseers to tear the example craft apart and being laying plans to build their own versions.

Despite the growing fascination of people around the world for steam-powered ships, the Company shipyards in Iusalem continued to build top-of-the-line clipper ships, particularly for fast mail packet work and luxury goods. This proved quite useful on several trade routes from Persia, which were now maintained by the Company.

### NORTH AMERIKA

Non-Denominational Mercenaries	Minimum bid listed in [x].
Condotierri	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].
Condotierri	5hei [2gp each]
Captains	Baron Von Hausen (M783) [5gp]
To hire, please contact	Norsktrad
Quality Ratings	c12 i16 a13 w18 s18 z6

### KINGDOM OF TZOMPANCTLI (Tzompantlan in Tutchone)

*Tizoc, Baron of Húkar-on-the-Plain-of-Bones*

**DIPLOMACY** None

With the assistance of technicians shipped up from Aztec, and funded by the Sisters of the Rose, the Tzompans began work on their own airship designs, all designed to deal with the terrible cold and the harsh conditions in the Ice. At the same time, the cities of Azatlan and Azaton expanded as more settlers found their way into northern climes and the native Tatar population began to rebound from long years of horrific conditions.

The Baron's wife gave birth to a pair of black-eyed twins, which caused great consternation among the Old Believers, who regarded twins as deformed monsters. Tizoc, however, held with none of that nonsense, though he did name them Xolotl and

Quetzacoatl out of perversity. Soon after the borth, prince Kehuehuel returned (at last!) from the far south in the company of many Norsk and Aztec merchants, as well as prince Xezhin of the Méxica.

The newspapers were filled with stories of the daring journey of Lord Tieuhepan, who sailed down to the Cook Inlet and went ashore amid the ruins of old Tatarsky Tosag<sup>5</sup>. He then followed the old Great Road up through Kashir and around to Gartsa and then home to Azatlan. He escaped death a dozen times, fought horrific monsters, fled from savage tribesmen and brought back many drawings of the denizens of the Ice lands, flora and fauna and a variety of anthropological curiosities. He also lost a lot of weight.

A cruel fate befell the visiting prince Xezhin while hunting with some of Tizoc's cousins – they were attacked by polar bears while moving along a frozen lake – Xezhin fled the attack but the ice cracked and he was trapped. While the others circled back, having evaded the 'white men', the bears snacked on Xezhin's exposed head, shoulders and arm.

### THE NISEI REPUBLIC (Usonomiya in Yokuts)

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

**DIPLOMACY** None

Work continued in the provinces on rebuilding infrastructure destroyed in the war. Chehalis, in particular, received a great deal of attention. Further south, the commander of IV Corps spent all of his time marching troops from place to place. Usonomiya city expanded again. With the restoration of a trade network to Europe (tenuous though it was), there was a huge rush of mercantile concerns to take advantage.

Dozens more Pacifican ships arrived from the west, landed at Anataya in Tolowa and set to expanding the city with the crews (and families) of the ships. Many houses were built using the wood from the vessels themselves, which indicated that – like the Achaeans before Troy – they intended to stay. This time they did not bring a whole gang of mercenaries with them.

Missionaries were dispatched into the plains, particular to Dakota, to sway the tribesmen and farmers there back to the *Kami* and away from the horrific deities hiding behind the sky. The fleet dispatched to the Shetlands returned to the forward fleet base at Colon, though Admiral Reishu immediately died upon his return.

Back in Yokuts, the Prime Minister had summoned the III Corps commander, Tasho, back to the capital – along with his troops – to keep them close to home. Unfortunately, Tasho took it into his head that Yeemi intended to relieve him of command (the general had been a little loose with the Corps budget) and instead, upon arriving near the city, led a brigade of his troops to attack the Prime Minister's residence and replace him with Tasho himself.

Thanks to an utter failure of the Internal Security ministry (the *Koancho*) to monitor Tasho's movements, the coup plotters broke into the PM's residence, dragged him out in his night-shirt and popped a cap in the back of his head. Tasho then declared himself Prime Minister and ordered his loyalists to seize the Parliament.

Unfortunately for Tasho, the rather more with-it admiral of the fleet, Ieicho, had happened by the army camps outside of town, had learned of the plot and had immediately commandeered every available airship. Thus, when Tasho and his troops reached the white marble edifice of the Parliament, they were illuminated by searchlights from above and found themselves facing guns on every side. Tasho ended his life properly in the plaza, even as most of his men threw down their guns.

<sup>5</sup> There were two "Tosa" cities, so this one is now "Tosag".



