

# Lords of the Earth

## Campaign One

### AN AGE OF AIR AND STEAM

## Turn 219



Anno Domini 1767 – 1768

**TURN 220 ORDERS DUE BY** Friday the 23<sup>rd</sup> of January, 2004

Turning and turning in the widening gyre  
The falcon cannot hear the falconer;  
Things fall apart; the center cannot hold;  
Mere anarchy is loosed upon the world,  
The blood-dimmed tide is loosed, and everywhere  
The ceremony of innocence is drowned;  
The best lack all conviction, while the worst  
Are full of passionate intensity.

Surely some revelation is at hand;  
Surely the Second Coming is at hand.  
The Second Coming! Hardly are those words out  
When a vast image out of Spiritus Mundi  
Troubles my sight: somewhere in sands of the desert  
A shape with lion body and the head of a man,  
A gaze blank and pitiless as the sun,  
Is moving its slow thighs, while all about it  
Reel shadows of the indignant desert birds.  
The darkness drops again; but now I know  
That twenty centuries of stony sleep  
Were vexed to nightmare by a rocking cradle,  
And what rough beast, its hour come round at last,  
Slouches towards Bethlehem to be born?

*William Butler Yeats*

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

Yet another version of the 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\\_3\\_4.pdf](http://www.throneworld.com/lords/players/loterule/lot01_mod_3_3_4.pdf)

## NORTH ASIA

<b>Mercenaries</b>	<b>Minimum bid listed in [x].</b>
<b>Condotierri</b>	11hc, 11xc, 5i, 2a [1gp each]
<b>Captains</b>	Kadan of the Bulingir (MA27) [10gp] <will not serve Judea>
<b>To hire, please contact...</b>	(No one)
<b>Quality Ratings</b>	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** None

The heartbeat of the Japanese economy continued to throb strongly – Akita and Yamaguchi both improved a GPv as modern farming practices began to penetrate to the Nipponese hinterland. Heavy industry continued to thrive in the Kwanto and on Shikoku. Prince Kii – lately much seen on the social circuit in Tokushima and Edo – received orders to rejoin his military command and bade a lengthy farewell to the ladies of both cities. Much of the main fleet then put to sea.

Meantime, in Austral, General Kato remained with his small army at Tempyo in Broome, keeping watch on the land and sea alike, waiting for the expected attack of the Meteor Men.

In late September of '68, the main fleet reappeared at Omikami on Palau – weather-beaten and well-exercised – and put in for careening, repairs and restocking provisions. In the far south, where the plantation-owners of Johor were troubled by the swift rise of the 'Brilliant Palm' sect among the workers and rural peoples – this religious group was led by a fire-breathing orator named Hozen Fusode and espoused an amalgam of both traditional Shintoism and Orange Catholicism (which had influenced him via the free city of Singapore).

This caused growing unease in Edo, as reports had also come from the far north – the denizens of the icy coast of Takama, where there was little but an Aztec waystation, had abandoned their Catholic ways and embraced the Orangist creed as well.

**PACIFIC MANUFACTURING & TRANSPORT** (Kriztyn on Luzon)

*Juchen Agoi, President and Executive officer*

**DIPLOMACY** Failed...

The settlement of PM&T employees overseas continued apace – their quarter in the city of Leakai in Assam expanded. At home, Kriztyn grew as the company factories continued to employ more and more workers. Sadly, young Juchen Sado (at a lively thirteen) was thrown from a horse while riding on a family estate near Tagaytay and hemorrhaged to death soon afterwards.

**THE PURE REALM** (Buddhist, Fusan in Silla)

*Great Master Sosandaesa, Abbot of the Wing Kung Temple of the Greater Vehicle of the Message of the Bodhisattva*

**DIPLOMACY** Khemer (^mn), Samatata (^ch), Pegu (^ab), Rangoon (^ch)

With sixty thousand laborers working day and night throughout '67 and '68, the Realm priests made sure that every port, harborage and inlet along the Tsushima Strait coast was reinforced against storm-surge. Every headland now posted a watch-tower and every landing place was overseen by a fort or sea-wall. Work to clean up Holy Fusan also continued apace.

Over the vigorous protests of his temple guard commanders, as well as the various priests assigned to see to the needs of pilgrims flocking to the holy city, Sosandaesa granted the civil

administration of the city independence from the oversight of the Temple. At the same time, an arrangement had been secretly reached with the Thai empire for *them* to establish a military and political presence in the metropolis.

The monk Cho Fat, imprisoned on Siberut, was ordered released by the Qing authorities – and lo, the rascal was let free.

Excellent news was received from the Manchu capital, where the Great Master's most recent flurry of letters, cajoling, diplomacy and threats had at least extracted a reliable title from the old Blue Jade temples and monasteries. This was then matched by poor news from the provinces, where open hatred of the Realm inspired the brutal murder of Homu Nahomunah in Liao-Tung, and an attack on two Realm galleys moored there. Both were burned to the waterline by 'brigands' and 'assassins'.

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

**DIPLOMACY** Bah!

Tun Wei was informed by his ministers that if the width of ox-cart axles was made all of a kind, then the efficiency of the tax collectors would be improved. A new ministry, therefore, was established to fix the sizes and shapes of things. At the same time, the new factories around Harbin continued to busily choke out vast plumes of dirty coal smoke and vomit streams of polluted water into the local rivers.

The boy Phu Yi was elevated to the principate, where he immediately disappointed his older brother by falling, drunk, into a canal during the celebrations. The prince was then rescued by a boatload of flower-girls, much to his delight.

The steady thawing of relations between the God-King's court and Holy Fusan continued, with Realm priests coming and going openly from Tun Wei's ministries and the Chaosen border open once more to priests and pilgrims alike. The Emperor also leaned on the local bankers, forcing them to reduce their lending rates in an effort to spark economic growth.

The dispute with the Ice tribes on the northern frontier flared up into open war – the Manchu dispatched two armies; 20,000 men under Vachir Ulagan to punish the Humahae, and Arik Boke with 42,000 to annihilate the Turanans. Though Tun Wei had ordered Boke and Ulagan to "leave not one tribesman alive" their campaigns were spent uselessly struggling through icy winds, snowstorms, deadly frost and mile after mile of empty forest. The Ice tribesmen had simply withdrawn into the fastness of the north upon the Sunlander advance.

Still, garrisons and patrols were left behind to watch the frontier, lest the savages return.

**THE KINGDOM OF PRESTER JOHN** (Sunni, Maclan in Tuhnwhang)  
*John Corrigan, Khagan of Karakocho, The White God, Wolf-Brother of the Altai*

**DIPLOMACY** Uigur (hostile! The embassy is forced to flee...)

Work continued apace on the road down into Suzhou, which now allowed for the swift passage of a post-rider almost all the way to the Judean frontier. Elsewhere industry was the mark of the day throughout the kingdom, which was beginning to thrive. After close consultations with the Persian government, an arrangement was brokered in the far west with the Kushans to return the fertile

valley of Ferghana to Persian control... allowing trade to flow freely down the Silk Route once more.

Trade negotiations, in fact, were much the order of the day for the Corrigan regime. An accommodation was also reached with the Arfen to lease them a goodly portion of the city of Kashi as an "aerodrome" for airships carrying mail, small goods, passengers and other luxury items. Arfen agents, in fact, were quite active in the area, coming and going through their new aerodrome at Astakana in the Kushan highlands. In the east, complementing this, an embassy was dispatched to open a trade route to the Manchu through the regions frequented by the Hsia-Hsia and the Uigur... unfortunately that effort ended in disaster, and lord Yissu-Temur died while fleeing the steppe-riders.

The normally peaceful routine of the capital was broken in May of '67 by the sudden sound of gunfire, the clash of blades and the shouting of alarmed men. Prince John, tiring at last of waiting for his elder sister to step aside, (and having recently allied himself by marriage with the influential Tangut) launched a coup against Queen Megan. Though a brute, John knew the virtue of speed, and his men had burst into Megan's chambers and shot her dead before the alarm was even fairly raised.

Within the day, her adherents had been forced to flee, or were murdered, and John was king in Maclan at last.

**THE DIVINE KINGDOM OF JUDAH** (Roman Catholic, Kaifeng in Hopei)  
*None as yet*

**DIPLOMACY** None

The vast wealth of Judea continued to make itself felt as the Hand of God determined to revolutionize the rural economies, making sure that the vast, teeming cities of the realm were never again threatened with famine... the provinces of Kansu, Huang, Shansi, Bao Ding, and Shantung all improved a GPv. The granaries of the Divine Realm were also packed to the rafters with rice, wheat, millet... sorghum, silk, Pima cotton, dried fruits of all kinds... the Judeans had known want before, had sprung from a dry and desolate land and the Emperor was determined not to be caught short by even so much as a single grain of rice.

The railroad line south to Xiapin in Tangchou remained closed, though the tracks were complete, as sufficient funds had not been allocated to finish the stations and bridges. Thousands of engineers were left idle, waiting for the Rail Ministry to get its act together...<sup>1</sup> A scouting expedition dispatched into the Karatao failed to return, which did not bode well for the farmers in Kin and Tumet.

The night of June 16<sup>th</sup>, 1767 found the Divine Hand sound asleep in his bed in the Celestial Palace of Pienching, surrounded by one of the greatest cities in the world. A city defended by 115,000 troops – all freshly blooded by their campaigns against the Guranites. A strong watch was set on every wall, and hundreds of batteries watched the night skies, crews sleeping beside their guns. Light clouds covered a moonless sky, though the stars winked down through the smog covering the city.

Lord General Aimi was not sleeping. A feeling of foreboding had stolen up upon him as he sat at his desk in the vast complex of the Ministry of War, and he had climbed one of the heliograph towers, keen eyes searching the sky to make sure the night patrol of war-zeppelins were aloft and circling the city. Thus, he was almost the first man to see the airships approach from the south.

<sup>1</sup> Engineers no longer generate GP for projects, only NFP. Check the latest Modern Era rules.

“Is there a post dispatch expected from Wuhan tonight?” The general growled as soon as he heard the distinctive flutter of Qing-built engines penetrate the muggy air.

“No, my lord,” answered the heliograph clerk.

“Signal the *Deer Dancer*! Have them head off that ship...”

Three more dark shapes emerged from the gloom, heading for the landing field on the eastern side of Pienching. Aimi growled, hackles rising on his neck. “Those ships are moving to swiftly for Qing engines... raise the alarm!”

Instantly, the clerk swung a locking bar, releasing a five-hundred gallon tank of water in the roof of the tower. Immediately, an air-horn began to sound, sending out a wailing, eerie cry across the tile rooftops. Within moments, the alarm was taken up by the other towers, filling the night with a heart-stopping wail.

By then, the *Deer Dancer* had simply burst into flames – the soft *whoomp* of combusting hydrogen drowned by the claxons ringing in the army encampments. The other seven airships – either in the air, or moored at the landing field – blew apart within heartbeats of each other.

Aimi hurtled down the stairs, bellowing for his men to “wake! Wake! To the guns! To the guns!”

A queer *shoock-shoock-shoock* sound pierced the clamor, and then the crash of something plunging through the roof of the nearest building and... *chuunf!*

Aimi skidded to a halt, staring out the window. Across a courtyard now swarming with armed men running to their posts, black smoke billowed from the windows of the commissary. The roof had caved in. The soldiers were already toppling over, choking to death as their lungs filled with spores.

The general spun and charged back up the stairs, pale as a ghost, and hurled himself recklessly around the turns, desperate to get away from the deadly mist which boiled through the buildings, killing every living thing it touched...

Outside, the guns of Pienching were hammering away at the black ships, lighting the sky with brilliant tracers. They were answered with fire – like lightning, stabbing down and igniting whole districts – and a constant rain of ebon mist...

The Imperial palace was engulfed in flame within the hour, and entire districts raged out of control as a firestorm built, rushing across the city. The Qing ships swept over the dying city relentlessly, silencing the guns, obliterating the factories, deadly rose-red light touching the ammunition cussions, melting the railway tracks. A vast mob of humanity poured into the streets, dying by droves, choked by the black smoke, or seared by the burning buildings, crawling through mounds of the dead, maddened and driven beyond any hope of comprehension.

The army broke and fled – the Emperor was dead, as was his son Bandares, who had tried to rally a defense, and even General Aimi – still clinging to the roof of the heliograph tower, bawling in fear, had perished at last as flames from the fiercely burning building below ate away the supports.

Dawn came at last, a pale red disk barely visible through the enormous cloud of soot and ash which billowed up from the ruins of Pienching. The suburban fields were filled with the wounded, the lost and scattered soldiers, all trying to find their commanders, their friends, their families... The city was still burning, obscuring the horizon with a wall of flame and smoke.

When Admiral Lee returned from his western expedition in late '68, he found Honan province in chaos, filled with gangs of roving, half-starved refugees fighting over scraps. Order was being restored by General Hei Po and his railway engineers, but slowly. The annihilation of central authority had paralyzed much of the Empire, though widespread civil disorder had not yet broken out.

Of course, there was no Emperor...

## GREAT QING CHINESE EMPIRE

(Buddhist, Wuhan in Hupei)

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

**DIPLOMACY** Wuliang (^f), Mianyang in Chiennan (^nt)



Quianglong's abiding interest in every kind of toy, gadget and mechanism continued to drain the Imperial coffers at an astounding rate. More practically, the rail-line to the south finally inched its way up to the Yangtze, though work on the vast bridge into the city was still underway. All throughout the land, every city fumed with smoke and the ringing of hammers as thousand of guns, rifles, and ships of war poured forth from the 'arsenal of the East'. War was in the offing and Qianglong intended to be prepared!

An ill-smelling lot of Manchus showed up to take custody of a freshly built *Heavenly Wind*-class airship, which they then repainted in their own colors and flew north... The desolate province of Taiping was settled to (0bh8). At the same time, in a particularly egregious display of corruption in the Emperor's household, the entire province of Ghang'de was sold to the Japanese pin-sellers from Kriztyn and not for good red gold, either, but for stock paper in their nefarious company! This prompted the immediate hostility of the local people, much less the land-owners, and the raising of a local militia to resist the greedy zaibatsu.

While attempting to please the Emperor by bearing another son, Empress Xiao Xian died in childbirth in '67, leaving the entire Imperial household in a black depression. Particularly since little Huy-meng, the boy she'd already produced, was weak and sickly himself. A poor omen...

In the east, where the Desolation still smoked and fumed – and strange unearthly creatures stalked the night, clashing from time to time with the Qing patrols – two Qing generals led a strong force along the river, both to protect a wave of new settlements (as noted above) and to enforce Imperial control over the new town of Tse Tsing, which had lately sprung up at the mouth of the river.

Generals Huat and Wu were pleasantly surprised to be welcomed into Tse Ting, which had been attacked more than once of late by the savages in the Desolation, and the Qing flag shortly rose over the mayor's house. Having accomplished his mission, General Huat then made a hasty retreat to more hospitable climes. Wu remained, in command of a strong garrison.

## 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** (Buddist, Angkor Wat in Khemer)

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

**DIPLOMACY** Bah ha ha!

Loathing idle men more than most, the Red Hand ordered six regiments of artillery out of the reserve and into the field. “The best medicine for a Moslem pig is grapeshot,” he proclaimed ghoulishly. The Emperor also continued to press his edicts against the caste system and the holding of slaves. Both were met with steadily rising resistance. The railway to Nakhon, however, was completed as the PM&T overseers were beginning to get the hang of driving huge

mobs of Khemer laborers and elephants to clear a path through the jungle.

Buddhist and Thai priests continued to work vigorously in Ahvaz, in Palas, where the local Moslems struggled stubbornly to keep their faith. Prince Kanok, commander of the local garrison, barely escaped an attempt on his life by knife-wielding zealots.

The Emperor – finding Angkor a little dangerous for his tastes (the Khemer separatists had tried to blow up a carriage he was riding in) – took the main army, reinforced by thousands of new troops, into the north-east, gathering up garrisons as he moved... he reached Palas with 36,000 men. Other Thai generals and the fleet were also converging upon the Bengal, rapidly swelling the ranks of a vast host.

Down in Singapore, there was religious trouble in the Free City, as boatloads of Oroist missionaries from distant Rarotonga arrived to bedevil the local Orangists. Intermittent violence followed between the two factions, causing the mayor to enforce a curfew and consider banning the Islanders from his city.

#### **HOSOGAWA BORNEO** (Oroist, Kozoronden in Sabah)

*Hosogawa Suenaga, Daimyo of Kozoronden*

#### **DIPLOMACY** Failed

Disgusted by reports in the local crier's sheets of sewage befouling the streets of his capital, Suenaga spent a few coins to have the local *eta* clean things up. The vast clouds of woodsmoke billowing up from the factories along the bay at Kozoronden and Shin Nagasaki, however, did not abate. Not when more steam-powered ships were needed for the war, and more airships needed to patrol the skies.

The daimyo himself rode south with his army in an attempt to assuage the hostility of the Selatani natives. His effort failed and – showing great self restraint – did not order his troops to slaughter everyone in the province. These results proved prophetic for the second embassy in play... Matsuoka's expedition to Mindanao; wherein the general was ambushed as he went to parley with the hetman of Jolo. Two of his catamarans were sunk when a huge force of Moro war canoes rushed out of the mangroves, and the rest of the squadron scattered in fear.

Trouble continued to brew on the southern shore of Borneo as gangs of Taika'no priests began to land from catamarans, and plagued the natives with the teachings of Oro – teachings which ran rather counter to the native Buddhist faith. Violence followed, with many Oroists dying by hanging in Selatan. The missionaries did manage to gain a bit of a foothold in Tengah, however.

#### **JAVA** (Oroist, Singhasari in Kediri)

*St'ert, Great Kahuna of Java, Emperor of the Maori, the Sea Spear*

#### **DIPLOMACY** None

In an odd parallel to the cruel Blajakay of Thai-land, the Kahuna also launched a reform of the civil law aimed at breaking down the caste structure throughout the islands and in reducing the power of the great mercantile, trade and craft guilds. Hainan island (in the north) and Sakalava (in the uttermost west) both increased to 2 Gpv. While efforts to reinforce the defenses of Tempyo in the south continued unabated, Wili took the time to issue an edict proclaiming Admiral St'ert his heir, should he die before little Miu Miu (his recently born daughter) should come of age.

The night of November 8<sup>th</sup>, 1767 – a heavy fog lies over the sprawling metropolis of Sunda. In the murk, harbor bells ring the hour, warning ships away from the sea-wall and the vast battlements of the Javan capital. Those defenses stand guarded – the night-watch of Sunda does not sleep – but the guns watching the sky are few and widely spaced. The might of Java looks a

different direction – to the south, to the Red Center and the horror festering therein, not to the north, not for a brace of Ming zeppelins to hove into view, heading for the landing field near the Fairegrounds.

This time surprise is complete. The black airships are over the city and the horrible *shoonk-shoonk-shoonk* of falling poison-gas canisters has barely penetrated the fog before the black smoke is billowing through the streets, murdering entire families, entire districts in their sleep. The guns of the citadel begin to fire, rousing the sleeping city, but are swiftly silenced by a searing blast of light...

Where Pienching's death was a vast conflagration, Sunda died silently, choked by ebon mist, screams muffled in throats filled with spores and mold. Only the crackling roar of the burning airship factories and the crash of the Faireground attractions toppling over into the bonfire of Javan dreams broke the dead silence of the night. Not even birds called among the empty houses and corpse-choked streets when the black ships had passed.