Ieicho shook his head, wondering at the stupidity of the man. A few weeks later, a retired provincial governor named Genjuku was elected as the interim Prime Minister.

#### **THE HIGH KINGDOM OF COLORADO** (Three Crosses in Navajo)

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

**DIPLOMACY** No obvious effect

The King's tenants continued to potter about, grubbing in their fields. A new castle was built in Ute to protect the northern passes and several fresh irrigation canals were dug in Hohokam. King Fredrik – getting tired of siting in Three Crosses all day – took the army out for a tour of the country, which made the soldiers grumble, but got them fit and in fighting trim again.

Much to the surprise of most of his citizens, the High King also instituted an AeroPost Service between the main cities of the kingdom, using a fleet of locally-built and manned zeppelins. This startled several foreign observers, who had assumed from the archaic dress and local penchant for carrying swords that the Coloradans were a backward and poor nation.

Efforts to establish cordial relations (that is, other than at gunpoint) with the Comanche continued with two lords of the realm in constant negotiations and administration in the province. Princess Yesobelle visited as well, showing off two Royal AeroCorps zeppelins as well. But it promised to be a slow process. Missionaries were dispatched into Leoti to bring the word of the Sisters to the heathen Catholics savages there.

Official status was granted to the Knights of the Flowering Sun and they were invited to establish a presence in the kingdom. Substantial gold deposits were found in the mountains of Shoshoni, causing the town of Matincus there to expand rapidly as people flooded into the province to seek their fortune.

#### **THE GHOSTDANCERS** (Fushige in Missouri)

*Geshin Azurama, Prince of Fushige, War-Captain of the Ghost People*

**DIPLOMACY** None apparent

The Ghostdancers continued to mind their own business. Geshin had troubles enough managing a nation comprised of four religious groups without making mischief elsewhere. Missionary work by the Sisters began in Pawnee and found fertile ground there in which to grow.

#### **ARAPAHO TEXAS** [Shawnee Protectorate](Ayoel in Atakapa)

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

**DIPLOMACY** Caddo/Natchez (^ea), Taino Island (^t)

Scrabbling out a living inbetween larger powers, the Arapaho managed to build some barns in Atakapa and began settling retired veterans in Onora in Kansa. Shawnee missionaries were thick on the ground in Natchez and Caddo, where they were making steady, but slow, progress against the Lencolar adherents there.

One minute everything in Natchez was quiet and sweltering, the river flowing past all muddy and dark, and then a horrible, pervasive *chittering* sound flooded the air. Everyone stiffened – a few of the old timers trembled in fear, remembering what had happened across the river in Taposa – and the sky blacked with an enormous cloud of locusts rushing in from the west.

Screams rent the air. “Kror! Kror has come!”

The locust cloud swarmed over the city, driving livestock mad, tear the flesh of the citizens, infesting the houses, and then it moved on, out over the river and dissipated. When everyone crawled out, the streets were knee deep in dead, grotesquely distorted locust and insect carcasses, some grown to enormous size.

Scouts ventured out into the countryside and found a wide swathe of destruction leading off to the west, into remote and

rugged hills tenanted only by scattered farms. Eventually they came upon a ring of freshly-raised standing stones. There were scattered, white human bones everywhere.

“Scum Krorists,” muttered the lance-captain leading the scouting party. “Thinking Kror is anything but a voracious monster desiring to devour the world.”

The Arroweye was forced to intervene in the province with his household troops to suppress a burst of banditry and looting following the passage of the locust-cloud. He wasted no time in stretching a few necks and executing every wolf's head he could catch.

#### **THE SHAWNEE EMPIRE** (Cahokia in Michigamea)

*Valeria Stormdragon, Queen of the Shawnee, Empress of the Iroquois*

**DIPLOMACY** Creek (^nt)

An enormous crowd turned out to line the docks of Cahokia when news spread that the Norsk company-men were delivering the first steam-powered ship to ply the Great Snake and see service in Shawnee hands. Indeed, the ship was a fine example of Norsk craftsmanship and made a very large racket with its paddle wheels and tooting horn.

Amid the festival atmosphere, the arrival of the Papal legate Junipero Serra went unnoticed, save by the Empress' privy secretary. Serra had come seeking to restore full ties between the Papacy and the Empire – in particular to see the tithes of the common people actually reach Papal coffers. Unfortunately for Serra, he immediately became embroiled in a personal dispute with a number of powerful clerics at the court and failed to re-establish Papal authority over the local dioceses. Pleas to the Empress fell on deaf ears, as she was busy plotting the doom of all enemies of the Faith.