#### **THE WAR AGAINST THE METEOR MEN**

##### **January 1767**

##### **February**

Javan troops at Broome begin digging a new ring of fortifications around the city of Tempyo.

##### **March**

A Taika'no army of about 5,000 men marches into Tempyo from the east to bolster the defenses of the city.

##### **April**

A variety of Javan generals arrive to command the defense of Tempyo, though there is no sign of the enemy. The ring of defenses around the city is now quite deep, and filled with heavy bunkers, covered gunpits and all manner of traps and snares for the enemy.

##### **May**

The Javan captain Nadeau arrives in Pilbarra and attempts to convince the colonists there to abandon the province in the face of the Meteor men threat. As none of these 'invaders' have yet been seen in the province, he is roundly ignored. All this despite the presence of a large fleet offshore ready to take them away...

##### **June**

A strong force of Sakalavan riflemen (Javan allies from Madagascar) arrive in Pilbarra and now the settlers are rounded up at bayonet-point and forced, weeping and wailing, to board the fleet. It is a lengthy process, as no one wants to abandon their homes...

##### **July - August**

The evacuation of Pilbarra continues, with nearly everyone aboard the fleet.

##### **September**

The Javan fleet at Pilbarra continues to load settlers, hampered by the lack of a proper port to take them aboard. Hundreds perish in the surf as boats overturn, whole families are separated or lost, and the wailing of the refugees raises a mournful pall in the air.

The Javan naturalist Ititu, attempting to emulate the success of a Borangi traveler a year previous, enters Great Sandy Desert from the east, on foot and alone. He is never seen again.

##### **October**

The Javan fleet at Pilbarra finally completes its cruel business and makes haste north, away from the threat of the Meteor men.

##### **November**

Sunda is destroyed by the Qing airship attack.

##### **December - January 1768**

A lot of rain.

##### **February**

A large Japanese fleet arrives at Na-iki in Nullarbor, takes on water, food and the latest mail, then leaves again.

##### **March**

Hosogawan general Hirokawa leads a reconnaissance force into Kwaranjdji.

An Oroist bishop named Yamazi Shigo reaches Orantjugurr from the east with a small party of bearers. He seeks to emulate the success of Hasaki two years previous – and to secure a number of specimens of the peculiar vegetation now native to those parts. Unfortunately, he never returns to make a report...

##### **May**

The Javan refugee fleet arrives at Singhasari and the

multitude of homeless Pilbaran settlers are unloaded and directed to a huge camp outside the city, where they languish in the summer rain, pining for their rough-hewn homes in the far south.

Admiral St'ert learns that he is now Great Kahuna and the line of Wili has been brutally severed.

Hirokawa and his men enter Tanami.

Hirokawa and his men enter Orantjugurr.

A large Taika'no fleet arrives in Oanx, after making passage from Hawai'i to reinforce the garrison there.

June  
July  
August

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

*Haj Alt, High Priest of the Shark*

**DIPLOMACY** None

In an effort to bolster the war effort against the MeteorMen, the Shark Priests rebated part of the tithes previously demanded from the Javan temples and sanctuaries. Otherwise, every priest and monk in the entire hierarchy converged upon Fukuzawa and the Pyramid of Oro in a desperate attempt to turn the tide against the mysterious invaders...

Because of the gravity of the crisis facing Oroism, the high priest Haoroko ne Muuta had called a supreme council of the priests of Oro to convene within the sacred apartments of the Temple complex. Having brought forth all of the sacred artifacts and assembled the hosts of the church to pray to the shark god in a special Ceremony to bring its mighty vengeance down upon the heads of the demons from the sky. As the shark god demanded blood for his offering, several thousand newly ordained novices were sacrificed to the Shark god, as was all the treasure of the church. Amid the chanting of tens of thousands, and the bellowing of conch trumpets and drums and chanting voices, the sacred pool boiled red and white and gray as the god's avatars feasted...

At the conclusion of the ceremony, in a final show of devotion Haoroko himself plunged into the sacred pool, offering himself up to the white teeth of the god.

In a quiet ceremony the next day, Haj Alt was made the new high priest.

### THE BORANG BAKUFU (Oroist, Sakuma in Borang)

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

**DIPLOMACY** Arukun (^a), Aanx (^a)

Faced with the prospect of a grim war, every Borang city rang with the sounds of industry... cannons were cast in ever increasing numbers, and dozens of infantry regiments received new rifles, new field pieces and modified uniforms. Despite these preparations, great uneasiness afflicted the western provinces – odd darting lights had been seen in the night sky, and the flight of the abos and their wild tales were still sharp in everyone's minds...

In attempt to forestall widespread panic, the Daimyo marched his armies to Dajarra, where a great camp was established as feudal levies arrived from the length and breadth of the realm, and the banners of the nobility bade to blot out the sky with their numbers.

In the north, a small Borangi fleet made landfall in Okora, taking over garrison duties of the province from the Taikan'o troops previously stationed there.

### TE NIHO O ORO (Oroist, Kenehold in Dajarra)

*Hatipi, Spear of the Order of the Black Shark*

*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 Black Sharks rallied to Kenehold as well, reinforcing the troops maintained by the order at that city. Every man was filled with barely-banked fury – the sacrifice of the Oro priests had not gone unnoticed – and the zeal of the Teeth was near-incandescent.

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Still, everyone was secretly relieved when no attack came out of the west...

### TAIKA'NO TE'IKOKU HIRO'I (Oroist, Rabaul on Bismarck)

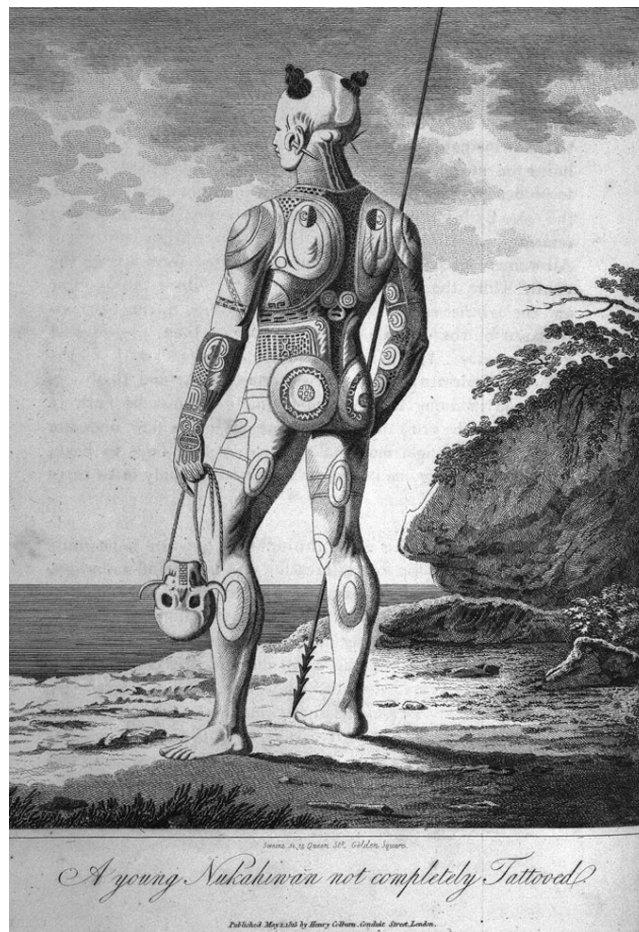
*Sugawara Te Anu, Daimyo of the Southern Seas, Lord of the Hundred Islands*

**DIPLOMACY** Madang (^f)

Having recovered Hawai'i from the peculiar



madness which had overcome the local population, the Taika' took pains to fortify the outpost and to keep a wary watch upon the sea-road in case the "white fleet" returned. A pair of zeppelins were purchased from the Hosogawans, just to allow the fleet some experience with the newfangled devices.



## 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...	House of Tewfik
Quality Ratings	i16 w20 s17 c11 a13

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

## EMIRATE OF THE CHANDELLAS (Shi'a, Bundelkand in Chandela)

*Kuhman Singh, prince of Bundelkhand, Lion of the North*

**DIPLOMACY** Failed...

With peace still lingering in India, the cities of Bundelkhand and Aliyasha expanded. War reparations continued to be sent to the League, though even such a small token began to grate on the sensibilities of the Chandellan lords. The massing of Thai armies in Palas was keenly noted by the border guards – the steady trickle of Moslem refugees from that land were eager to fill Kuhman's ears with news of dire portent.

Diplomatic efforts by Singh's emissaries in Avanti failed to gain the release of the Hussite leaders held captive there – while also gaining no advantage for their own diplomatic cause. Further south, the garrison of Pandya was reinforced, which proved an excellent idea as some Shi'a malcontents in the area attempted to blow up several Orangist churches on a given Sunday – but only managed to detonate their cart-bomb in a residential neighborhood, killing several dozen on-lookers, the cadre and two goats.

Governor Ramanothar was forced to impose a curfew and street patrols to prevent sectarian conflict between the two religious groups. Further religious trouble raised its head in Vengi, as well, where Orangist missionaries (from the Carthaginian outpost at Calicut) were active, finding a receptive host in the regional governor, general Ghotangar Sayman Singh.

## SHI'A IMAMAT (Shi'a, Yathrib in Kosala)

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

**DIPLOMACY** Mozul in Pandya (^ch), Chabaz (un)

The Imam focused nearly all of it's activities on attempting to roll back the presence of the Orangists in Pandya. Both good luck and the extreme fervor of the Indian Shi'a were successful in turning nearly all of the fickle provincials back to Allah. But not quite all.... Rhemini himself spent all of '67 and '68 in Mozul and the surrounding countryside, preaching to the Orangists and bolstering the will of the faithful.

Elsewhere, however, things did not go so well. Efforts to gain greater control of the mosques and madrasas in Chabaz only sparked an open break between those mullahs and the Imam. Many scribes and clerks were lent to the Chandellans to help them complete a census and tax roll.

## THE SOUTHERN LEAGUE (Hussite, Amon Hen in Karnata)

*Joseph of Satava, King of the South*

**DIPLOMACY** None

Though morale remained low throughout the League, the tribute received from Chandella did allow King Joseph to see some war-damage repaired in Malabar. Even better, the Carthaginian Emir Hamilcar remained at Calicut with a powerful army, playing polo, chatting with the local nabobs and generally keeping a weather eye on the Chandellans.

## DANRAJASTAHN (Hussite, Schwarzkastel in Edrosia)

*Peregrin von Hessen, Maharajah of India, Duke of Delhi, Grand-Duke of Abalach, Prince of the Black Tower*

**DIPLOMACY** Bhuj (^a)

Peaceful industry marked the day in old Arnor, where the cities of Kanauj, Varanasi and Somnath all expanded a level. The riverside town of Agra, in Chitor, grew into a more proper city as well. Great strides were taken in the countryside to restore the ruined farms and poisoned



wells left behind by the decades of war now (hopefully) put behind the brotherly nations of India. If only the Avanti crisis would pass!

Buddhist monks continued to try and infiltrate the 'stahn from the east, but were regularly hunted down by the local landowners (ably assisted by both the Hindoo and Hussite clergy) and murdered. Their desiccated bodies were a regular sight on the kingdom's main roads, usually painted a particularly vile yellow.

A daring attempt by the Maharajah's elite guards to sneak into Avanti and break Hakanson and Nehru out of the pits of Sagar (the rajah's mountain-top fortress) failed by happenstance – a guard turned left instead of right, and it was windy. Coupled with the failure of the Chandellan embassy to win the release of the diplomats, the rajah blew a loud raspberry at both kingdoms.

Back in Kanauj the now-very-eldery Peregrin summoned his son Christian home from China, put down the nargile and began working on his memoirs. A particularly weak parliament was also instituted by fiat, and while the Hindu community had token representation, none of the senators were elected – Peregrin selected every last one...

That crazy Polish woman continued to feed soup to the poor, and hand out blankets and help people find their lost children. Governor Clive – bending to popular pressure – recognized her charity (the Little Sisters of Mercy) and had the city police lay off roughing up her helpers and constituents.

Prince Christian returned home just in time to be saddled with a wife, lady Toral of Bhuj, who was a waif-like girl of only seventeen. The prince, who had dragged a veritable harem of Chinese flower-girls home with him, was rather despondent at this turn of events. Among the wedding gifts, however, was a particularly amusing set of "Lil' Arnori" toy soldiers, along with a "Lil' Peregrin" figure on a painted horse. The Prince showed them off to everyone, which gained the House of Tewfik emissary (whose workshops had made the toys) some extra orders.

## KINGDOM OF BALUCHISTAN (Hussite, Multan in Sukkur)

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

**DIPLOMACY** None

John Saul and his court lazed in the hot, Indian sun, sipping tea and laughing behind their hands about the Danarajahooohos. Of course, then something bad happened... this is India, after all!

## SHAHDOM OF AFGHANISTAN (Sunni, Kabul in Afghanistan)

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

**DIPLOMACY** None

The Afghans herded their sheep and feuded with each other, ignoring the lowlanders. The famine afflicting the whole of Persia and the Middle-East plagued the Pashtuns as well.



## KINGDOM OF THE KUSHANS (Hindu, Astakana in Kush)

*Bujayapendra, Blessed of Vishnu, prince of Astakana*

**DIPLOMACY** Ghazni (^fa)

The Great Prince – approached by embassies from both Persia and Prester John – agreed to sell the valley of Ferghana to Persia in exchange for suitable monies, grain and general good will. The Arfen began regular air-courier service into Astakana and out again, to east and west alike. They too paid the Great Prince tribute in exchange for rights to land and refuel their ships of the air in his remote kingdom. Other, more secretive emissaries had come to the city as well, promising great things...

With his northern border thus secured (and his troops paid with weighty Persian coin), he then turned his attention south... to

India, where millions of his co-religionists languished under the Hussite lash. The hosts of Kashmir and Khotan alike were gathered, lance-tips shining like living stars, and Bujayapendra went to war – the Hindu army swept down out of the Kushan hills and into fertile, well-watered Und. Riders went ahead of the army, stopping in every hamlet and village, promising an end to the tyranny of the Hussite invaders.

The Hindu underclass, however, had heard *that* before and they kept their heads low, waiting to see if the Sword of Saiva would vanquish the feringhee white-eye devils and their Moslem servants or not... in any case John Solomon of Baluchistan stood nearby with his army in Lahore and marched immediately to drive these “hill-men and rabble” back into the mountains. The baron of Multan, Gabor Derwent, and Carloman von Per, the baron of Peshawar marched as well, bringing their own levies into the fray.

At **Mardan** below the Malakand pass, the Hussites mustered twenty thousand men and 12 scout zeppelins against the 26,000 Kushites and Ghaznavar. Though outnumbered (and having already allowed the invaders through the bottleneck at Malakand due to disputes on the march between Derwent and von Per) John Solomon put his trust in the heavy guns of his Hussite batteries and the long eyes of his zeppelins. The Hussites advanced, bringing their guns to bear on the Hindu positions in a series of orchards just north of the town.

An artillery duel ensued as the Hussite riflemen advanced in loose formation and their airships began winging bombs and rockets down into the orchards. Almost immediately, John Solomon received an unexpected surprise – despite his heavy guns and superbly trained crews, the Kushan field pieces outranged his and their batteries were matching his shot for shot. The Hussite advance grew ragged, torn by bursts of fire. John Solomon ordered his infantry to halt and the guns run forward.

The Kushan left, seeing the motion of the enemy, surged forth from cover, their Ghaznavar light horse speeding recklessly across the field. At the same time, the airships circling overhead came under heavy shot from the long-bore Hindu guns. Facing unexpected fire, the airships broke away from the field to gain height. The Hussite right wing, commanded by Derwent, turned to face the hill-bandits, guns wheeling to rain fire into the charging lancers.

Sensing his moment in the confusion, Bujayapendra ordered a general charge by his heavy cavalry into the Hussite van. Expecting to face infantry and guns in the close confines of the trees, the Hussite riflemen were taken aback to face a charge of hussars and grenadiers. Now the Hindu guns were raining shot and explosive shells into the scrambling artillery batteries moving forward...

A hard-fought action followed and John Solomon was forced to yield the field after a bloody day. Hussite losses were heavy, though they held order and made an orderly retreat behind the screen of their remaining airships. Von Per's surviving troops then holed up behind the pitiful walls of Peshawar while John Solomon and the main body of the army fell back into the Punjab.

Bujayapendra now concentrated his attention upon Peshawar, which proved wise as Von Per was a poor leader of men. Hammered by the Kushan guns, the city fell within a fortnight. Von Per surrendered rather cravenly before even one Hindu *kshatriya* had died on the ramparts.

Learning of this at his camp in the Punjab, John Solomon swore bitterly – but with his army now outnumbered two-to-one by the Hindus – he could only throw barricades across the roads and dig in, hoping the Kushans would throw themselves upon his guns. Bujayapendra, meanwhile, was in the thick of a dispute with the

crowd of Brahmins which had sprung up from nowhere to ‘advise’ him upon the rule of Und.

Two months after Peshawar had fallen, the Kushan army took to the field again, burning churches and mosques and shooting any priest or mullah they could find. This devilry then inspired the remaining Hussite population to rise up in open revolt, while the Hindus *also* rose up in a vicious orgy of murder and arson directed at their oppressors.

John Solomon wasted no time in marching his army north into the chaos – both to succor the rebellious (and fleeing) Hussites – and in hopes of catching the Hindu army by surprise. Despite his hopes, however, John Solomon marched directly into an ambush just beyond **Kohat**, where the Hindu prince had deftly maneuvered his army into flanking position. Once more, the Ghaznavari light horse – let run wild in Und to torch and burn – had lured the Hussites out of position.

John Solomon's army was destroyed. The prince himself was captured, while Baron Derwent was killed on the field and his body dragged behind a captured cassion into Peshawar. The Hussite rising was then thoroughly crushed and their estates and lands properly apportioned by the Brahmins. Thousands of Christians fled south or east into the Punjab and Sahis, rightly terrified by the atrocities which had taken place.

All throughout India, no Moslem or Hussite now slept easy in their beds at night...

**GRIVPANI I' TIMURLENK** (Sunni, Bukara in Turkmen)  
*Bukharm Al'Qadir, Grand Master of the Grivpani*  
**DIPLOMACY** Abadan (^op)



Monies at last began to flow into the hands of the Grivpani, letting them establish themselves. Rumors of war and turmoil echoed out of the east and Bukharm had a good hearty laugh at the failure of the Baluchis to fend off the Great Prince of Astakana. (That the Hindu army was well-equipped with Persian artillery was a delightful coincidence not lost upon the Grand Master.)

**THE NOBLE HOUSE OF TEWFIK** (Al'Harkam in Carmania)  
*Tenfik Saul, Purveyor of Weed-killer of particular efficiency*  
**DIPLOMACY** Antioch (^mf)

While the House was open-handed on one part – providing the Grivpani with large sums of money in exchange for the Knights protecting their far-flung mercantile interests – Saul also made sure to garner up every kind of money-making venture he could lay hands on. In particular he took direct interest in establishing a mercenary brokerage in Central Asia and India – one in opposition to that long enjoyed by the East India Company.

Unfortunately, some activities of the company – such as their agent in Surashtra – drew hostile attention, in this case from a Hindu mob who attacked the warehouses, burned them down, and murdered the company employees (including Jamal Hibriz, who was there trying to renegotiate some cotton contracts).

My people made fate their henchmen  
And strode across the peaks of epochs.  
They swathed their heads with the sun  
And build their houses with the stars.  
My forebear was Chosroes, of the towering palace—  
Who among men has a forebear like mine?  
The ancient power of royalty is mine,  
Even above the honor of Islam and culture.  
I drew glory from the best of forebears

And religion from the best of Prophets.  
I based my pride on both sides,  
The majesty of the Persians and the religion of the Arabs.

Mihyar al-Daylami (d. 1037)

### THE SAFAVID PERSIAN EMPIRE

(Sunni, Semnan in Khurasan)

*Safi Babram "the bold", Khan of Khans, Shahanshab of Persia, Prince of Bukhara, Caliph of the East*

**DIPLOMACY** Persia (^ea), Cem in Mand (^a)

Though it seemed unlikely that the work would be completed for many years, the Shah's engineers began surveying routes for railroad lines from Al-Wan in Zagros south to Abas in Fars, and north to Tehran. A third section of



rail was planned from Tehran to Rayy in Dash'al'kavir. With the assistance of the Kushites, trade along the old Silk Road in the east re-opened, pleasing many merchants with long-standing interest in the lands ruled by Prester John.

Further west, the demon-haunted and Ice-tribesmen plagued province of Singanakh was abandoned. In the south, pushed by the Shah, a number of efforts by the Sunni clergy in Iran to meet with and discuss doctrinal differences with the Orangists in Araby met, at last, with some measured success. The marked hostility between the two camps lessened minutely, helped by the open warfare between the Al-Haggar and the Karidjites in the Levant. Indeed, in Fars, the population leaning towards the Karidjites swung back the other way, returning to the Sunni mosques in droves.

The winter of '67 saw the Shah's household blessed by his first child, a squalling girl, and the entire nation afflicted by terrible ice storms and frosts. When this horrible weather lingered into the spring of '68, the peasants quailed, watching their flocks perish, and then with a summer filled with torrential rain, their crops rot and mildew in the fields. Famine touched every household, large and small, and only the careful preparations of the Imperial government prevented a catastrophe.

Great confusion prevailed in the southern city of Abas after nearly four hundred bandits (apparently wayward Indian mercenaries lacking employment) became involved in a brawl with local police and militia and hacked their way out of the town, whooping and hollering and setting buildings on fire to make a diversion. They were then chased by an angry mob up into the mountains, where they disappeared over the border into the lawless domain of Neyriz.

Media remained in quarantine, for no one was quite sure what calamity had swept away the entire city of Hamadan, but General Al-Siribi maintained his cordon until two full years had passed. Then criminals and casteless men were driven into the ruins to see if they would die as well. When they did not, Al-Siribi allowed as how, perhaps, the contagion had passed.

### THE KARIDJITE IMAMAT (Karidjite Islam, Baghdad in Mesopotamia)

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

**DIPLOMACY** None

Faced with the onset of the Al-Haggari heretics, idolators and infidel dogs the kalifa took to the courtyard of the An Ansar mosque in Baghdad, preaching a particularly virulent strain of *jihad* against the Orangists (and all other scum like them). Unfortunately for his cause, all of the zealous were *already* in the Union army and at arms against the invaders.

### The Bayt al-Hikima, in Baghdad, on Friday 21 Rajab 1767

"In the name of Al-llah, the compassionate, the merciful.

Praise be to Al-llah, Lord of the worlds, the compassionate, the merciful, King on the day of reckoning.

Thee only do we worship, and to thee do we cry for help.

Guide thou us on the straight path, the path of those to whom thou hast been gracious.

The holy Qur'an has shown us the truth of what Al-llah wills, in its guidance sure, without doubt,

To those who fear Al-llah and to those who reject faith, whether thou warn them or do not warn them;

They will not believe.

Al-llah has set a seal on their hearts and on their hearing, and on their eyes as a veil; Great is the penalty they incur.

Al-llah has called us my Khawarij brothers and sisters, to carry his will to the fakir and the apostate.

To the adulterer and the sinner. To cleanse once and for all the stain that has come to the holy of holies. We have been called to vindicate the truth through the sword. Al-llah wills us to call Jihad on the unrighteous and the unjust dogs that have turned from the true faith and the heretical apes that have come to the holy land by force and treachery. We have been chosen to punish the unbelievers and the enemies of Al-llah. Embrace this honor and enforce Al-llah's will.

### THE ISLAMIC UNION (Karidjite Islam, Ar-Raqqah in Mosul)

*Izzat al-Ayyubi, Sultan of Ar-Raqqah, Prince of Mosul, Emir of Aleppo*

**DIPLOMACY** Edessa (^c), Carhae (^nt)

Determined to keep the Fedyakin out of their heartland, the Union threw a line of fortifications across Aleppo, Mosul and Palmyra. At the same time, Sultan Ali had fallen back to Baghdad and Ar-Raqqah, gathered fresh levies and his reserves, and then marched back west. Al-Ayyubi, with the remains of the army which had been driven out of Levant, took up station at Homs and prepared to respond to the next wave of Orangist attacks...

But none came. The Arab street from Alexandria to Kabul, however, was filled with wild tales that the Carthaginians were preparing to (not only) accept the Orange Catholic faith for their national religion (but also) then invade the Middle East in support of the Fedyakin.

At the end of '68, after a long illness, Ali Adin died. His appointed heir, Al-Ayyubi then became Sultan and leader of the Union.

### KEL AL'HAGGAR FEDYAKIN (Orangist,

Jerusalem in Levant)

*Ameur bin Skikda, Paraclete of the Faithful, Duke of Lybia, First Moon, the Desert Mouse*

**DIPLOMACY** None to speak of

Though the Fedyakin barely owned



more than the boots on their feet and the rifles in their hands, various 'friends' funneled enough money into Ameur's coffers to not only keep his soldiers fed and paid, but also to dispatch a survey crew to the far-western Sinai to begin laying the course for a canal directly connecting the Mediterranean and the Red Sea. A canal, it should be noted, that would be large enough to allow the passage of steam-powered warships.

The gains recently had by the Orangists in Mansura were now strongly opposed (and being ground back) by an ever-increasing number of Taborite preachers active in the province.



Fedyakin missionaries scattered to the four winds, but they found entrance in Union lands roughly opposed... so they wound up focusing their efforts on Jordan, where they found fertile soil for the Word of Revelation. But while the Union armies girded for a massive Fedyakin attack into the east, Ameer turned south and his armies swarmed against the mighty walls of **Aqaba**.

While the Fedyakin guns hammered at the ramparts of the port, a scuffle in the tents of the Paraclete yielded up a furious, bruised and not-entirely-subdued Karidjite cleric named Walad'ir who had attempted to ambush Ameer by his lonesome and murder the 'heretical dog who drinks blood from the hand of Shai'tan'. The Duke had him bound with chains and dragged behind a camel until he learned humility and good manners.

After two months of shelling, and the lack of any Unionist force arriving in relief, the defenders of Aqaba surrendered, trusting the Mouse would treat them with mercy and clemency. Little known to the citizens, however, the Fedyakin high command were involved in a bitter dispute between Ameer (who had taken it into his head to have the "corrupt, demon-loving infidels" slaughtered man, woman and child) and Prince Leto who did not think that was a good idea at all. After several tense days, Ameer relented and the city lived.

Leaving the province in the hands of Abu Abassin Mohammed, the chief of the Sinai and 20,000 Fedyakin, the Mouse then turned his army north and marched straightaway into Jordan and to the city of Amman. There, with Fenriq, Abu and Leto busy elsewhere, Ameer proceeded to tell his troops "the Earth will be cleansed of the Sin of the unbeliever!" and the city was utterly destroyed, walls cast down, earth sown with salt, people slaughtered and their bodies charred beyond recognition.

The Karidjite mosques in the province were also looted and burned to the ground.

Meantime, in Palmyra, word of the Fedyakin atrocities had reached Sultan Ali's army and his troops rioted, demanding to be let at the devil-worshipping westerners! Ali himself, who late lately been afflicted by troubled bowels, still hewed to the original plan of waiting for the Fedyakin to throw themselves on the defenses of Palmyra... but Ayyubi and al-Zayyani (commanding the ground and air forces of the Union, respectively) were now eager to revenge their defeat in Levant. With Ali dragging along, now confined to a wagon and increasingly ill, the Union army surged south, through Syria and into Jordan.

In that very region, meanwhile, Abu Abassin and his Sinai-men had been wreaking havoc upon the citizens, trashing mosques and burning copies of the Koran. The Nabatean and Bedouin populace rose up in revolt, whereupon Abassin took the opportunity to massacre the men, take the women as prizes for his men and sell the children to Ethiopian slavers loitering off the coast of the Hijaz.

Ameer was waiting for the Unionist attack with rather cold calculation (had he destroyed Amman simply to lure out the Karidjites? Could he be capable of such an act?) and met them in battle near old **Jerash**. Never had the Fedyakin seen so many airships bearing down upon them, spitting rockets and raining bombs... but against the 26,000 Union soldiers, the Mouse could still bring 70,000 fanatic religious zealots to bear! Amid olive groves, in a sloping valley, the two armies clashed, the sky filled with the drone of zeppelin engines and the staccato roar of Union artillery.

Even as Ameer sprang his trap and hordes of Fedyakin stormed towards the Union forces from all sides, his handful of zeppelins plunged out of the uppermost air (having strained their engines to reach a great height) and lumbered through the ranks of Union airships. Unfortunately, the Unionist flying machines were

expertly handled and broke in coordinated fashion – catching the Fedyakin zeppelins in a cross-fire which sent all six swiftly plunging to earth in flaming ruin. Two Union airships were lost.

Just behind the Unionist lines, General Ayyubi had taken stock of the vast clouds of enemy dust and the fall of Fedyakin cannon shot. His airships were now signaling the disposition of the enemy and their numbers by mirrors using Norse-code. "Retreat!" He bawled, and the Union force withdrew in swift manner and in good order. The Union airfleet hammered at the advancing Fedyakin the rest of the day, giving Ayyubi and his men time to break contact and withdraw up the road to Damascus.

Disgusted, Ameer withdrew as well, seeking solace for the failure of his cunning plan in the arms of as many concubines as his vizier could procure... his sulk would last the rest of '67.

The next year, the Fedyakin advanced again, eyes warily on the sky, into Syria. Still unwilling to fight unless in positions of their own choosing, the Union army withdrew again to Palmyra. Ameer, for his part, contented himself with seizing Damascus and converting Syria to Orangist by bullet, bayonet and blade.

**THE EXARCHATE OF TREBIZOND** (Roman Catholic, Cerkes in Abasigia)  
*Lars Vilbuna, Governor of Georgia, Prince of Cerkes, Exarch of the South*

**DIPLOMACY** None

Many ships were dispatched to the south to carry yet more colonists to the barren and rugged coast of Asir, in Araby, where the Exarchate had undertaken to establish a town around for the fortress of St. Olafs (which, among other things, was now serving as a way-station for Arfen ships traveling to the east, and for airships in need of food, water, spare parts and other supplies on the Alexandria to India passage).

A complicated shell-game of ships and men and banknotes was successful in acquiring a small fleet (six men-of-war and ten frigates) from the Arfen in Rostov. Margrave Vasa was appointed admiral of the Black Sea Fleet, which (after a shakedown voyage to Alexandria to deliver Prince Sigurd to the African theatre of war) took up residence in Cerkes.

Other mercantile business with the Arfen was stymied by the Companie's lack of proper groundwork. The possibility of trade with grand and distant lands faded for the moment... though the Company was granted an exclusive right to trade in the feathers of various rare birds (such as the Anatolian Whooping Crane) which made their homes in the highlands of the Exarchate.



Figure 1. Exarchate Airship Crew in Urmia

## EUROPE

<b>Catholic Mercenaries</b>	<b>Minimum bid listed in [x].</b>
<b>Condotierri</b>	None
<b>Captains</b>	None
<b>To hire, please contact</b>	Norsktrad
<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>	5c, 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



### AERONAUTICAL RESEARCH & FABRICATION

(Rostov in Levedia)

*Solyom Pasternak, Captain of the East*

**DIPLOMACY** Debrecen in Moldavia (^bo),  
Taman (^f)



Hoping for a happier result than his short-lived marriage to Valentina Prokofief, Solyom took a second wife – Koyuki Yama, from among the Japanese who had settled around Rostov – and got her with child, and then both mother and babe died quite terribly in a breech-birth. A little staggered by this run of ill-luck, Pasternak then took a third wife, Mathilde Grochev (of a once-noble family from Moscow), but did not succeed in quickening her. Worse, she soon developed a cough uncannily similar to that which had claimed Valentina.

In the hinterlands, massive investment by Sweden and Masai allowed the necessary expansion of farming land and roads, bridges and other appurtenances of the agricultural arts. The Company also dispatched a daring band of colonists to the upper reaches of the Volga, where the ruins of Bolgar (in Suvar) were once more tenanted by living men. The rebuilding town was named ‘Arpadagrad’ in honor of that famous Companyman.

Swedish missionaries working in Company lands turned their attentions upon the Hussite population of Khazar, where there was some ugly business while faith was reassessed.

The air courier service rearranged its priorities and opened a number of new routes. AirPost mail traffic into and out of Rostov now included swift deliveries to Kiev, Semnan, Kingston, Astakana, Rome, Komarno, Warsaw, Baghdad, Valetia, Alexandria,

Augustino, Bukhara, St. George the Defender, Mount Tabor, London, Corunna, Cimmura, Paris, Al-Harkam, Kabul, Riga and Cerkes. As part and parcel of this new initiative, the Company scoured Europe for airship pilots, crews, mechanics and skilled men of all trades to service their rapidly growing aerofleet. Substantial bonuses were being paid...

Arrangements were made with Swedish-Russia for the Company to assume management of the province of Patzinak.

### PRINCIPATE OF KIEV (Eastern Orthodox, Debrecen in Moldavia)

*Ivan Kourmos, Prince of Kiev, Master of the Holy Rivers*

**DIPLOMACY** None

Despite the fact that no further meteors had crashed to earth, the Kievians continued to work on their hidden mountain fortresses, digging them deeper and stocking them with more supplies, just in case. In the south, Orthodox missionaries continued to plague the Hussite farmers with cheaply printed tracts, long dialogues on the materiality of Christ and demands for donations.

### PEOPLES REPUBLIC OF BAKLOVAKIA

(Hussite, Komarno in Slovakia)

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

**DIPLOMACY** None

Under cover of darkness, without so much as a single lantern... OW! SPLASH! “God curse you, Ivan Fernos, you’ve woken the whole town with your fat feet!” ... the Baklovakian Navy (all eight ships) set sail from the docks of Komarno and down the Danube to the distant sea.



Reflect upon your blessings,  
of which every man has plenty,  
not on your past misfortunes,  
of which all men have some.

Charles Dickens

### ALBANIAN EAST INDIA COMPANY (Thessaloniki in Macedon)

*Valentin Argir, Senior Partner in the AEIC*

**DIPLOMACY** Somnath in Surashtra (^mf), Schwarzcastel in Edrosia (^ma), Multan in Sukkur (^mf), Brest in Brittany (^mf), Stralsund in Pomern (^mf)

With a team of Danish auditors looking on, the Company launched a strange-looking, steam-powered ship (the *David Kukulone*) built along the lines of a Javan trimaran. Two steam boilers in the outriggers powered a pair of screws and four stacks belched smoke and steam in equal measure. On its maiden voyage, the *Kukulone* managed to make way to Cape Kanastraion and back again – without sinking! This made the company boffins immeasurably pleased.

Continuing efforts by the Company to sway the ill-feeling of the Bithnians to friendship continued to fail. Better luck was had by Yelmul in France and Poland, where the favor of the company was well looked on. That the good captain was traveling with a flying casino (where the mayors of both cities had won substantial sums) only added to his friendly nature. Efforts to show off a crude picture-machine based on the use of a rotating series of luminescent plates moving in front of a strong lantern failed when the entire contraption burst into flames.

Things having returned to something like normal in the Company offices, the mercantile officers in the hierarchy now took

great offense to the picking and prying and general incompetence (in matters of international trade and finance) of the Taborite monks who had come to “help” the Company clean house. After a bitter internal struggle, the Taborites were driven out, and good riddance too. They had even tried to give away the entire assets of Air Albania to the Danish government... for nothing! Fools.

The great ships of the air were not, in fact, turned over for military service (particularly as those scum Arfen were now trying to horn into the market), but regular passenger service was reorganized from Thessalonika to the Hussite capitals of Paris, Augustina, Warsaw, Kanauj and Amon Hen.

#### **THE REPUBLIC OF DENMARK** (Hussite, 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-Midgard, Regina Germanica, Pendragoness of the Isles*

**DIPLOMACY** Franconia (^ea), Champagne (^t), Swabia (^fa), Hainaut (^a)

Having gained just the tiniest breathing room (and having been oddly left out of League deliberations to respond to the Invaders in Africa), the Republic took the time to conduct a thorough and wide-ranging census of all possessions, provinces and towns. The Dust Ranger forces patrolling the Italian wasteland were reinforced, given the intermittent affrays between the new colonists in the devastation and the inhuman denizens thereof. A quieter, but no less important war continued at home, where federal police raided a number of suspected Dawnist safe-houses in the capital itself, dragging many prisoners away. Similar efforts were undertaken in Athens, where the Polytechnic League university (which had continued to operate, despite the seizure of the company offices and it's dissolution) was packed up and moved to Thessalonika.

Work began on a military road connecting Slovenia and Verona, following the ancient course of the old Imperial Highway. At the same time, the surveyors were busy marking the roadbed of a rail-line paralleling the road. A Carinthia-to-Austria railway was also in the works. And amid the sands of the Sinai, Danish engineers labored alongside Albanian and Fedyakin workers on the proposed Suez Canal. The Judean fleet which had been busy refitting at Leghorn left at last, intending to make the long, long voyage back to China. Little did Admiral Lee know what horrors would await him...

Missionaries were dispatched to Gibraltar in support of the fleet, which was returning to restore Danish control of the city on the Rock (the Carthaginians having expressed dismay over the “misunderstanding” which had cost so many lives). While that hot-spot had settled, the German princes remained restive and reactionary – despite continuing efforts to woo them into the Republic as directly administered provinces.

A strong force of Dust Rangers, supplemented by freshly levied regiments were dispatched to Africa, to reinforce the defenses of Mansura.

And almost unnoticed by everyone, Princess Judit came of age.

#### **THE SWEDISH EMPIRE OF RUSSIA** (Roman Catholic, Riga in Latvia)

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

**DIPLOMACY** Muscovy (^nt)

Settlers continued to filter back into northern

Russia, particularly to Livonia (where the Torsson government was providing land grants and seed money for farmers, lumber-mills, swamp-draining and district road building) which improved to 3



GPv. Efforts by the Senate to divest themselves of any responsibility for the lands south of the Volga Canal continued. The arid province of Patzinak was sold to the ARF company for a few bushels of wheat and the promise of more in the future.