The Lencolar citizens of Ifni were the immediate focus of her anger. “These bastards have repeatedly revolted against Our authority and have murdered the Imperial Consort, my beloved Running Bear. Now we will end their rebellion.”

25,000 Shawnee troops poured into the city and every last Lencolar worshipper was dragged from their homes and slaughtered. There was much lamentation. Loyal, Catholic Shawnee settlers from across the river were waiting to move in, and by the end of '60 all traces of the former inhabitants had been wiped away.

The Imperial government continued to stamp out reactionary cults, heretics and other evil-doers in the east. Arrests were made in Qadara. Prince Drakon, having come of age, was elevated to Crown-Prince and received his mother's blessing (even though he was a snotty little thug with very poor manners.)

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

*Lucas II Stormdragon, Lord of the East.*

**DIPLOMACY** Poctumtuc (^f)

Settlements continued in Mohawk and Delaware (which was now a 2 GPv province). Overseas, Cardinal Hector and the Iroquois Expeditionary Force seized the Hussite city of Stralsund from the diabolical Poles. There were substantial religious successes at home as well, particularly among the savage cannibal tribes of Susquehanna and Appalach.

The Swedish governor of Arkham was quite distressed to learn that Captain Trygvasson, master of the clipper ship *Fauwolf*, had fallen prey to thugs and ruffians in the warehouse district, being attacked and murdered as he returned from a late dinner engagement to his rooms. Trygvasson's body was packed in salt and arrangements were made to send him home.

King Lukas pressed a winning case in Poctumtuc, gaining not only the fealty of the province, but a wife, Sosan, who then provided him with a daughter.

#### **THE ORDER OF THE FLOWERING SUN** (Tenochtitlán)

*Chikietl, Master of the Order, Shield of the Sun against the Ten Thousand Enemies*

**DIPLOMACY** Náhuatl (^oe), Teofilo in Caraca (^oh), Ponto Grosso in Cumangoto (^oh)

Aside from the knights of the Order traipsing over hill and dale in all parts of the Amerikas, the Tlahulli concentrated their effort in the Aztec capital, where sister Dzeba had taken an honor guard of 200 Eagle Knights to attend young prince Zinicha and see to his education. Unfortunately for Dzeba's political aspirations, she immediately made an enemy of the boy's mother, outraged the chamberlain of the palace and was banished to an outlying villa to stew and fret... the masters of the Order now wondered if perhaps they should have sent someone a little more polished to the court.

#### **THE AZTEC EMPIRE OF MEXICO** (Sion in Huave)

*Mamexi the Foul, Emperor of Mexico, Warrior of Christ, Protector of the Faith, Smiter of the Infidel, Conqueror of the Incans, Rex Britannicus*

**DIPLOMACY** Boruca (^a), Nicarao (^f)

Prince Nimulana continued to sport about with the latest airships out of the Tenochtitlan yards, though he wasn't considered to be a very good aerocommander. This made him feel many enough to summon his estranged wife back home. Still, everyone thought playing with zeppelins would keep the prince out of trouble – and out of succession politics, which were beginning to heat up as Trákonel had grown so old. A new 'standard' Legion of 16,000 men, the Red-and-Black-God, was raised and placed under the command of lord Huemac.

Work continued in the south on the lengthy Guyami to Inca highway, but in such a sporadic and leisurely fashion it might take decades to complete. Grain was imported from Bolivia and Colorado, as the savants at the Imperial Office of Maize had predicted consumption of tortillas would rise markedly in the coming years. Substantial sums were doled out to the Nisei and the Zacatecas.

Huemac was dispatched with his fresh Legion to subdue the Zacatecas, who had been getting restive of late. News reports from the hills told of fierce fighting, but Huemac and his troops returned to Sion late in '60 in fine fettle, having had a nice march in the cool mountain air. Further south, in Nicarao, the locals agreed to fully support the Empire just in time for Lord Potozin to suffer a stroke and die.

While the troops were gone, things had gotten interesting in the capital. Old Trákonel, seeing his son and heir Nimulana was a useless thug and craven coward, decided to remove him from the scene, allowing his still-malleable son Zinicha to be taken into the care of the Sisters and the Tlahulli (who might make the boy a respectable Emperor). But before the Emperor could have his son strangled, princess Thuia (dragged kicking and screaming back to her husband's bed) had done the job for him. Nimulana died choking on his own testicles.

This pleased the Emperor greatly, though he orchestrated a massive and elaborate funeral for his son and showed all proper signs of grief. Thuia disappeared back to her beach villa in Chinikam with a shudder of relief. Little Zinicha was now anointed as the successor, despite prince Xezhin (Nimulana's younger brother) being entirely of age to rule in his father's stead. Then news circulated in the capital that Xezhin had met with a cruel accident in the far north, ending his life as polar bear feed.