Having decided to view his vast domain with his own two eyes, Tsar Kjell set out from Riga accompanied by a huge number of settlers, cows, goats, engineers, and soldiers. The cavalcade traveled south, through Smolensk (which was settled to 1 Gpv) and then Chernigov (also settled to 1 Gpv) and – eventually – across the hideous deserts of Urst-Urt to the citadel of Korn and the vast warren of Hasturite tunnels digged there. The Tsar viewed various arcane relics, hunted for ghost-rats in the echoing chambers and generally acted like a feudal lord on vacation far from his wife.

A quiet law was passed by the ~~rubber stamp~~ Kalmar senate allowing the Norkstrad company to continue to operate freely (including the right to build warships, guns and all manner of armaments) in both St. Georges and the northern city of Malmo (from which, long ago, the Company had sprung). Soon after this, a Norsk squadron of four steamships visited the port, though their commander, Post-Kaptan Marschal took sick almost immediately and died during the winter of '67.

Rather more dispute and discussion followed the Foreign Office introducing a bill calling for the recognition of a new free-state called ‘Overstjord’ based around the settlement at Bergen in old Norway. Hemming and hawing followed, before most of the Senators were mollified by the Overstjordanes acknowledging Imperial suzerainty.

In Afrika, a fleet finally returned to take aboard the huge mob of refugees which had begun to settle in around St. Georges in mile upon mile of shanties and tents like the Rot. Admiral Bornovsky took the whole mass aboard – many at bayonet-point – and then set off for the east, where (eventually) they made landfall at Kherson in Polovotsy, destined to live once more among the green, cold confines of the Russ forest.

#### **OVERSTJORD** (Roman Catholic, Bergen in Hordaland)

*Preben Overgaard, Mayor of Bergen*

**DIPLOMACY** None

Granted autonomy in western Scandia and given free rein to resettle the abandoned lands, the township of Bergen (previously the site of a failed Nörsktrad colony), and now reoccupied by landless men and women from England, Germania and Poland. The Mayor, now in charge of a steadily expanding settlement – a Swedish agricultural engineer named Nielsen had taken charge of an aggressive project to clear the rivers of dead logs, to re-open the roads and help reestablish the network of farm steadings abandoned with the onset of the Ice – signed a mutual defense treaty with Sweden and endured a stream of nosy Danish embassies, checking for “cults, secret societies, Shriners and pickle salesmen.”

Not far away, in Malmo, there was also a great deal of activity as industrial construction on a vast scale began in the city. Norsktek contractors were quite busy building a new steamship yard.

#### **THE GRAND DUCHY OF POLAND** (Hussite, Warsaw in Poland)

*Ivan Dovietski, Duke of Poland*

**DIPLOMACY** None

The bustling port of Stralsund was now thronged with an ever-increasing number of merchants, particularly those rascally Albanians, and it increased in size. Helped by substantial foreign investment, the railroad from Warsaw south to Krakow was completed, which made Poland the first nation in the world to offer steam-train service to every major city. Not that you would

actually *want* to suffer through sixty hours of choking smoke, cinders, spine-rattling travel from, say, Kassel in Denmark to Krakow. That would be pretty vile...

The Duke made a point (at the official opening ceremony of the Krakow line) to thank the Albanian East India Company for their assistance in “the continuing development of Poland, jewel of the East.”

### THE KNIGHTS OF TABOR

(Hussite, Mount Tabor in Bohemia)

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



**DIPLOMACY** Calais in Flanders (^ch), Ponthieu (^ab), Tours in Maine (^ch), Macedon (^ch)

The Knights busied themselves with doing good works in such distant urbs as Alexandria, Stralsund, Marseilles (where they showed great piety by clearing the ruins and shoveling Catholic bodies into mass graves) and Munich. Temporal control of the region of Provence was turned over to the Frankish Commonwealth who now had, at last, their port on the Mediterranean. The garrison there – though ordered to join the Frankish attack on the Islander possessions in the south of France – did not leave their posts.

Further trouble unfolded on Tabor itself, where the students at the bible college nestled among the church buildings rioted against the weevily bread, unheated dormitories and the cruelty of the instructors. The Mountain Guard was called out and suppressed their pitiful insurrection with bayonets, clubs and grapeshot. Even in the hallowed halls of Huss it seemed the ideals of the SRC were not entirely dead. They were bleeding, however, though the murdered students were soon revered as martyrs.

A spate of revenge killings followed as the relatives of the murdered students exacted a bloody tithe from the Knight officials who had ordered the brutal suppression of their protests.

**UNITED KINGDOMS OF GREAT BRITAIN** (Roman Catholic, Kingston in Northumbria)

*Sinclair Russell, King of England, Scotland and Wales, Admiral of the Fleet*

**DIPLOMACY** Highlands (~un)

Industry continued to flourish in the south of the island, and this led (almost inevitably) to a great hewing and sawing in Scotland, for the mercantile marine of the island kingdom needed ever more ships, and the factories and sprawling cities needed firewood and furniture and all matter of building materials. Strathclyde became cultivated and literally plagued by both vast herds of sheep and catastrophic soil erosion.

The same kind of creeping cultivation afflicted Dyffed and Gwynned, which increased to 2 Gpv each. Elsewhere, King Oliver caroused in London, making it his manly duty to soldier through every fleshpot, brothel, gambling den and casino in the city on a nightly basis. Prince John himself was addicted as well, but to matters of the Fleet (he had recently taken an abiding interest in the myriad uses of *steam*) and running the government on a day to day basis.

One of the matters distracting the Prince from his lonely wife and neglected children (Catherine and James) was fresh trouble in the Highlands, where Duke William Exeter’s attempt to woo the clans into something approximating duty to the crown had turned violent, and the Scotsmen were in open revolt.

Exeter, despite commanding eight thousand King’s Men, immediately fled the province, letting the rebellious Scots run rampant, slaughtering every Sassenach they could find and looting businesses and farmsteads financed by ‘bloody southern gold!’.

Duke William, meantime, had hurried straight through Strathclyde, across Lothian and all the way to Kingston in search of yet more troops with which to crush the rising of the clans.

This news had barely reached the King and Prince in London (where they had lately taken up residence, preferring the bustle of the city and the docks to the staid confines of Kingston) when a Carthaginian zeppelin hove into view from the east, following the prevailing winds off the North Sea. Given the tense international situation, the air wardens of the city immediately sounded the alarm – sending a droning *buuuuuuu-buuuuuu-buuuuuu* echoing over the rooftops of central London.

Along the Thames, the crews of the *HMS Hood* and *HMS Audacious* sprang into action, clattering down gangways and rushing to their gun turrets. Both battleships belched steam, boilers thrumming and made way into the channel. But the Hussite airship – engines howling – had already raced across the city, spewing bombs from its lower holds. Black spheres rained down across Soho and Covent Garden west of the center of London proper. Two sharp explosions rattled the windows of St. Paul’s Cathedral.

The deep, hammering roar of the *Hood*’s guns smote the air – but the Carthan airship had already vanished into the industrial haze to the west. South of the city, four RAF zeppelins rose from their mooring masts, crews scrambling to load their quick-firing guns and bring the engines to speed.

In the narrow, twisty streets of Cheapside and Whitechapel, the momentary panic was subsiding. The Navy guns had fallen silent and everyone was peering out of doors – there seemed to be no fires, no billowing columns of smoke – no screams of the wounded. On the bridge of the *Audacious*, Prince James Stuart ordered a pinnace brought around – the King was at Kensington and Stuart needed to consult with the old windbag immediately.

A firewarden on Berkeley Square saw it first.

A drifting black cloud spilling out of the windows of the Church of St. Ignatius of Loyola like slowly falling rain. Then his eyes widened, mind grasping that the street – indeed, most of the square – was carpeted with the sudden dead. Screaming in terror, he pelted back towards Oxford Circus – but the spores were already lodged in his throat, multiplying at a horrific rate, digging their sporophytes into the soft tissues to drink his blood, clogging his lungs – even as he wheezed desperately for breath and a grayish mist spewed from nostril, mouth and then – as his body crumpled to the ground, from every pore of his body.

The Contagion blossomed across central and western London, drawn by the wind, then blocked by rows of furiously burning buildings. King Oliver had not managed to consult with the Prince – he had been riding in a carriage on The Mall when a sphere burst not more than sixty yards away. The prince ordered the city fired – and now the guns of the *Hood* and *Audacious* roared again, firing incendiary rounds into the woods of Regent’s Park and flimsy townhouses lining the Strand.

Despite this desperate measure, the gray mist was flung upwards by the convection of the flames – some particles were destroyed, but the rest fell as a dreadful ashy rain that slew as it touched. James himself died late that horrific night, as the city burned and the *Hood* ran aground in a Thames choked with boats crowded with the dead. The crew had succumbed. More than half of the city was annihilated, including the Jesuit College in Mayfair. Fire consumed much of the rest, and the stunned, disheartened remnants of the Royal Army let it blaze, fearing the gray mist more than smoke or fire itself.

By great good luck, the wind died that night and did not resume the next day. By then, the spores had exhausted themselves, consuming all available fertilizer. The *Audacious* had escaped the

deadly pall, along with most of the fleet. The Royal Army moved cautiously in the ruins, soaking the ashy ground with lye, every remaining building put to the torch.

While the nominal center of the Cromwell government had always been Kingston in the north, the suffocation of London (the true capital) shook the realm from crown to soul. In the north, Duke William declared himself Regent for young prince James II – though no one had seen the boy, his sister or his mother, Princess Wilhelmina. This assertion was immediately disputed by Lord Edmund Spenser (commanding a great force of engineers in Penzance) and Admiral Russell (at that time commanding a squadron off the coast of Morocco) was rumored to be sailing for home with all speed.

Exeter, in control of the Parliament, immediately issued an edict naming Spenser a traitor to the Crown. Lord Edmund, for his part, was on a train – tracks cleared, all stops out – racing for the ruins of London. The battered, disorganized remnants of the Royal Army were there... and they held the crown of England in bloody, blackened hands.

Exeter realized the Army was the key as well, though he was forced to race south over postal roads, laming horses and breaking carriage axles at an astounding rate. Spenser reached London in a fraction of the time, stepping off his train onto the siding in Kensington to be greeted by a solemn mass of soldiers, engineers and civilians who had been working the quarantine lines around the gaping wound of center City.

Spenser was a charismatic man, and rallying the Army to him was little effort. The grasping greed of Exeter was all to plain to these men. There was still no sign of the Princess or her children (nor would they be, though such heartbreaking news would not be confirmed for months, all three had died in the initial effusion of the spores). With 12,000 loyalists, Spenser swung north to intercept Exeter and his Parliamentarians.

At **St. Mimms**, the two armies met. Spenser was shocked to see that Exeter had managed to gather 25,000 men out of Kingston, the north and the midlands, but there was nothing for it but to rally the men into line and let fly... The army of the false Parliament charged recklessly into Spenser's positions, which were anchored along a line of fortified redoubts ringing London. Despite their superior numbers, Spenser's airships pounced out of a rainy sky, blasting Exeter's artillery batteries and the Royal Army's riflemen stood firm, smashing two cavalry charges and then a general rush of the Parliamentarian infantry.

Fortune turned her face from England on that cruel day.

Both Exeter and Spenser were killed in the waning hours of the battle. The Parliamentarian army recoiled from St. Mimms in disorder, morale shattered. Spenser was carried from the field by his grieving engineers. Both armies splintered then, thousands of men throwing down their arms and fading into the night.

In the north, the Highlanders raided across Strathclyde and to the very walls of Aberdeen, burning and looting as they pleased. The lowland clans of Lothian also abruptly revolting, dreaming once more of their ancient rule over all Britannia. In Ireland, the duke of Lienster was dragged from church and stoned to death, and Dublin-town was afire with revolt. Ulster followed close behind in bloody rebellion. Tynwald on Man threw the remaining King's tax collectors out on their ear.

Admiral Russell arrived too late from Africa and his ships were turned away from Portsmouth by a rain of shells from the harbor forts – for the barons of Wessex and Mercia had raised their own flags, mustered their own militia – repudiating the authority of the rump Parliament in Kingston. Indeed, open warfare had already erupted in Mercia between Hussite and Catholic. Heartsick, Russell

sailed on, round to Great Yarmouth, where he found the rest of the fleet huddled and dispirited.

The admiral stepped ashore and a Fleet chaplain greeted him with a crown wrought of metal stripped from the forecastle of the *Audacious*, which now rode at anchor in the harbor. The abandoned *Hood* was being recovered from the Thames by a gang of steam tugs.

“By this, I crown thee King of Britain,” the old man rasped.

The band of iron felt enormously weighty on Russell's head, but what could he do but try and restore order and faith in a wounded land?

**THE SOCIETY OF JESUS** (Roman Catholic, the ruins of London)

*Karok Redfox, Vicar-General of the Society of Jesus*

**DIPLOMACY** None

The Jesuits were content to pray and discuss theology, but other – more diabolical – powers had no intention of letting them enjoy the easy sleep of the just... the rain of spore-bombs annihilated the heart of the Order, destroying their administrative center and leaving the remnants leaderless and confused.

**THE FRANKISH COMMONWEALTH**

(Hussite, Paris in Ilé De France)

*Louis Alphonse du Maine, Archon of the Commonwealth*

**DIPLOMACY** Provence (^t)

“Enough of this talk, to action!”



The Commonwealth spent lavishly on increasing the arable land in the land to offset the poor harvests that had continued. The regions of Anjou and Brittany were developed and many new farms, orchards and vineyards sprouted into greenness. The Commonwealth also completed its work on the shipyards in Brest. Soon, new Commonwealth-built steamships would be rolling from the docks. Work was also completed on the airfield expansion in Paris. By agreement with the Hussite Church, the region of Provence was returned to the Commonwealth. Despite this progress the Archon looked elsewhere and saw gathering clouds of darkness. Walls and fortifications were added to the Commonwealth cities.

Rousseau's *Histoire d'Paris*

The Archon had finally seen enough in Spain. His father and his father's father had offered assistance to the Occitanians, but each time it had been rejected. The damnable Catholic-Hussite Church dispute had prevented the Commonwealth in helping Spain to rid itself of the Golden Dawn and their Wolfden & Cane lackies. The Commonwealth had worked for many years to try and complete this project in the Archon's lands, to some success. If... if, the Archon needed any justification in the actions that the Commonwealth had taken he need only point to Spain as an example.

Be that as it may, the destruction of Bourbon Spain had done nothing to ease the mind of the Archon. In its place had sprouted a veritable paella of unappetizing replacements. The Golden Dawn still held sway in many places, the fanatical and unpredictable Cruzaderos ran rampant and now the Duchy of the Three Isles had interfered in matters on the mainland. The same despicable Duchy which had murdered Princess Margaret and her brave soldiers! This could not stand.

These savage Cruzaderos had not even responded to diplomatic overtures sent by the Archon. Was the Commonwealth the next target of the fanatics? To sit and do nothing was to invite danger, to invite trouble. Even the Bourbons had responded lethargically..... once again.

While the Archon was plainly shocked by the news reports coming from New France, the Nile and Australia his advice and assistance had not be requested. He did not seek war, but the situation on his southern borders plainly needed a stabilizing force. The Archon called his strategists and intelligence agents to his war room and begin devising and revising plans and strategies. When he was satisfied, the orders were written and the cogs in the machine of war begin to turn.....

Despite the hostile reception previously recieved in the Commonwealth, the Taborites continued to worm their way into the fabric of local life. The city of Dijon, in fact, expanded a GPv as thousands and thousands of monks from the east settled there in the existing monastic district just outside the south-eastern walls.

The Commonwealth Foreign Ministry circulated a letter to the other European capitals, claiming the region of Pennacook (on the savage coast of Amerika) and the 'abandoned town' of Valeria therein as direct possessions of the Archon.

The armies of the Commonwealth were in motion already – moving south by land and sea alike. Securing Provence opened up a port on the Mediterranean at last (ah, how the Franks had yearned for such a thing for centuries!) and the garrison of the battered town was reinforced.



Figure 2. Prince Marcel of the Commonwealth in Battle

## DUSK, BIELEFELD, WESTPAHLAIA

Westphalian Royal Coach Lines luggage storage rear of carriage house.

Thievery, a fine line of work for an assassin. He was in a foul temper tonight and both his henchman knew it well enough. He'd pummelled both earlier to vent that frustration. He had taken this job to kill Voltaire and get a name for himself. That in itself rankled him. He had killed dozens of men and was thought of as little more then a thug. Then there was Voltaire.

She travelled openly in high society around the world even though she was widely known as an assassin, and a high priced , high quality one. e was sure she got where she was by sleeping her way there. He had to admit she was quite a figure of a women. Her with her Mysterious origins and the Hussite churches backing. He was going to enjoy killing her if his employers ever stopped with all these games.

There she was in the Inn across the street, with just that burly Taboric sargent and the two cloaked ad cowed servant girls. e could shoot her dead from just around the corner from where he stood. If only he was permitted. First he needed to steal a book. A book from the tree leaves full of symbols not words. ow stupid.

So there he was breaking into the luggage storage to get to her

iron bound trunk. The rom had two doors. One at either end of the room that stretched the length of the building.e had a man stationed at either door just inside to avoid detection. Allowing him to work without the worry of interruption. Picking a lock was not his strong suit. He tended to shot them off when they got in his way. Finally it came free and he opened the trunk.

He was never sure what kind of snake had bitten him. It struck the moment the heavy lid had given it enough room to strike and it was black, near invisible in the light provided by the shuttered lantern he had been using. The lid fell trapping the snake in the trunk as he staggered back. He was confused by the head rolling around on the floor by is feet. What was that fool doing leaving his head on the floor? He was not going to be able to see anyone coming without his head. Like the two cloaked figures with swords standing over him. He died before he could figure it out. He only had 8 seconds and he had not been a smart man.

"I'm glad that lids spring loaded. Dinner would be cold before we caught that snake." the first women said whipping her sword clean on the assassins clothes.

"it may still be" replied her partner doing the same. " Your cloaks splattered, you will have to change first."

"so is yours" she said giving a distasteful look at her cloak now ruined by the blood of the headless corpse she had created upon entering as had her partner.

"we need a larger clothing allowance. That is the fifth cloak in two years"

" your forgetting that Marsailles trip where we had to leave al out luggage"

"don't remind me, lets go chang, we can ask for a raise after the priest goes to bed. She's always in a better mood when the clergy is not around"

## THE KINGDOM OF CATALŪNA

(Roman Catholic, Cimmura in Gascony)

*Ferdinand Bourbon, King of Spain, Navarre and Catalonia*

**DIPLOMACY** Valencia (^nt)

Despite facing the loss of all his lands, the defeat of his armies and the onset of not only the Amerikan cruzaderos but now the perfidious Islanders and their Occitan allies, Ferdinand risked everything still left to him to ... keep the bankers happy. Loans were repaid, and then new ones extended. A tiny, tiny army was raised in Gascony and a secret exchange of letters with Longlance and the Cruzaderos promised a way out of the decades long-war embroiling Spain.

The King himself set off for Aquitaine, in attempt to muster support for his regime – but was chased out of the province by the Hussite invasion before negotiations could be completed. Terrified and forced to disguise himself in a bear suit to escape capture, Ferdinand skulked back to Cimmura and the nominal safety of its 800 man garrison.