Unfortunately for old Trákonel, his own time on the wheel of fate was nearing a close – he died quietly in the winter of '59 – leaving only little Zinicha to succeed him. As it happened, a will had been drawn up, appointing the rather ill-favored Lord Mamexi as regent for the boy.

The appointment was met with near universal horror, as Mamexi was a craven, corrupt idler with far less talent and charm than the so-suspiciously-dead Nimulana. Even the martyred Xezhin would have been preferable! Still, everyone choked down the bitter slug and soldiered on...

Until Mamexi, having surrounded himself with opulence and brigades of fawning courtiers, decided to *adopt* little Zinicha as his own son, thus securing the *huey tlatoani* for Mamexi himself. And if something should happen to the boy, why then Mamexi's son Tochtli would become Emperor in turn! A cabal formed itself out of the air, devoted to the removal of Mamexi from his post.

The lords and ladies of Sion and Tenochtitlan expected the eagle-prickly-pear-lord Camargo, commander of the Smoking Sun Legion, to deal with the venal Mamexi himself, but *he* proved too loyal to the memory of Trákonel (had not the deified Emperor chosen Mamexi?) and refused to accept the knife.

Thus, Huemac (so recently risen to command) took it upon himself to launch an ill-fated and badly-bungled coup attempt to oust Mamexi and his adherents. When the first rush to arrest the Regent failed, Camargo was forced to step in on Mamexi's part and arrest and execute the rebellious Huemac. This put a solid stop to any more plotting!

Of course, now Mamexi was convinced Camargo was plotting against him...

#### **THE SISTERS OF THE ROSE** (New Jerusalem in Quiche)

*Kelly Davias, Holy Mother of the Lencolar Christian Order*

**DIPLOMACY** New Hiquito in Caquetio (^ca), New Colorado in Comanche (^ch), Dallas in Coahuila (^ch), Three Crosses in Navajo (^mn), Gagnoa (^ab), Akan / Ax Knot (^ch), Togo (^ch)

Follow the guidance of their faith, the Sisters established new hospitals in Tairona (particularly to aid the victims of the recent eruption) and Sayyida Ifni in Idjil (to minister to those wounded in the North Afriqan wars). A School was opened in Popol Vuh.

The Order issued a statement in support of Prince Zincica of the Méxica being named the old Emperor's heir – but then fell silent when the corruption of Mamexi's Regency became apparent. Another statement was distributed, urging Lencolar adherents in Shawnee and Arapaho lands to leave as quickly and peaceably as possible. A very threatening letter had been received from those quarters, stating the intention of the Arroweye to slaughter every Lencolar he could find.

And, indeed, the massacre at Ifni only punctuated the threat.

Mother Kelly returned to New Jerusalem and found the entire city in an uproar over the revelatory nature of a certain Book which had been delivered in recent time to the keeping of the Librarian of the Order. Davias was not troubled or panicked by the wild claims being made, however, and took the time to read the volume carefully. Afterwards, she called a Church Council to debate the contents and decide what to do about them.

The Council was filled with vigorous discussion, but (unlike the recent Vatican Council) preceded rather smoothly.

"The heart of God is great enough to encompass all truth," Davias announced upon the completion of the Council. "The Orangist faith has touched upon a truth drawn directly from the Hand of God. We accept them as our brothers and sisters in the light of the Revealed Sacrifice of Christ."

After that, everyone went back to work building God's Kingdom on Earth. This included missionary work in Chimu and Guahibo in South Amerika, as well as in the jungles of Asante in Afrika.

## 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** None

The Queen turned her attention to the business of rule, though there were a few distractions, such as the unit creation ceremony for the new squadron of Air/Sea Knights. Colonel Brenco was put in command of the elite unit of new-model airships which would land on either land or water, being fitted with descending pontoons. Brenco and the AirSea unit were immediately dispatched to the far south, to find the source of the Amazon.

Religious trouble began to stir in Caraca, where Catholic missionaries had lately been moving among the people, seeking to turn them back to the old faith. This was then exacerbated by a clash in Recife between Shawnee freebooters loitering in the port and Governor Miguel's garrison. The 'pirates' were driven off and reputedly decamped to the lawless town of St. Laurent in Camopi.

At the end of '60, his airships rusty and spattered with bug carcasses, Brenco returned from the Green Hell of the upper Amazon with thousands of drawings, crates and crates of geological specimens, flora, fauna and native artifacts. He was very, very glad to find himself in civilization once more!



### THE PRINCIPATE OF BOLIVIA (Trishka in Karanga)

*Ramon Mascate, Prince of Bolivia, Duke of Trishka*

**DIPLOMACY** None

Peace reigned unrestrained in the southern lands. No, really! It did. Nothing bad was happening and everyone was happy. Shut up, I am not lying! Everything was *fine!*

### 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 apparent effect

With the cruel hand of war withdrawn, the cities of Araguari (in Camacan), Cuiaba (in Paraiba), New Granada (in Acroa), Impanema (in Karaja) and Thiat (in Terembembe) all expanded a level. A new port town, Quirigua, was built on the coast of Tobajara. Relations with the Potiguaran and Timbrian dukes improved, though not so much as you'd notice.

The military governor of Kayapo sent a series of blistering letters to Acroa, complaining about gangs of French priests marauding around the countryside of his province, burning down Lencolar churches and roughing up the parishioners. Humphrey ignored the matter.

The port-master at Cuaiba was surprised to find an Arabic ship-captain in his office one spring morning in '59, much less one

with passable Spanish. Yet there he was, Hadji Abdul Rahman bin Mahomed Cazim, and riding at anchor in the harbor was a tautly-rigged merchantman no so different in design (yet obviously laid down in some Persian shipyard) from the clipper ships and fast merchantmen common in Sud Amerikan waters. Cazim's cargo of Qing silk, porcelain and jade was welcome anywhere.

Vast quantities of wheat, sugar and corn were shipped off to the Afrikan markets. A large fleet of Afrikan merchantmen, escorted by Sud Afrikan naval vessels visited the northern ports.

Prince Eluterio, having come of age, now requested of Humphrey that he be ordained as the Grand Master of the Order. But Humphrey refused, saying the boy was not yet ready. In a similar vein, diplomatic efforts in the south – in the breakaway provinces of Arana and Tupi – met with unyielding hostility on the part of the local nobility.

### GREAT FRANCE (Versailles in Calchaqui)

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

**DIPLOMACY** Hulleche (^nt)

Though he would not have been pleased by the comparison, the Emperor of France emulated Humphrey of Toron by turning his attention to



matters of reconstruction and renewal in his domains. The cities of New Marseilles and Artica expanded. Public baths were provided by Francois' privy purse for many towns throughout the land, including such remote outposts and Novo Ghent in Mapuche and Novo Lyon on the coast of Mauritania.

Tewfiki ships began to frequent the ports of Great France as well as more northerly anchorages. Honorable Afrika Company merchants were also a common sight, even in the halls of the Sorbonne, where they were helping the French open a school of navigation, astronomy and nautical arts. Direct trade resumed with the Knights.

Though warned against doing so by his advisors, Francois lifted a variety of laws restricting the banks in his nation. The Emperor hoped more credit in the economy would lift many boats, including his own. He was more pleased, at home, to learn his wife Angelique had born him a daughter.

"And now for a son," he declared, rubbing his hands together in anticipation.

And while waiting for that blessed day, Francois summoned Duke Tcholon to Varres, to the palace, and bestowed upon the rather stunned lord both Francois' sister, Niki, and the title of Crown-Prince, making Tcholon his heir until such time as a son might be born of the Empress. In a strange turn, this expression of trust affected Tcholon deeply, and thereafter he was the most loyal of Francois' supporters. Too, he was a devoted husband to Niki, who had frankly despaired of ever marrying again after her annulled coupling with the vilified Nicholas Gafard.

Baron Weygand took a fleet around the Cape (successfully) and eventually found and landed on the Galapagos, where a French outpost – Novo Gien – was established.

## BANK LIST

Bank		GP	Rate
Aztec Empire of Mexico	Tenochtitlan Teocali	2159	40%
Chan Mongol Empire	Uncle Wu's	873	40%
Emirate of the	Mutaib Mercantile	237	40%
Chandellas	Lending		
Free Republic of Ethiopia	Funj Gold Reserves	391	40%

Principate of Kiev	Royal Bank of Khitai	142	35%
Coptic Kingdom of Maasai	M'Beya House of Credit	1461	20%
Mali Ax Empire	Mixtec International Fund	1404	34%
Great France	Banque du Varres	1133	40%
The Nisei Republic	New Yedo Matsuma Bank	867	40%
Empire of Swedish-Russia	BUX	807	40%
Duchy of the Three Isles	First Merchant of Valetia	568	40%
The Kingdom of Java	Sunny Sunda Savings	950	40%