## THE KNIGHTS OF THE TEMPLE (CRUZADEROS)

(Roman Catholic, Corunna in Galacia)

*Longlance, Proconsul of the Legions of the East, Grand Master of the Temple of Jerusalem*

**DIPLOMACY** Aragon (^a)

The turn of the winds of fate and politics blew in Longlance's favor once more. Now Papal gold flowed into his coffers, and the Norsktrad and even CatalŪna paid him tribute in grain. In exchange (and in the course of many agreements, trades and oaths) Longlance elected to withdraw his armies from eastern Spain and to

heed the counsel of the Pope to take upon himself the mantle of Grand Master of the Knights of the Temple of Jerusalem (the Proconsul being, in fact, a high-ranking member of the western Temple, which had long endured in North Amerika).

While this seemed hopeful, even as the Papal delegates were putting ink to paper to seal the arrangement there was a scuffle on the road outside of Corunna as bandits attacked a Cruzadero arms caravan. The attackers were beaten off – not one man of the Cruzadero nation is not an accomplished warrior – and examination of the fallen found they were Germans – indeed, they were Taborite *landsbnecks* in the garb of Basques.

Cortez in Granada was returned to Arfen control, and Catalonia, Navarre, Valencia and Granada were abandoned – reverting in name to Bourbon control. Sateweya and Hector marched their armies back west. But as they left lands still looking to the Bourbon regime as their rightful rulers, they found some provinces were not minded to accept Ferdinand as king, not unless forced, and in *those* lands the Cruzaderos were begged to stay – for the Templars brought a just and mindful rule, one free of the corruption and malice which had marked previous regimes.

Andalusia, Estremadura and Aragon therefore, remained in Cruzadero control; while Portugal itself and New Castille and the town of Tharsis once more raised the Bourbon flag. From all across Spain, armies marched and leaders gathered to Corunna where the flag of Seven Stars was raised and the Pope himself appeared (as though lowered from the heavens) to anoint Longlance as Grand Master of the Order...

#### THE ORDER OF THE BLACK HAND (Hussite, Gibraltar)

*Anthony Corp, Master of the Order of the Black Hand*

#### DIPLOMACY Granada (^oh)

After much discussion between the Danish and Carthaginian foreign offices, the dispute over Gibraltar was settled – with the fortress and city remanding to Denmark. The Order of the Black Hand remained in the city, though now civil administration and security was maintained by Danish fleet marines.

The Carthaginians, meantime, returned a number of captured frigates to the Danish navy and were very busy unloading more troops at Gibraltar, under the guns of both Dane and Carthan fleets. The turmoil in Spain, it seemed, had at last drawn Hussite attention.

#### THE DUCHY OF THE ISLES (Roman Catholic, Valetia on Malta)

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

#### DIPLOMACY Languedoc (^a), Narbonne (^f – after the death of De Gellone)

Still finding the taste of enforced peace bitter, Namia dispatched another shipload of treasure to pay off the cursed Carthaginians. But with some fragile moment of peace at hand, considerable investments were made all across the bucolic isles ruled by the Empress. Her anointed heir, Bernardo, was doubly blessed when his wife Magda gave birth to twin sons – and by the Lord Christ, they were both healthy! But this beneficent peace was only a momentary pause in the foul wind of war – the domains new won by diplomacy in southern France were soon to erupt in open conflict between Hussite and Catholic.

Another ominous omen surfaced in Valetia, where princess Nimi (who had lately returned in Afriqa in a great state of excitement and sporting a golden tan) was found strangled in her bed-chamber, entirely dead, and without even the faintest clue to be found as to the culprits. But given the events in France, the

Empress (particularly grim-faced to receive this news) had an excellent idea who was to blame...



Figure 3. The Frankish Army in the Lang d'Oc

#### THE WAR OF THE SPANISH SUCCESSION



Cruzaderos, Catalüna, Pope, Three Isles

vs.

Commonwealth, Knights of Tabor, Carthage



January 1767

Ice.

February

Snow.

March

Acting on an anonymous tip, Armand Lorento (a Islander agent working in **Languedoc** with the local authorities to root out cultic elements abandoned in the wake of the Spanish collapse) raided a Golden Dawn infestation in the countryside, capturing many conspirators and killed a round dozen.

April

Bernard de Gellone, the Duke of **Narbonne**, is gunned down by Frankish agents on the streets of his own city. All of southern France is thrown into panic by this cruel act, for every wit and dullard can tell this only presages war... mass arrests searching for more Frankish infiltrators do, however, turn up a clutch of Golden Dawn cultists among a community of retired Spanish officers living in the city.

In **Navarre**, Bishop Manuel (leading a tiny force of 600 horsemen) reclaims administration of the province from the Cruzaderos for the Bourbon cause.

May

Pope Benedict XIV arrives in Corunna by sea to bless the reformation of the Eastern Templars.

Further north, Bishop Nunez marches a Papal army through Limousin on his way back to Nantes in Poitou – ignoring, for the moment, the pleas of the nobles of the province to stay and defend them against an imminent Frankish attack.

June

Attempts are made by Hussite agents against the other notables in the Lang d'Oc who support the Islanders.

July

Bishop Manuel and his Bourbon lancers enter **Catalonia** and Barcelona, intending to reclaim the province from the Cruzaderos. Unfortunately, a particular fervor had already gripped the province – news of a surviving heir to King Largo had circulated – and the Bourbon “traitors” were attacked by a mob. Manuel was wounded by a flung stone, and his men made haste to withdraw from the city.

With the retreat of the Cruzaderos, Catalonia becomes independent.

August

Taking refuge in Navarre, the Bourbon commander Manuel grows sicker, takes with an infection, and dies.

Marshal Gasquet's army of 20,000 Franks invades **Limousin** from the north. At almost exactly the same

	<p>time, Prince Marcel's <i>Armee du Provence</i> (another 9,000 Franks plus 3,000 men of the Hussite Legion) strikes along the Mediterranean coast at the great port city of <b>Narbonne</b> from the east.</p> <p>The Catholic lords of the Lang d'Oc are in disarray. Frantic messages are dispatched in all directions, seeking help.</p>		<p>The skies clear enough for the siege of <b>Narbonne</b> to resume in earnest and for Marshal Gasquet to take the field in Limousin once more.</p> <p>The Papal general Nunez also marches forth from Nantes and takes his time approaching Limousin, expecting for Gasquet to once more plunge south to conquer the province, allowing the Catholic army to swing in behind the Hussite force.</p>
<b>September</b>	<p>The Papal bishop-general Nunez learns of the Frankish invasion and rushes to get his army back into the field that he might intercept Marshal Gasquet in Limousin.</p> <p>The Frankish army, meanwhile, has been burning churches and shooting Catholic priests in the head as it rolls south towards Aquitaine... Nunez and his Papal troops – guided by local barons – catch up with the marauding Frenchmen at <b>Bergerac</b> on the Dordogne river. With enormous fervor and howling "Deus Vult!", the 17,000 Papists crashed into the 21,000 Hussites and no quarter was asked or given on either side. Blessed with a more mobile army (and air superiority), Gasquet chose his ground well, negating the superiority of the Papal troops in drill, formation and fire discipline.</p> <p>In this, the French drew even and battle was met ferociously... a long day of charge and counter-charge, the field choked with smoke and the drifts of the dead followed... and Gasquet was driven off his position on a ridge overlooking the Dordogne bridge by the relentless advance of the Papal Guard.</p> <p>Withdrawing behind a screen of his cavalry, the Marshal retired north into Anjou to tend to his wounded and see to rallying his battered army. Behind him, he left Nunez' army intact but bled terribly by a markedly pyrrhic victory.</p> <p>In the <b>Languedoc</b>, the Frankish advance is not immediately opposed. The diverse militias of Languedoc, Narbonne and Auvergne are rallying to one standard – that of the Islander general Giovanni Lucaio – but he does not intend to face the attack until he's assembled sufficient forces.</p>	<b>March</b>	<p>But the Frenchman has marched his army swiftly west and is already in <i>Poitou</i> as Nunez's columns tramp through the vineyards. The Papal force is caught by surprise at <b>Lussac</b> and a vicious brawl at pistol- and bayonet- point ensues.</p> <p>And the Papal army, boasting extraordinary morale, courage and near-incandescent piety soundly defeats a Frankish force three times its size – in part due to the congested nature of the struggle among the hedgerows and close-set fields – and even more from Nunez' brilliant leadership on the field.</p> <p>Shattered, and with General Vichy dead, the French rout from Lussac, fleeing north, harried by Papal light horse which reaps a rich harvest from the broken Hussite regiments.</p> <p>At <b>Narbonne</b>, the siege has become a hellish struggle on land and sea and air – Prince Marcel is hard-pressed to deal with an Islander fleet at sea, with Lucaio's raiders inland and the guns of the city itself. Mindful of his father's temper and the honor of the Commonwealth, however, he soldiers on...</p> <p>In the south of Spain, where the weather has already cleared, a Carthaginian army of 17,000 men suddenly issues forth from the mighty fortress of Gibraltar and invades <b>Andalusia</b>. As the Cruzadero armies have withdrawn to Corunna for the reformation of the Templars, there is <i>no one</i> to stop the attack.</p>
<b>October</b>	<p>Gasquet regroups his army in Anjou, but before he can resume the attack in Limousin the early snows have rendered the situation untenable. His men settle into winter quarters at Bourges.</p> <p>In Limousin, Nunez withdraws to the safety (and ready provisions and barracks) of the Papal fortress of Nantes.</p> <p>Prince Marcel and his <i>Armee du Provence</i> lay siege to the great port city of <b>Narbonne</b>. Within, the Islander ambassador Hasaran commands the defense (with Gellone's death, the Duchy has taken direct control of the city). Marcel's fleet blockades the port, while his zeppelins rain bombs on the town. Inland, Lucaio's horsemen raid the Frankish supply trains and raise havoc among their camps.</p> <p>A confused three weeks follows ... and then the rains of winter set in and no one can do anything but suffer.</p>	<b>April</b>	<p>Gasquet stumbles into Bourges with the remains of a demoralized and thoughtfully-beaten army. Undaunted, however, the Marshal immediately rallies the remnants and fortifies the city against an expected Popish counter-attack.</p> <p>The rumor of Largo's heir is now common currency throughout all of Spain, particularly in the eastern provinces, where news circulates that the girl had been hidden in South America and had now come of age.</p> <p>"La Reina, la reina!" Chanted the faithful in the streets. Everyone hoped for a saintly queen to restore peace and unity throughout the land and repel the Hussites invading from north and south alike.</p> <p>At <b>Narbonne</b>, Prince Marcel's 12,000 Franks are locked in a death-struggle with the 10,000 Islanders and Occitans and the tide of the siege is running against them... disease plagues his camps, his fleet (under the timid command of Admiral Bodreaux) has been hammered by the swarm of Islander frigates, and the walls of the city have simply failed to yield.</p> <p>Disgusted to learn of Gasquet's defeat in Poitou, the prince abandons the siege.</p>
<b>November December January 1768</b>	<p>Ice. Snow and ice.</p> <p>In a night-time ceremony, gently falling snow glowing with the light of thousands of torches and lamps, Longlance of the Cruzaderos is anointed Grand Master of the Knights of the Temple of Jerusalem by Pope Benedict himself.</p> <p>A vast crowd gathered in the Plaza de San Anton, filled with fiery zeal and great piety. Near every man and woman understood great darkness threatened the world and the Templars would stand against that peril – stand, aye, and cast it down as the Ice Lords had been cast down, and the Daemon Sultan hurled into the fiery pit! Longlance appeared on the steps of the cathedral to take their vows of obedience, which were rendered with mighty acclaim and distinction. Among those who swore themselves to the Temple, as it happened, were the mayor of Tortosa and Duke Leopoldo of Aragon who arrived in secret, intending to bite their thumbs one more time at Ferdinand and the Bourbon pretenders.</p> <p>Bitter, bitter weather.</p>	<b>May</b>	<p>Prince Marcel's army retreats (still harried by Lucaio's Languedoc and Auvergnais lancers) back to Provence, battered and stricken with heavy casualties.</p> <p>Spain itself, for once, is quiet. Longlance has too much to do with the organization of the Templars and the Bourbons are stripped of anything like power or the ability to affect events.</p> <p>All they can do is eye the Islanders in Narbonne and wonder if they will march on Cimmura.</p> <p><b>Seville</b> surrenders to Colonel Harko's Carthaginian army without a shot. Even the normally restive students at the Universidad de Seville are subdued.</p> <p>Nunez and his Papal army arrive in Languedoc, seeking to raise the siege of Narbonne. They find the Islander army celebrating the retreat of the perfidious French. Nunez, Lucaio, Hasaran and the noble Baron Anton de Valle-Chir of Auvergne consult and decide to secure their lines of communication while the Franks are licking their wounds.</p> <p>Harko's Carthaginians advance into <b>Granada</b>.</p>
<b>February</b>	<p><b>Lords of the Earth, Campaign One, Turn 219</b></p>	<b>June</b>	<p><b>Page 16 of 27</b></p>



July

The Islander-Papal army moves into Aquitaine, where intense negotiations are undertaken with the duke. In Cimmura, King Ferdinand takes to hiding under his bed and drinking heavily from a flask.

The Franks have regrouped their armies, but are now entirely wary of crossing sabers with either the ferocious Papal army or the Islanders. Both commanders report to Paris that they will stand on defense in Provence and Anjou, respectively, in the event of a Catholic counter-attack.

The Carthaginians crush the Granadan militia, capturing the province.

August

The city of **Cortez**, defenseless, surrenders to the Carthaginian army in the south.

September - December

Winter arrives while everyone is still mooching about, trying to figure some advantage.

### THE CHURCH OF ROME

(Roman Catholic, Vatican City in Rome, Latium)  
*Benedict XIV, Pater Patrias, Pope of the Roman Church, Vicar of Christ, Successor To Peter, Keeper of the Keys, Servant of the Servants of God, Patriarch of Azteca, Soldier of Light*



**DIPLOMACY** None

Vatican gold continued to pour into the vast sinkhole called Spain in an ever-more-desperate-seeming effort to maintain a Catholic monarchy on the peninsula. Considerable sums were also expended to contest the heretics and demon-worshippers in Gambia, Segu, Khazar and Saksiny – with varying success, for the Church was beleaguered on many fronts...

The Curia, in fact, pleaded with Benedict to remain in Rome, focus – as they argued most cogently – on the problems at hand. But the pontiff was not to be swayed and was almost immediate at sea, on his way to Corunna in Galicia, to anoint the Iroquois warchieftain Longlance master of the Eastern Knights of the Temple.

### AFRIQA

Non-Catholic Mercenaries	Minimum bid listed in [x].
Condotierri	40i [1gp each]
Captains	Chimalpahin (M969) [10gp]
To hire, please contact...	None
Quality Ratings	i16 w16 s18 c11 a12

Catholic Mercenaries	Minimum bid listed in [x].
Condotierri	29xea, 6hea, 3sha, 20t [3gp each]
Captains	General Xho (M936)
To hire, please contact...	Norsktrad
Quality Ratings	i16 w18 s16 c12 a13

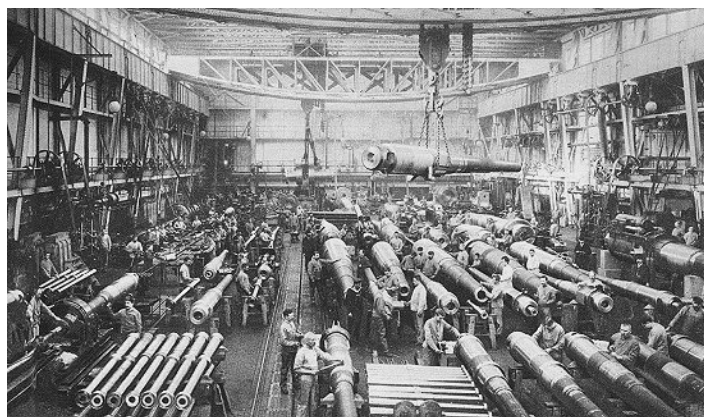


Figure 4. A Nörsktek Factory in Morocco

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



**DIPLOMACY** Valetia on Malta (^mf)

St. Georges fairly boiled with activity... ships thronged the port and every factory, shipyard, workshop and mill was running at full capacity. Three shifts were instituted, filling the night with the ring of hammers, the whine of wheels and gears and the rumble of boilers and engines. A great dark fume covered the city, rising from thousands of chimneys and smokestacks, the gritty exhalation of industry in full spate...

Hundreds of merchantmen were withdrawn from commerce and their holds refitted to carry men, guns and other supplies. The sinews of the Company tensed for war. A Company bulletin was circulated: Any AEIC heavy airship approaching Nörsktrad ships, cities and offices would be treated as hostile. Further strictures were imposed on all non-Company ships entering the port, and even camel caravans from over the Atlas were carefully searched.

To help the Customs officials, a thick booklet was prepared by a visiting Swedish doctor, Carl von Linné, which provided a swift and efficient means of identifying plant matter and its origin. Surprisingly, a special red-edged section of the *Botanica* contained taxonomic drawings of queer and unnatural varieties of plants which none of the Custom's officers had ever seen, all in deadly-looking shades of magenta, crimson and rose.

A Jesuit brother traveling in Merrakesh, one Master Verteleaf, was stricken with a religious fervor while attending mass in a rural village – after taking communion he turned the most amazing color, began speaking in tongues and then – truly overcome by the glory of God – ascended to heaven on the spot. Later, his interred body was found torn from the ground and his head hacked off.

Sir Charles regarded the members of the Board with a level gaze. "Despite the criticisms of the shareholders a few years ago, the Company has striven to improve its commercial success and profitability. Operations in Spain have been curtailed and this year a lucrative licensing agreement has been made with both the HAC and the AEIC to allow them to build the *Mjöllnir* artillery." He ignored the looks of consternation rippling around the table.

"Nörsktrad continues to export the products of our heavy industry to Swedish-Russia and, given the situation on the Upper Nile, Carthage. The European Mercenaries, despite their, ah, inability to resist temptation have been rearmed. Deliveries have also been sent to Great France, financed in part by the generosity of His Holiness the Pope."

One elderly Director could not contain his outrage. "We openly are aiding the Hussites and the other heretics?"

The Mäklareväldé nodded genially. "We are aiding whoever is threatened by the Invaders as best we can. Consider it an investment for the future; an attempt to secure the *mere existence* of our markets. Consider the attacks upon the Company by self-proclaimed Spanish Nationalists armed with unearthly weapons and the unwarranted libel and slander of the Company and my own reputation."

He leaned back in the battered old chair. "Gentlemen, we are at war. The Company will do everything it can to support the League in this conflict between the worlds."

Despite such prosy talk, rumors began to circulate that the Company was growing sufficiently uneasy at the events of the wide world they were not above stooping to diabolical tortures... apparently the Basque assassin who had failed to riddle Bond with gaping, bloody holes had broken under the most extreme torture –

an extended reading of “The White Maharajah”, translated into Castilian.



Figure 5. Santa Barbara of the Guns

Extract from  
 “Olesson’s Questions & Answers for Steam Engineers”  
 published by Nörsk Boks (1766)

Q. How would you classify steam boilers?

A. In various ways, as follows: (a) According to their construction, as shell, flue, fire-tube, and water-tube boilers; (b) according to their use, as stationary, portable, locomotive, and marine boilers; (c) according to their arrangement, as vertical and horizontal boilers; (d) according to the position of the furnace, as internally fired and externally fired boilers; and (e) according to the pressure carried, as high-pressure and low-pressure boilers.

Q. What is a shell boiler?

A. It is a plain cylinder cased at both ends, partly filled with water, and heated by an external furnace. It is also known as a plain cylindrical boiler.

Q. What is a flue boiler?

A. A cylindrical shell having heads between which extend one or more large flues surrounded by water, through which the hot gases must pass.

**THE INTERNATIONAL RED CROSS** (Hussite, Alexandria in Egypt)  
*Taharqa the Elder, Dean the School of Alexandria*

**DIPLOMACY** None

Still attempting to secure a steady supply of grain for his medical students and surgeon’s staff, Taharqa brokered an arrangement with the East India Company for a steady supply of Indian corn, rice, lamb and ox-tails in aspic. In exchange, the small fleet maintained by the Kross was given over into Albanian hands.

**THE EMIRATE OF CARTHAGE**

(Hussite, Augustina in Tunisia)

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

**DIPLOMACY** None



As the Emir was absent in far Injah, Prince Isketerol returned home in some haste to look after the business of government. A general sense of incipient panic was threading its way through all levels of Carthaginian society as most people were beginning to realize that their small nation was on the front line of the war against the Invaders. And that did not seem to be a good thing.

The inhabitants of Ghebel-Garib, in fact, flocked to the teachings of a spate of Orangist missionaries slipping across the

Red Sea from Sinai in droves due to a prevalent rumor that the faith would protect them, in fact, from the depredations of the Invaders.

Amid the confusion of thousands of foreign soldiers in the streets of Alexandria (and no less than five nation’s armies were barracking, brawling and disputing national pride in the bars), the arrival of one Danish naval officer would have gone unnoticed save that he was embroiled in a shootout with Exarchate merchants within the week, set a house afire in the Canopos district, was arrested by the Emirate police, escaped, fell in with some Taborite thugs, shot one of them, escaped the police again and then found himself besieged in the Danish consulate, while a maddened mob of Hussite clerics demanded his head for profaning a shrine of Saint Oniko near the old Greek Theatre. Not a bad eighteen days work for Lieutenant Rosswald Gellar!

Amid all of this, the city began to regain something of its old vitality.

**CATHOLIC SHARIFATE OF MAURITANIA** (Orangist, Sayyida Ifni in Idjil)  
*Magda, Governor of the Azores, Shariifa of Mauretania*

**DIPLOMACY** None

With her domain relieved of Ameur and his violent swings of mood, Governor Magda devoted her time to overseeing the worthy project of reclaiming the Arguin coast from the clutches of the desert sands.

**THE PRINCIPATE OF VASTMARK** (Roman Catholic, Chihuahua City in Takrur)

*Kusar bluVren, Stadholder of Takrur, Prince of Vastmark*

**DIPLOMACY** None

The cordial relationship of the Principate with Nörsktek continued – another steam-powered cruiser (the *DeRayter*) rolled off the Chihuahua City ways and immediately began working up under Vastmarken crews. While this went well, efforts inland to roll back the Orangist tide still creeping south from the desert (and to revitalize the piety and Catholic nature of the kingdom) did poorly – Vastmark and Papal missionaries were roundly reviled, and only the stalwart presence of Sud Afrikan priests prevented the effort being a complete loss. Lord Nkrumah returned from Spain with his sadly reduced force of ships and men. He did not receive a triumph.

Efforts by the Air Corps to set a new altitude record for an airship failed disastrously, leading to the loss of four zeppelins and Minister Kalagi as well. This led to a deep gloom afflicting the remaining members of the Corps, despite one of the airships reaching almost four thousand meters.

And at the end of ’68, old Nkwame finally succumbed to a strangling cord (he had been suffering from a ghastly fluxion of the bowels and his son Kusar could no longer stand the smell) and the Prince became Stadholder.

**THE MALI AX EMPIRE**

(Lencolar, Ax Mixtlan in Mixe)

*Ten-Wind (Eyabue), 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**

Faced with the prospect of imminent and full-scale war against the power which had come to infest the eastern Sahara, Ten-Wind ordered the full-scale mobilization of his realm – every man, boy and grandfather that might bear arms was summoned up, armed and sent east. At the same time, vast



investments were made in Songhai, Mixe and Togo to put more land under seed, that the unceasing hunger of such enormous armies might be properly fed.

In the capital, in a dank corridor far from the sun, four burly men – warriors with a hundred captives each from the testament of their facial tattoos and feather-capes – stood outside a cell holding a single, defiant captive.

“I welcome death,” the Blue Cloaked Lord said, his face showing neither fear nor concern, “for your presence reveals the cowardice of my enemy, and truth of my claims.”

The four *cuanhuebueh* did not respond (indeed, their ears were stopped with wax, it being the fashion in these uneasy days) and the crashing blast of their pistols drowned out any further words. The Blue Cloaked Lord staggered – did not fall – then slowly slid down the wall behind, his heavy azure mantle soaked with blood. Gravely, his eyelids drooped, then lay closed.

So died a true son of the Tenocha. The four *cuanhuebueh* grieved, as they climbed the long flight of stairs to the sunlit world, but all well knew the dead man’s reckless, vainglorious plot against the Emperor Ten-Wind could not be allowed in such a dangerous time.

## THE REPUBLIC OF ETHIOPIA (Coptic, Soba in Funj)

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

### DIPLOMACY None

The President, despite the pleas of his advisors to prepare the Republic for dire war against the Invaders, did nothing but lounge about his rooms, smoking from a long-stemmed Rajastahni pipe.

## THE WAR AGAINST THE INVADERS...

**January 1767** Not quite so hot.

**February** Almost pleasant.

**March** A very large Swedish fleet arrives at **Alexandria**, crammed to the gunnels with refugees bound for Russia, and delivers a fresh squadron of zeppelins to the Swedish Afrika Corps.

General Suvorov arrives at the same time, have sped down the Nile with his remaining airships. His battered command is handed off to General Yellowhawk – a letter from Riga is given in return, containing a short, rather rude note from the Tsar: “*Good work, you are now Marsk, do not fail me again.*” And then Suvorov is rushed aboard a post cutter, which then puts on all possible sail for the west.

South of the Sahara, Mixtec scouting parties fan out into **Soro**, watching for the vanguard of an Invader army heading southwest... among them, Lady Two-Rain leads the most advanced party, which consists of only herself, an askari and a porter named Jojo. Within two weeks, she learns that something “horrible” is happening in Darounga...

**April** After unloading, and taking command of twelve steamships and their attendant coaling vessels, Admiral Bornovsky sets sail for Russia. Quite a number of young Swedish lasses disappear from the refugee ships while in the exciting, cosmopolitan city. The Fleet has no time to look for them, however.

In the south, Lady Xochiquetzal of Mixtec rides into the **Kreda** with 800 horsemen to bespeak the chieftains of the wandering tribes endemic to those areas. The Mixtec emperor greatly desires an alliance with the fierce horsemen against the Invaders.

General Kieta and the main Mixtec army march into **Soro**, where Six-Leopard takes command of 30,000 men (many of them engineers) and begins preparing a defense in depth of the line of attack into the Empire.

**May** Suvorov – very ill from the rough sea voyage – arrives in **Tobruq** and is taken to a secret desert encampment south of the city (in the highlands of

Marmarica) where a large Arfen airfleet was gathering. A large crate accompanies the Marsk, guarded by an eerie-looking troop of engineers dressed in diving suits fitted with long air-hoses.

**June** Kieta and the rest of his Mixtecs swing north, into **Njimi**, where troops are delivered to the Scarred Lord for a forward defense of that barren province.

In Kreda, Xochiquetzal’s deliberations with the local chieftains are interrupted by the appearance of a vast cloud of dust on the southern horizon – and within days, the panicked appearance of nearly a hundred thousand terrified nomads, all fleeing up from the south.

Riding ahead of the mass migration of humanity are some Daroungan horsemen, who relate a grim tale of entire peoples being driven like cattle by “the hellbats” who stalk the upper air.

Xochiquetzal and her party abandon the region with all speed, riding hard for Soro and the nearest Mixtec outpost. Behind them, the Kreda chieftains attempt to turn the mob west...

**July** The Exarchate squadron commanded by Prince Sigurd arrives in **Alexandria**. The ships are then turned over to Admiral Vasa (who had sailed up from the outpost at Asir on the coast of Araby), and then Sigurd heads back home.

General Teukolsky (another damnable Swede) arrives in Alexandria to take overall command of the defense of the city.

The efforts of the Kreda to turn the tide of the migration fail – their guiding parties perish, wrapped in flame, and then the horror overtakes them as well – and the entire mass of humanity stumbles north into **Salamat**.

**August** With Teukolsky entrusted with defending Alexandria itself, Yellowhawk and his air/sea force blockades the lower Nile, standing watch on the Mansura Canal and the constant flood of mercantile shipping passing through the seaway.

The Mixtec general Kieta and his “raiding force” attack into **Batha**, which they discover is well infested with the loathsome maroon weed... efforts are made to burn out the infestations, with varying success.

And then, the huge migration of nomads is spilling across the plains and valleys like a living sea. Kieta’s scouts race south, attempting to divine the damnable mechanism causing such fear.

The General, however, knows only too well what is likely coming up from the south. And such an *opportunity* is likely never to come again. He orders his men to immediately dig in directly in the line of march of the frenzied mob and to cover their guns...

Bey Senghor is given command of the artillery, which include a sizeable number of the largest made by Mixtec hands, and they lie in wait... Kieta himself commands the rest of the army, which falls back trying to stop the vast mass of frightened nomads with rifle and saber... and the hellbats sweep up from the south, harrying the stragglers along and see the migration stalled and swirling, confused, and beyond that the lines of the Mixtec army, banners flying, sun shining from their bayonets, a rock of steel upon which the mob is breaking, spilling aside like brown and tan ink.

Four of the hellish things hiss through the bright sky, each surmounted by a writhing, searching metallic stem surmounted by a blazing greenish eye – there is a brilliant flare – the heat ray speaks – and the ranks of the Mixtec army erupt in flame, entire regiments incinerated in a single breath.

“All batteries – FIRE!” Senghor roars and three hundred and fifty guns belch flame, the hammering roar of their barrage thundering across the plain. At the same moment, seeing the rippling flashes of the guns, Kieta lifts his saber, whirling the bright metal around his head.

“CHAAAARGE!”

Twenty thousand Mixtec lancers surge up over the ridge, riding into the gaping maw of hell at a gallop,

carbines and pistols cracking, hurling themselves into certain death, just to gain the battery a second more of life, another salvo into the underbellies of the hellbats swooping in the upper air.

Behind them, the nomads scatter in all directions, and the Mixtec infantry gives way, breaking ranks by company and battalion, racing west at double-time, mixed in among the vast dust cloud raised by the fleeing nomads.

The centermost of the four hellbats staggers, slammed by three hundred high-explosive shells, slews to one side... plunges sickeningly into a nearby mesa and blows apart in an blue-white actinic flare. The other three hellbats to shriek away at high speed. A ragged cheer rises from the batteries.

Then the hellbats swung round, keeping quite a distance, and systematically incinerate the remainder of Senghor's battery and the cavalry still galloping across the desert floor.

From six miles away, crouched behind a rock, Kieta watched the slaughter unfold, keen eyes fixed on the swooping, darting black shapes and the inferno blazing below. "Like shrikes they are," he muttered, "but we got one of the bastards."

## September

A Danish aerocommando led by Zuckertort lands among the dunes in **Ayn-al-Ghazal** and four hundred Dust Rangers slip south, intending to investigate the rumored "Invader city" at the center of the province.

The herded nomads pass into **Bourkou** – suffering now, for there is little graze left, only the poisonous red weed... Kieta and the remainder of the Mixtec army march warily back into Njimi, footsore and lacking any kind of baggage train at all.

Zuckertort and his commandos have only crept ten or fifteen miles through the crimson and maroon fields which now carpet the once-sandy valleys of **Ayn-al-Ghazal** when a queer buzzing sensation begins to prick at his brain. "Plugs!" He hisses, immediately jamming wax into each ear. The other commandos do the same – but within the hour over half their number have turned upon them – eyes mad and inhuman. But Zuckertort is not among those who fall prey to the invidious influence. A fierce, soundless battle follows among the rows of *usa* saplings as human fights human... to the death.

Zuckertort wrenches a bloody dagger from the throat of his first sergeant and stares grimly around. Of his four hundred men, perhaps only eighty remain alive and sane. "Fall back," he whispers hoarsely (the sergeant's fingers had left black bruises on his throat) and the survivors jog away through the low trees.

They have reached a range of jagged hills at the edge of cultivation when one of the commandos in the rear guard whistles wildly (and the common loon is *not* found in these lands) and Zuckertort turns – and stops dead, eyes wide in wonder and horror alike,

A troop of cavalry is spurring up the slope towards his men, their lines pirouetting as swiftly and cleanly as the Emperor's Guard on parade, but *these* cannot be called *horses* – not with such huge, lean beasts blessed with six monstrously powerful legs spurting forward, sand kicking away in plumes – nor can their riders be *men*, not when they are two heads taller than Zuckertort himself and like their fang-mouthed mounts boast two sets of arms and one of legs and more... are a dusky *olive-green* in skin and flesh.

"Line! Form a line!" The Danes turn, load, fire – and then the enemy is upon them, great pistols roaring, sabers slashing down, and a bloody melee on a dusty hillside sees the Dust Rangers go down bravely, Zuckertort among them, fighting to the last with dagger, pistol and shotgun.

The "green men" gather the fallen Danes, doing them honor by draining their water, and then gather up the few trinkets of interest – coins, the signature dust-masks of the Ranger, some printed matter – and discard the rest (guns, bladed weapons) as dross. Then they ride away in a column of twos, their own snake-

banners snapping smartly in the breeze.

Across the valley, among the jagged ridgetops, an Arfen scout gently eases back from his vantage point and then pads off through a rocky canyon, entirely shrouded in a dusty tan cloak. Several miles away, the rest of his reconaissance unit is waiting, hidden in a cave.

"Those blubber-fat Danes bought it," the Inuto reports to his commander, a lean and withered-looking Japanese.

"And the patrol?"

"Gone back to the city to feast on some nice rich fatty meat, I expect." The Inuto grins, showing a mouth filled with needle-point teeth.

The officer nods, concealing a deep and bitter anger at the recklessness of the Danish incursion. He consults his watch. *Still two months to go*, he thinks, wondering if he should have the signals team raise the heliograph hoist and flash a *no-go* signal back along the line of outposts stretching across the vastness of the Sahara to the Mediterranean.

"We will keep watching," the Japanese says, settling in to wait.

## October

After bidding farewell to the ladies of Alexandria, Prince Sigurd Vilhuna and his "desert rats" traverse the wastes of El-Wahat, heading for Bir Tarfawi.

## November

A passel of archaic, leaky boats arrive at **Alexandria** and unload four hundred drunken Cossacks with enormous fur hats. After getting lost in the city, having a dust-up with the police and rescuing a dozen Swedish girls from captivity in a Hussite nunnery, the Baklovakian Expeditionary Force hires a pleasure barge (the *Cleopatra*) and sets sail up the Nile.

In Ayn-al-Ghazal, the remaining hellbats sweep over another Arfen watch-post, driving the seemingly limitless numbers of the nomads before them and into the deadly city beyond the mountains.

## December

A large Nörsktrad fleet offloads five massive cannon – quite the largest that anyone has ever seen – intended for the defense of lower Egypt.

Yet another Swedish squadron arrives at Alexandria, this one under the command of General Hogendorf – who delivers gun crews for the massive *Mjolnir* guns a veritable army of Nörsktrad construction crews have been putting into place around the city. This force is accompanied by a Polish Aeroforce squadron of four zeppelins.

The Arfen watch-team on the northern edge of Ayn-al-Ghazal looks up in wary amazement as eighteen enormous zeppelins drift up a steep-sided desert valley in the moonlight. Both the Japanese officer and the Inuto scout are relieved to see that all of the airships are "special branch" Arfen craft, their motors muffled, every reflective surface dulled, the vast airframes painted a blotchy tan/white/blue.

Then their eyes narrow in puzzlement to see a short, stooped figure with a two-sizes-too-large jacket hop down onto the sand and look about with wide-eyed interest.

"A Swede," the Japanese grunts, disappointed.

Then Prince Cassatengo steps out of the gondola and both Arfen bow deeply.

"This is Suvorov," the Iroquois says in a carefully neutral tone of voice, "he is in command now."

"Of course, my lord," says the Japanese, unimpressed by the gnome-like appearance of the Russian, who is wandering about, poking and prodding at the heavy canvas drapes covering the entrance of the cave.

"Get on then," Suvorov rasps in a croaking kind of voice, waving at Cassatengo. He brandishes a silver watch, grinning foolishly. "We'll be waiting."

Cassatengo nods – starts to say something – then holds his peace. Within moments, all of the airships have turned and are gently gliding away north again, carefully keeping their massive silhouettes down behind the cover of the ridgetop. Behind them, hundreds of

January 1768

Arfen aerocommandos are hoisting their packs and rolling clever little recoilless rifles into the cover of the cave mouths.

The Japanese grimaces at the little Russian, who barely comes up to his shoulder. "My... lord?"

"Are your men fit?" Suvorov asks, suddenly serious. "Can they run strongly in this sand?"

The Japanese nods, nonplussed.

"Good." The Russian lifts his ugly face to the stars, sniffing the air. "We have two weeks to be within an hour's fast march of this city."

"What?" The Japanese hisses in surprise. "The city of domes is two hundred miles south of here!"

"Then we set out as quickly as the men can be fed."

Suvorov lies in the lee of a brittle volcanic crag, studiously keeping his attention away from the sprawling city of magenta domes and spires and thick stands of fleshy, limbed trees sitting in the valley below. One of the Arfen soldiers squats just below him, face wrapped in a heavy *kaif* to keep blowing sand and grit out of his eyes. A season of fierce, intermittent winds is upon the desert, plowing up great anvils of dust from the east.

"It comes," whispers the Arfen sergeant, though no sign of an Invader has been reported by the Russian's cordon of scouts. The attention of the inhabitants of the unnatural city seems focused entirely upon the endless, fetid camp of camels, horses, women, children and men now surrounding the loathsome metropolis.

Enormous tripod-like machines move constantly through the streets, going about their unknowable business; smaller ones (only twenty feet or so high) stalk ceaselessly around the fringe of the valley – though they do not venture up among the sharp-edged peaks where Suvorov rests so patiently.

He is waiting for the wind to rise.

The Arfen soldier turns his head, watching the eastern horizon. Moments pass. Suvorov wets his lips from a flask, and then sees the man stiffen. Without waiting for a hissed warning, he rises up, taking a hand mirror from the pocket of his ratty, stained jacket. He fixes his gaze, lank brown hair obscuring his eyes, on a helmet-shaped peak on the far side of the Weed-infested valley.

Three times he flashes the mirror before settling back, feeling the air stir around him as though the breath of God was moving upon the face of the Earth.

There is an answering flash.

The Russian raises his face to the sky – a pale, pale blue verging into white – and squints, finally making out a bare fleck of azure.

"Pass the word to prepare." He says to the soldier.

Exactly fifty-five minutes later, eight Arfen zeppelins burst over the far wall of the valley, engines howling at maximum speed, sending the blue-white airships racing over the nomad camps with a shriek. The tripods swing round, deadly heat-rays flaring alight – one of the airships ripples end to end with a brilliant flare and bursts into flame – and then crashes into the war-machine with a thunder of secondary explosions.

Smoke billows out of the wreckage, and the tripod – slammed into the wall of the city – topples sideways, heat-ray still burning bright as the sun. A long searing blast rips across the camps, sending thousands fleeing while hundreds are instantly burned to ash.

The other seven airships roar over the spires and towers of the city, bombs raining from their underbellies, guns hammering from every firing port. Explosions rip across the domes, shatter the porticoes of the arena, stagger the huge many-armed men rushing out of the barracks. Everywhere there is chaos and clamor; and then the guns of the city begin to fire.

The green men raise long *jezail*-like rifles which spurt flame, and the rear galleries of the two lead zeppelins – picking up speed as the last of their bombs rain down upon the buildings below – explode with shrapnel, crewmen flung about like dolls as the rifle bullets tear

lengthways through the airship. Instants later, both airships are afire and slam into the girdling wall of rugged mountains.

The other zeppelins scatter from the middle of the city like a flock of quail bursting from cover; their monstrous, double-propped engines straining almost to the bursting point, their crews rolling the last of the huge bombs down the guiderails to the hatches... columns of smoke boil up from the buildings, making a violent spiderweb.

Below the ridge, Suvorov's men are running downhill with all speed, faces doubly-wrapped in cloth, every man with a gas mask bouncing on his shoulder, carbines and repeating rifles in hand. More than two miles separate them from the nearest wall of the city, but Suvorov is right there with them, running through heavy sand, leaping rocks, scrambling down the sides of dry *wadi* and then up again...

The last of the attacking zeppelins explodes out over the reddish fields and crashes to earth, burning furiously as three of the smaller machines converge upon it, metallic tentacles reaching down to seize men struggling in the wreckage and crushing them to pulp.

The azure fleck high in the sky has grown vastly larger, a specially-modified *Kestrel*-class heavy cargo zeppelin plunging towards earth, frost burning away from metallic skin – so swift is its approach, and so busy are the Invader machines with hunting down the last of the Arfen aeropilots in their ruined machines – that none in the dire city catch sight of the airship until it is too late.

The *Reshep* banks hard, going to superheat on the main gas cells, propellers wailing in reverse, and the lower bomb-bay springs open. A rusted black cylinder tears free of its restraints, crushing the engineers struggling to release the device and flies free from the airship. The cylinder crashes to earth, landing at the intersection of two boulevards lined with tendril-trees, shattering the reddish tile paving stones and bursts open.

A cloud of blackish-gray spores billow out into the street.

A mile short of the city, Suvorov sees the *Reshep* swing wide from the city, metallic skin already burning white hot where dozens of heat rays have converged upon the airship. The transport does not even last sixty breaths, exploding over the arena in a blue-white ball of flame.

"Down," the Russian barks, and the raiding party goes to ground in the fields, each man fixing his gas-mask snug and testing the seals of his gloves, waxed trousers and overcoats.

Suvorov waits, lying on his back, humming a quiet tune, eyes half-lidded, watching the eastern ridges.

In the city, the rising wind gusts and eddies, spinning clouds of gray-black death through broken windows, shattered domes and streets filled with panicky, startled humans and Invaders alike. The Contaigon claims them all – green, red and brown – without qualm or preference. The cruel minds hidden within the machines turn their own weapons upon the city, wreaking even greater devastation in an attempt to stop the spread of the ghastly death.

Four hours after the Russian made his first signal, the eastern sky blots out black as a howling wall of wind, dust and gravel boils over the ridge, born on the winds of the *Khamseen*, the "Devil's Wind".

"Up!" Suvorov bellows, putting his back to the wind and a pistol in either hand, "Forrrrwaaaard!"

The Arfen soldiers jog forward, visibility down to mere meters, and the plague dust is swept away before them, a wall of living death...

Suvorov and his men, having lost most of their zeppelins in the raid, toil northward to the secondary rendezvous, backs heavy with captured gear.

Having made a successful, though grueling foray south into Bir Tarfawi, Prince Sigurd and his very very tan soldiers head back north into El-Wahat.

February

March

Suvorov and his men reach the backup zeppelins, get a drink of water, and are airlifted out of Afrika.

**April** Hellbats attack **Addis-Adaba** in Shoa, reducing the town to burning ruins, filled with charred corpses and the unending wail of the living.

**May** Hogendorf, having provided Teukolsky's guns with crews, now takes command of a small Swedish force patrolling the desert frontier with El-Wahat.

**June** Lieutenant Aderbal, commanding a sizeable fleet of steamships (some with only skeleton crews, having just made their maiden voyage from Morocco) arrive at Alexandria. Another five massive *Mjolnir*-class guns are unloaded.

The hellbats attack **Mt'suia** on the Ethiopian coast, wreaking terrible devastation and slaughter.

The Carthaginian army wrestles the new super-heavy artillery into place around Alexandria, which is now defended by an ever-increasing number of soldiers from many nations, an ever-expanding number of trenches and revetments, and massive gun-bunkers. Surveyors criss-cross the countryside for miles south of Lake Mareotis and along the Nile, making the most detailed maps yet produced by man.

Continuing to carve a swathe of utter devastation along the Red Sea coast, the hellbats destroy **Gozer** in Suakin, turning the city into a funeral pyre six miles high...

**July** Prince Sigurd and his men return to Alexandria, having found nothing but endless dunes and sun-baked rocks, rather thirsty and filled with an irreversible desire never to see even so much as a single grain of *sand* ever again.

**August** The Ethiopian president Josiah Draume huddles in his capital at Soba, fearing that the wrath of the gods will soon annihilate that city as well...

**September** By all reports, the hellbats have returned to their lair.

**October** Much to everyone's surprise (including Colonel Adenauer, who was suffering from the tremors after they'd run out of even fermented camel piss) the Baklovakian Expeditionary Force (four hundred of the unluckiest troopers the Komarno Light Horse had ever sworn into its ancient and noble ranks) stumble out of the desert into **Ayn-Al-Ghazal**.

Unfortunately – thanks to the Arfen attack – the inhabitants of that place were extremely alert and violently opposed to any and all visitors...

**November** Gets a mite cooler.

**December** The Carthaginian heavy guns at Alexandria are finally in service and fully crewed.

**THE MAASAI KINGDOM** (Coptic, Mbeya in Kimbu)  
*Sogobu the Cripple, King of the Maasai, Emperor of Ethiopia*

**DIPLOMACY** None

The Government Investment board continued to ship exceptional sums of capital north to Russia, to aid the Arfen in establish ever greater plantations and farms in the Russian 'breadbasket'. Though the north and west were abroil with war, the Maasai remained content with their kingdom, though the border watch was given instructions not to admit any "flying creatures."

**REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRIQA** (Roman Catholic, Great Zimbabwe in Rozwi)

*Izinduna, Protector of the Senate and the Republic*

**DIPLOMACY** No Effect

Lord G'mar, traveling in the far north, was bitten by a bat (or something very much like it) and died quite horribly, bleeding from every orifice. The Prince of Banhine, also visiting the chiefs of Cuango at that time, ordered G'mar's entire traveling party slain, their bodies burned with lye and then cast into the flames. The horrible affliction did not recur.

Late in '67, a huge RSA fleet arrived at the French trade outpost of Leutetia in Herero and unloaded a huge mob of

unwashed refugees, who immediately swelled the town into a modest city (the Republic spent lavishly to raise new houses, warehouses, buildings, even a college hall, schools and a library) as well as swarming out into the countryside (whereupon the local Bushmen were driven out, or just shot like dogs) making Herero a (2♣3) province.

### THE HONORABLE AFRIQA COMPANY

(Iusalem in Karanga)

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

**DIPLOMACY** Akone on Okinawa (^mf),  
 Tazeh-ko in Arukun (^mf),  
 Kam (^c)

All manner of foreigners were seen coming and going from the Company offices, including some slant-eyed fellows who would have been cause for alarm and gunplay only a decade ago... but how things have changed! As per usual, enormous sums flowed out of the Company coffers – through now it was to purchase the secrets of their competitors, for the Invaders threatened to choke off all commerce, even as the damnable weed strangles all that is green.

Thomas Chard, the currently presumed heir to the Company directorship, was embroiled in a gambling dispute in Nova Roma and barely escaped alive, despite the coolheadedness and ready pistols of his boon companion, P.K. Sureshiandar.



### NORTH AMERIKA

Non-Denominational Mercenaries	Minimum bid listed in [x].
Condotierri	None
Captains	None
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** (Lencolar, Tzompantlan in Tutchone)

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

**DIPLOMACY** None

Efforts to clear the forests from Han and to resettle the abandoned farms and towns continued, drawing all (or nearly all) of the Baron's attention. Furs and polar bear meat was dispatched to the Emperor in tribute. Princess Itzapalicue, who had long served the Baron as his dutiful wife, took her own life (having been recently suffering from a surfeit of bile) in the winter of '67. She missed, therefore, the birth of a grandson in the following spring. Efforts to woo the Catholics of Azoton to the Lencolar path continued apace.

**THE NISEI REPUBLIC** (Shinto, Usonomiya in Yokuts)

*Tomeyo Sagaya, Soridaijin, Commander of the Armies of the Republic, Protector of the Emperor of All Japan*

**DIPLOMACY** None

Completely embarrassed to have the lowly *Colorado* beat them to something, the Republic hastily and quietly instituted an AirPost service between the great cities of the nation – sixteen speedy zeppelins were built amidst all of the preparations for war – and set about their business. Construction work on the coastal highway intended to run (eventually) from New Yedo south to Melias in

Serrano, ground to a halt between Tolowa and Yurok while gangs of Chinese laborers and zaibatsu (Three Diamond) overseers laid track for a new railway between Anataya and Toyama.

In the east, the Soridaijin Sagaya and his I Corps marched into Dakota, where they met Zamori's V Corps (which had pulled back from Oto to meet them) and his combined air/riverine flotillas. The two corps then marched back down the road and attacked into Missouri, intending to seize the port of Fushige from the Ghost Dancers (or whoever might be there...) in July of '67.

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

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

**DIPLOMACY** None

When a messenger arrived in Three Crosses bearing news of the Shawnee and Arapaho invasion the GhostDancer homeland of Quapaw, Gunthar addressed his commanders: "As you know, for years there has been a balance of power along our borders. The Catholic nations of Shawnee and Arapaho on one hand, and the Lencolar nations of Colorado and the GhostDancers on the other. With the brutal subjugation of the GhostDancer homeland by the Catholics, this balance has now shifted in their favor. Should this new state of affairs be allowed to continue, it is obvious that once the Catholic warmongers have made good their losses, Colorado would be their next victim!"

"You speak truly," stated one of the staff officers in attendance upon the High King, "what is your plan, my lord?"

"We shall restore the balance," Gunthar replied, "we shall crush the Arapaho. We have lost an ally, and now so shall the Shawnee be deprived of an ally. The Great Snake will be the border between Catholic and Lencolar."

"What of the creatures from another world?" asked another officer, a Northlander with distinctly Japanese features, "the ones called the *Tz̄it̄zimime*?"

"We would be marching even now to join the fight against them, had Valeria Mother-Killer not sent her army and that of her Arapaho lackeys against the GhostDancers. But given her actions, we dare not leave the Catholics in such a position of power. Surely the mad Valeria would come at us next! We must first avenge our Lencolar brothers and sisters before we dare weaken ourselves to send an army far from home."

Gunthar paused to look around the table, and saw his staff in full agreement with him.

"Mobilize the Army," ordered Gunthar, "we strike for God and Honor!"

The High King then marched his army east, gathering garrisons and levies as he moved, and in June of '67 slammed across the Arapaho border into Tonkawa. At the same time, Princess Yesobelle Iron-Skirt was marching her 'Expeditionary Force' up out of Aztec, reaching the town of St. Michaels in August...

**THE GHOSTDANCERS** (Lencolar, No capital)

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

**DIPLOMACY** None

Faced with the prospect of annihilation at the hands of the despical Shawnee, Prince Waylo acceded to the urgent suggestion of embassies from both Nisei and Colorado. "This is the final struggle," he growled to his lance-commanders. "Death and ruin to the Catholic dogs!"

Tidying up his personal affairs in the late winter, Waylo named Prince Gukkukun his heir, and his younger brother Cold-Iron a war-leader of the people. This proved wise, as the opening of the

river with the spring thaw brought attacks on Waylo, Prince Gekkukun and Bishop Panukan by 'bandits' – poorly disguised Shawnee assassins!

Preparations then began to abandon Missouri and the half-ruined city of Fushige. At the same time, Waylo's remaining troops fortified the crossing from Quapaw and dug in, expecting a fresh Shawnee attack. Further east, General Blackhawk rallied the garrisons of Ponca and Pawnee, abandoning those provinces, and marched the men back east into Kansa.

Similarly, in the north, the outpost of Aztlan was abandoned and Prince Gukkukun and Bishop Panukan (nursing a bad wound) rode south through the desolate plains of Iowa, escorting the settlers back to Missouri. Their arrival at Fushige found the city almost empty – all of the Dancer civilians had already left – and the sunburst flag of the Nisei Republic flew over the walls. Sagaya's Ist and Vth Corps have occupied the city and the province and the earthworks facing the east. Gukkukun and Panukan hurry on to the southwest.

King Waylo and the Dancer refugees abandoned Missouri in March of '68 – crossed the still-frozen Missouri into Kansa, and then hiked south through the barbarous hills of Onate and into Tonkawa by the end of '68. Gukkukun and Panukan's army, much lighter on its feet, has joined them by that time.

**ARAPAHO TEXAS** [Shawnee Protectorate](Roman Catholic, Ayoel in Atakapa)

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

**DIPLOMACY** Taino (^a)

Unaware of the violence planned by the Colorado, Arroweye remained at his administrative capital of Natchez, seeing about the muster of fresh troops to garrison the provinces newly won in the north. General War-Eagle was dispatched to bring up the new levies, which had mustered at St. Michael's in Tonkawa...

Apparently heedless of the risk of inciting a trans-Snake war, Lencolar missionaries infiltrated back into Quapaw to contest the efforts of the Catholics to recapture the faith of the province. The Arapaho, meanwhile, were similarly attempting to stamp out the Lencolar heresy in Caddo.

Gunthar's Coloradans attacked Tonkawa in June of '67 – met no resistance – and plowed on into Atakapa in July. The city of Ayoel – lacking any walls or garrison – was captured in August without a shot fired. The Arapaho prince Speardancer – who had watched the Colorado march past St. Michaels in outrage – had meantime evacuated as many Arapaho from that city as possible into the presumed safety of Caddo.

Also in August, General War-Eagle (who had learned of the invasion and turned his small force around) arrived on the north bank of the Arkansas and took up defensive positions. Messengers tore up and down the windy forest roads, trying to keep the Arroweye apprised of events. Lacking the strength to essay a crossing of the river, War-Eagle waits for the Shawnee and Prince Hophea to join him.

Princess Yesobelle Iron-Skirt of the Colorado and her Expeditionary Force captures St. Michaels in Tonkawa in September, having marched up the Aztec coast as fast as humanly possible to join the invasion. Both her and her father now go on the defensive behind the barrier of the Arkansas, expecting a counter-attack...

While the humans sniped at each other across the river and sat drinking homebrew in crude bunkers in the Arkansas forest, the thriving river-port town of New Orleans woke one October morning to the muffled *whoomp!* of a merchant snow in the harbor bursting into flame as its cargo of cotton bales and safflower oil ignited explosively. Firecrews rushed towards the docks, only to be

met by the *thoonk-thoonk-thoonk* of black smoke canisters bursting on the cobblestone streets. Second later, two bat-winged machines swept over the city, incandescent eyes setting warehouses, factories and churches alight.

The greater War had come to Amerikan shores. The *tzitzimime* rained poisonous black smoke onto the city with abandon and fired all the shipping they could find in harbor. Then, with the city a burning ruin behind them, they vanished out to sea again.

At much the same time, Prince Hophea and his lancers reached the Arkansas and joined up with War-Eagle's infantry. Ordered by the Arroweye to recapture the Arapaho capital at Ayoel, the Prince sent a flotilla of commandeered boats down the Snake to fake a landing opposite Kohan and then forded the Arkansas with his main force, catching King Gunthar by surprise.

Skermishing ensued at **Pine Bluff** as the Arapaho army cut behind the High-King's force (Gunthar was wheeling his regiments to face the real attack) and ran directly into Ysobelle Iron-Skirt's corps. Hophea did not expect to encounter the Princess, and his 9,000 Arapaho were almost immediately outnumbered by the 37,000 Coloradans as they came swarming across the wood-lots and grain-fields. Hophea cursed, ordering his men back, and the Arapaho disappeared into the trees at a quick pace.

Despite her best efforts, Yesobelle could not catch Hophea before he was back across the river. And so things stood for '68 as the Colorado were content to hold onto their new lands and await the arrival of the Ghost Dancers from the north.

Down in the Carribean, a Coloradan squadron commanded by the ancient Admiral Cannell attempted a landing on Taino island (which had recently allied itself with the Arapaho) but turned back after lightning raids by the islanders upon his squadron cost him two frigates.

In October of '68, Flaggkaptan Valgardsson and "Pig" Johanssen arrived at New Orleans with a Nörsktrad fleet and set about helping the dazed citizens recover from the hellbat attack. Two months later, Natascha Tukachevsky and her squadron returned from the far south, where they had been delivering new-built steam cruisers to the French.

**THE SHAWNEE EMPIRE** (Roman Catholic, Cahokia in Michigamea)  
*Valeria Stormdragon, Queen of the Shawnee, Empress of the Iroquois*  
**DIPLOMACY** None

Rumors of a large Ghost Dancer force sneaking about in the forests of Illinois kept the Queen's attention in the north, though General Hyrcanius' patrols found no physical evidence of such a force. The Dancers, it seemed, were focusing their efforts fleeing into the west. Far more troubling was a cunning attempt to strike down Nakos Iron-Hand, the commander of the Infni garrison, by hurling a gunpowder bomb into his privy. Despite the destruction of his jakes, the gray-bearded commander escaped and the bomb-throwing anarchists were gunned down or captured by his guards.

This revealed ill news – they were Apaches out of the far west – and known agents of the High Kingdom of Colorado. Iron-Hand immediately dispatched messengers to the Queen, though he knew the main army of the Empire (under Prince Drakon and lord Tecumseh) had already sailed off down the Snake to join the Aztecs in their war against the semi-legendary *Tzitzimime*.

A few months later, an Arapaho messenger came galloping up the road from the south to tell Iron-Hand that Colorado had attacked the Protectorate – but Nakos had only some four thousand men and keeping control of Infni was far more important... particularly with the Ghost Dancers on the move. He stayed put.

**KINGDOM OF THE IROQUOIS** [Shawnee Protectorate] (Roman Catholic, New Canarsie in Mohawk)

*Lucas II Stormdragon, Lord of the East*

**DIPLOMACY** Pennacook (^ea)

While his presumed overlord (and aunt) was grappling with war on the western frontier, King Lucas was content to see that his people finished the standardization of weights and measures throughout his small and bucolic realm. Sadly, princess Sosan took sick while gardening (and pregnant) and died in the summer of '67, which left Lucas bereft and despondent. His thoughts turned to ill-tidings of all kinds.

New Canarsie also expanded, though the suspicious king took pains to rebuild the outer walls afterwards. "Things are getting a mite dangerous," he muttered, signing orders to build a line of forts along the coast of Mohawk. He was soon to be proved right...

Joining the general confusion of foreign powers nosing about the Iroquois coast, a pair of Frankish frigates made landfall at Valeria in Pennacook (expecting the town to be abandoned, as per the last report available in Paris) with a mighty force of 200 musketeers. Finding the port inhabited by "red savages" made no difference to Captain Alliet, who seized the undefended town and raised the flag of the Commonwealth over the mayor's lodge.

"Vive le France! America is ours!"

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

**DIPLOMACY** None

Deep in their meditations, the Tlahulli did not fare about in the world (as they might usually do), save for Kelle Dineh and Sister Dezbah who had the fortune (or fate, morelike) to be in Sion guarding the court of the Emperor when the Tzitzimime came calling.

**THE AZTEC EMPIRE OF MÉXICO** (Lencolar, Mitla in Zapotec)  
*Mamexi the Foul, Emperor of Mexico, Warrior of Christ, Protector of the Faith, Smiter of the Infidel, Conqueror of the Incans, Rex Britannicus*

**DIPLOMACY** Culiacan (^ea)

Construction continued apace in the south, with the workers on the great Incan Road now working double-shifts to try and complete the military highway as quickly as possible. Nan Chao also bustled with activity as the Empire began its first two steamship yards (modeled on the latest Nörsktrad designs). The Earthquake Legion was brought up to strength as the military sinews of the Méxica began to flex.

Missionary work in support of Sisterhood efforts on the Inca coast ramped up, particularly in Moche. In the capital, the bleak atmosphere in the Imperial residences did not lift – Prince Tochtli lost two more wives in succession, in childbirth, and became even more savage and morose, and began to partake of certain Chin herbs and the poppy in an attempt to dull the pain.

"We are cursed," he whispered to himself in the darkness, "for murdering the old king, for overthrowing the true and rightful line of Emperors..." But despite the prince's pleading, old Mamexi (now past seventy and showing no signs of relinquishing his claw-like grip on either the throne or life) refused to abdicate. But doom, indeed, was closing swiftly upon the Prince and would not be denied...

A spat with a disgraced wife and her wayward husband ended Lord Atonal's life in Ipai, where the Eagle Legion commander bled his life out in a confessional in the Sisterhood cathedral there.

[ See [The War Against the Ten Thousand](#), then return ]



A shudder rippled through the Empire as news of the destruction of Sion spread, and many restive peoples who chafed under the rule of the Méxica grew bold and rose up, fighting to regain their freedom! Ataura, Chimu, Choco, Culiacan, Cuna, Moche, Ulva (but not Aser), Wairajikira and Zacatec revolted. Everywhere there was confusion, and still the armies of the state were locked in combat in the far south...

**THE SISTERS OF THE ROSE** (Lencolar, New Jerusalem in Quiche)  
*Kelly Davias, Holy Mother of the Lencolar Christian Order*

**DIPLOMACY** Nicarao (^ca), Navajo (^ch), Apache (^ch)

Though missionary efforts continued on the Inca coast, the Sisterhood now found itself grappling with die-hard Incan and French Catholic communities which simply refused to yield the faith of their fathers to the hated Aztecs.

The Holy Mother issued an encyclical calling upon all Lencolar believers to render all aid to any refugees feeling the menace of the Tzitzimime – even if those refugees were Catholic, Moslem or Orangist. In the same letter, she deplored the “unprovoked Shawnee attack upon the Ghost Dancers”, and called for a swift and peaceful resolution of the “matter in North Amerika.”

Working among the faithful in wind-swept Navajo proved too much for Sister Frances, who took sick and died in the fall of '68.

## SOUTH AMERIKA

<b>Mercenaries</b>	<b>Minimum bid listed in [x].</b>
<b>Condottieri</b>	None
<b>Captains</b>	None
<b>To hire, please contact...</b>	None
<b>Quality Ratings</b>	i15 w17 s18 e12 a12

## THE KINGDOM OF CAQUETIO

(Lencolar, New Hiquito in Caquetio)

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

**DIPLOMACY**

Summoned to war by the Church, Malinal

ordered a new regiment of riflemen and grenadiers be raised and then led (along with the rest of the army) them into the south. The insurance brokers working in the coastal ports raised their rates appreciably, as the passage from Africa had become, of late, very dangerous.

**VICEROYALTY OF ZACATECA** (Lencolar Christian, Lucifuge in Moche)

*Maxltantizo, War-Commander of the Host of Christ*

**DIPLOMACY** None

Despite the near-hysterical urgings of the Aztec Legate in Quillaca, the Zacatecs (who comprised a large fraction of the Lencolar armies assembled in the province) refused to cross the mountains and attack the Tzitzimime - *despite this being their holy duty!* – and were cursed for cowards and fools by the Aztecs, Bolivians and Nisei soldiers encamped there.

**THE PRINCIPATE OF BOLIVIA** (Roman Catholic, Trischka in Karanga)

*Shakira Mascate, Princess of Bolivia, Duchess of Trishka*

**DIPLOMACY** Characa (^nt)

Every man, woman and child in the Principate labored mightily to raise and equip a new regiment of mountaineers and to shovel food, wine, firewood, clothing and other necessities into the enormous sprawl of military camps at Gaxan in the south, where the massed armies of the Aztec Alliance were gathering to do battle with the Ten Thousand Enemies.

**THE KNIGHTS OF SAINT JOHN** (Roman Catholic, New Granada in Acroa)

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

**DIPLOMACY** Kayapo (^f)

Efforts by the Knights to dislodge the Lencolar heretics from Potiguara showed mild success, while they failed entirely in Thiat. The Office of the Inquisition began to suggest simply putting everyone in the damnable town to the sword. The long slow work of rebuilding the army continued as well, with the Steward returning to the field with a fresh cavalry battalion. In his absence, Eluterio at last became ruler in fact as well as name.

**GREAT FRANCE** (Roman Catholic, Sevilla in Patasho)

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

**DIPLOMACY** None

Embattled though the realm was, Tcholon plowed great sums of cash and labor into expanding the harborage capacities of the port cities still controlled by Great France – not only to let the merchantmen who carried desperately needed goods into the nation, but also to allow the troop transports delivering more men, more guns, more ammunition easy unloading. Sevilla, where the Emperor's government had reconstituted itself, was heavily fortified and the fleet scrapped to fill out the ranks of the artillery, infantry and cavalry.

In the south, the Lady Fayette's laboratories in New Marseilles were destroyed by fire after being thoroughly searched by a band of masked creatures – but the city was already abandoned and the workshops empty – the contents having been packed up and taken away by the Afrikan fleet weeks before.

## THE WAR AGAINST THE TEN THOUSAND (THE TZITZIMIME)

**January – April 1767**

By the end of April, the Sud Afrikan fleet at **New Marseilles** has loaded the entire population of the city, as well as the University of Great France, aboard ship (having nearly a hundred enormous transports and clipper-ships on hand) and sets sail for Afrika.

Fresh Bolivian reinforcements arrive at Gaxan in **Quillaca**, swelling General Torellas' forces to an even 34,000 men.

**May**

The Aztec *Jaguar* fleet makes landfall at Kn'yan on the Shawnee coast and takes aboard Prince Drakon's army for the campaign in the south.

A small party of Frenchmen, led by the redoubtable Lady Fayette and Captain Hasird, enter the 'dead zone' of Allentiac on a desperate mission...

**June**

The Sud Afrikan army at **Chamonix**, having waited around *quite long enough* for a Tzitzimime attack marches north out of Charrua for the presumed safety of Cari.

The Great French fleet (or what was left of it) limps into Sevilla and the Duc du Coligny sends his sailors ashore (along with many refugees from New Marseilles) for some well-deserved R&R.

A large Aztec fleet arrives at New Hiquito in Caquetio and takes aboard the near entirety of the Caquetian army, then sets sail for the Canal and the Inca coast.

Inland, the two Aztec Legions already in the field (*Black Sky* and *Singing Flame*) surge over the Andes and into **Characa**, hoping to avoid the Tzitzimime defenses of Omaguaca. Behind them, other armies are also gathering in Quillaca for the second phase of the campaign...

**July**

The Aztec legions invading Characa get a modest welcome from the locals, who have agreed to give them passage through to the south. The Aztecs, however, are more interesting in building camps, setting up their tents and rubbing the chill of the Andes from their cold, cold

August	<p>fingers.</p> <p>Captain Delmas, commanding the French “Grasshopper” regiment, infiltrates his men into <b>Chana</b>, where they hope to interdict the Tzitzimime supply lines up to Omaguaca. To their surprise, the region is not yet overrun with the dreadful Weed and the (human) peasants are still toiling in the fields – though now with new masters.</p> <p>Delmas and his men advance to the highway, whereupon they are witness to the actual landing of a cylinder plunging through the atmosphere and crashing to earth in a great gout of steam and dust. Taking careful notes, the Grasshopper commander watches in steadily mounting horror as the massive metal object (longer, he guessed than the Cathedral of Saone was high) settles to earth, ping-pong as it cooled, and then one end began to <i>unscrew</i>...</p>	<p>quiet, lulled into a deep and dreaming sleep by the queer vibration pervading the air. A little more than half of the citizens are awake, but their mad faces and jerking, syncopated movements do not include wild shouts or wailing cries... no, they move quietly, creeping through their houses, through the militia barracks, with knives or hammers or cudgels in hand.</p> <p>The tiny garrison is swiftly dealt with and within the week, the entire province has fallen to the enemy.</p>	
September	<p>Delmas’ observation of the loathsome machines crawling out of the cylinder – and the troop of hideous creatures which arrived soon after to greet the new arrivals – was broken off by the approach of six of the walking, tripod-like machines from the north.</p> <p>He and his men fled the scene, keeping to the trees and in culverts, a wary eye on the clanking war-machines around the highway. Sadly for Delmas, the tripods appearance was only a flourish... the beating of <i>pantan</i>-drums to flush the <i>khelekit</i> from cover. The Grasshoppers ran directly into a hidden line of the enemy and were obliterated in a fierce, hand-to-hand action.</p> <p>The Nisei III Corps (Teyoe commanding) arrives in <b>Quillaca</b> to join the massed armies of the Aztec Alliance.</p>	April	<p>The Aztec <i>Earthquake</i> fleet returns to Guyami from the south, having delivered the Caquetio to the southern front. Lord Pimotl takes command of the combined fleet at Nan Chao.</p> <p>The Tzitzimime army finishes unloading at Tlacotalpan, where the citizens are now laboring for new masters – but joyfully, and with great exertion. Now they advance inland with great speed, heading for the passes over the inland mountains to Huave.</p> <p>But a Tlahulli courier has already fled that way, changing horses with reckless speed, racing from post-house to post-house...</p>
October November	<p>Amazingly, nothing happens.</p> <p>The Nisei IX Corps (under Shun) arrives in <b>Quillaca</b>, having sailed from Yokuts at the beginning of the year. This brings Nisei troop strength in the south up to 47,000 men.</p> <p>On the coast, Queen Malinal’s 13,000 Caquetians unload from an Aztec fleet at <b>Apamea</b> in Arica. There is great confusion in the port, as Prince Drakon’s 15,000 Shawnee are landing as well, and the sea is blanketed with ships, the docks crowded with men, guns, supply wagons and all the materiel of war.</p> <p>In the east, Steward Humphrey of New Granada rides into <b>Zaragoza</b> (his capital), picks up new builds and then turns around to make the long, long ride back to Cari in the south, accompanied by General Garrido.</p>	May	<p>Ramon Mascate, the Duke of Bolivia, dies in camp at Quillaca of pneumonia.</p> <p>Snows.</p> <p>Two freshly-built steam cruisers arrive at <b>Sevilla</b>, having made the long voyage down from the (now destroyed) Nörsktek yards at New Orleans. These ships (all <i>Sword</i>-class cruisers) were named <i>Altecler</i> and <i>Durandana</i>. The Duc du Coligny’s sailors (who have been using the <i>Enfant de Tonnerre</i> as a training vessel) swarm aboard, working feverishly to get the cruisers in operation.<sup>2</sup></p> <p>Having waited very, very patiently for months and months, the two Aztec Legions in Characa finally attack south into <b>Omaguaca</b>. And no one is there... the enemy have withdrawn their forces. The Aztec commanders are puzzled, then suspicious. But a scout zeppelin is signaled, passing the word over the Andes to the rest of the massed armies of the Alliance, summoning them to battle.</p>
December	<p>A ring of heavy <i>Mjolnir</i>-class guns are now in service around Sevilla, giving the defenses a long reach indeed.</p> <p>A cool quiet night on the Bahia Campeche off the coast of <b>Popoluca</b> is broken by the creak of rigging and the splash of sweeps as a fleet creeps into the harbor of Tlacotalpan, lanterns shrouded and brass blacked with soot. Above, the tropical night reverberates with the <i>hnnnnnnnnnnnn</i> of a machine in flight.</p>	<p>Meanwhile, back in the Méxica heartland, the Tzitzimime striking force strides through Huave, heading for the Aztec capital at <b>Sion</b>. In the city, Emepor Mamexi dithers, then panics and flees with his personal household, his sycophants and most of the senior ministers in the air-fleet. Prince Tochtlí, however, grasps the concept that the entire organization of the Empire is packed into one place and if the Tzitzimime annihilate Sion, then the Empire will break apart.</p> <p>“We stand and fight,” he orders the garrison (which is quite large), “show these eastern devils the blood of the Méxica has not yet run thin!”</p>	
January 1768 February	<p>A hellbat drifts invisibly over the city, and then swings into an attentive orbit covering the highway heading south into Kekchi and the dirt roads leading up into the mountains of the west.</p> <p>A flotilla of boats from the White Fleet slide up to the docks and wharves and thousands of the Tzitzimime and their servants swarm ashore. But the city is oddly</p>	<p>The enemy is game for a siege, and a fierce duel erupts between the heat rays of the enemy (their numbers now including a variety of sizes of tripod war-machines, as well as a hellbat and a scattering of ground-troops) and the guns of Sion (and it’s attendant citadel of Nacayoh) which spend powder and shell with abandon... Tochtlí is everywhere, racing from post to post, urging the men to fight – showing absolutely no concern for his own safety.</p> <p>The great tripods reduced the citadel with a burning wreck within days, while the Tzitzimime soldiers (huge, ugly brutes) breached the wall while the defending guns were suppressed by the hellbat’s incandescent gaze. The enemy was within the city, but they had paid... several of the smaller machines were toppled in the fields, brought down by hidden pits and buried explosives. Tochtlí fell, rallying his troops, and then the enemy swept through the city, the great tripods wreathed in smoke as their terrible gaze set building after building alight.</p>	
March	<p><b>Sion</b> burned, and the terrible cry of the invaders echoed amongst the shattered temples and corpse-choked pyramids. Much of the Méxica government died with the metropolis, though many had fled with the Emperor or just afterwards.</p> <p>The Alliance armies pour over the mountains into <b>Omaguaca</b> – Bolivian, Nisei, Caquetian, Shawnee – making a vast host of nearly 250,000 troops. Still the Tzitzimime do not respond.</p> <p>At <b>Sion</b>, the invaders finish wrecking the city, leaving not a stone standing on stone, and then retire back into Popoluca and their waiting fleet. All flee before them.</p>	June	<p>The Alliance armies swing south along the highway into <b>Calchaqui</b> and at last enter into the dead and desolate lands afflicted by the monstrous growths of the Red Weed. And here too they face resistance at last, for</p>
March	<p>The Alliance armies swing south along the highway into <b>Calchaqui</b> and at last enter into the dead and desolate lands afflicted by the monstrous growths of the Red Weed. And here too they face resistance at last, for</p>	July	

<sup>2</sup> I’ve changed the steamship ships-per-unit rate from 2 to 1, thus the disappearance of the *Héritier de Foudre* from the roster of French ships.

the Tzitzimime have withdrawn into their fortress and citadel at Versailles, where russet domes and slender towers of inhuman design now rise over the ruins of the French city...

The Alliance army advances in a black tide, swinging wide around the city, engineers already running forward to dig gun emplacements, zeppelins retiring to the rear at all speed – what use sending them to certain doom? A stabbing, actinic ray lashes across the vanguard of the deploying army, vaporizing hundreds of cavalymen... but more keep coming, thousands upon thousands... the siege begins in earnest with a thunderous barrage from nearly 1,200 guns.

The Tzitzimime answer in kind, filling the sky with the shriek of black smoke canisters spitting from the war-machines rising from the ruins like dreadful black flowers. Among the batteries, many of the human gun-crews do not pause in their barrage – nearly all have cumbersome, head-enclosing masks and grotesque filters. They sweat ferociously, covered head-to-toe in canvas battle-suits...

Hell descends upon the earth and in a maelstrom of poison gas, unending artillery barrages and the searing blaze of the deadly ray the Alliance army storms against the Tzitzimime defences again and again.... But they hold. The monstrous creatures and their engines of destruction chew up regiment after regiment, division after division, and the hellbat ranging the upper air wreaks havoc upon the Alliance rear-areas.

After a month – no more than thirty days of hellish unrelenting combat – the Alliance army staggers back, shattered, leaving more than a hundred thousand dead upon the walls of Versailles and in the surrounding countryside. The demoralized survivors stream north, mindless with fear, into Omaguaca where only the willpower of Queen Malinal of Caquetio (the most noble surviving commander) holds the survivors together as an army, rather than a mob.

Among the lost were Prince Drakon and lord Tecumseh of Shawnee, the two Aztec commanders and a host of lesser lights.

By the very grace of god, the Tzitzimime do not pursue.

#### August

The Sud Afriqan transport fleet under Mpahlwa the Navigator returns to South Amerika, to **Sevilla** in particular, and unloads a fresh Zulu army of 60,000 men equipped with the very latest in guns, artillery and protective devices.

The Tzitzimime fleet at **Tlacotalpan** takes aboard the raiding army and sets sail. The remaining citizens of the port wake as though from a terrible dream... and then are staggered (any many go mad) when they realize the enormity of the crimes they have perpetrated upon their children, their wives and husbands, their friends...

#### September - December

An uneasy silence descends upon the Amerikas...



Figure 6. The Siege of Versailles

### BANK LIST

Aztec Empire of Mexico	Tenochtitlan Teocali	1,954	40%
The Borang Bakufu	Na-Iki Trust Bank	1,227	40%
Chan Mongol Empire	Uncle Wu's	951	40%
Free Republic of Ethiopia	Funj Gold Reserves	743	40%
Kingdom of the Iroquois	Ney Arkham Trust Bank	90	40%
The Kingdom of Java	Sunny Sunda Savings	849	40%
Coptic Kingdom of Maasai	M'Beya House of Credit	1,047	20%
Qing Empire of China	Luang Golden Venture	854	40%
Mali Ax Empire	Mixtec International Fund	1,578	34%
Taika'no Te'ikoku Hiro'i	First Pacific Bank	649	35%
Great France	Banque du Varres	820	40%
The Nisei Republic	New Yedo Matsuma Bank	939	40%
The Kingdom of Cataluna	Banque du Galway	318	40%
Empire of Swedish-Russia	BUX	33	20%
Duchy of the Three Isles	First Merchant of Valetia	726	40%

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