

LA BELLE ÉPOQUE

DIPLOMACY AND IMPERIALISM AT THE SUNSET OF THE OLD WORLD



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"Nations and empires, crowned with princes and potentates, arose majestically from all sides, wrapped in the treasures accumulated over the long years of peace. All were inserted and welded, without apparent dangers, in an immense architrave. The two powerful European systems stood opposite each other, sparkling and reverberating in their panoplies, but with a calm gaze ... The old world, at the hour of its sunset, was beautiful to see ..."

(Winston Churchill, *The World Crisis*, 1921)

1.0 INTRODUCTION

La Belle Époque is a political simulation of the decades preceding the First World War (from 1880 to 1914), a period of apparent stability, prosperity and technological discoveries, but also of arms races and tensions that eventually lead to global conflict.

The players represent one of the main European Powers of the time: Great Britain (the British), Tsarist Russia (the Russians), The Third Republic of France (the French) and the Central Empires (the allied powers of Germany and Austria-Hungary) who compete in Europe and around the world to increase their political prestige with the development of armaments, the conquest of the last colonies and the alliance of minor nations.

The game develops over 7-9 rounds, each of which represents a period of approximately 3-4 years. The game maps represent the continents of Europe, Africa and Asia where the European Powers confronted each other.

1.1 HISTORICAL CONTEXT

"La Belle Époque" is conventionally dated from the end of the Franco-Prussian War (1871) until the outbreak of the First World War (1914).

It was a period characterized by optimism, apparent stability, economic prosperity and technological, scientific and cultural innovations.

While the term itself refers specifically to France in the Third Republic, especially Paris, there were closely parallel developments not only in other Western European countries but also outside Europe, such as in the United States (the so-called *Gilded Age*) and Mexico (the *Porfiriato*, period of the dictatorship of Porfirio Díaz). In Italy it coincided with the Umbertine age (1878-1900) and the Giolittian age (1903-1914).

The Americas are not represented in the game due to the *Monroe Doctrine*, where the United States followed a separate policy, remaining isolated. The same reasoning was made for Japan, an emerging power in Asia. Both the United States and Japan have been rendered as neutral nations that are brought into the game by play of Event and Intrigue cards.

La Belle Époque was also a period where nationalism resurfaced thanks to the rampant imperialism that the European Powers exhibited on the global chessboard in their race for supremacy outside Europe. It was the period of the so-called imperialist nationalisms, which, in some states at the end of the First World War transformed into new and more extreme nationalisms which became the hotbed for the Second World War.

A Europe of monarchies

La Belle Époque also represents the decline of many European monarchies, several of which ceased to exist after the First World War. **Great Britain**, whose monarchy has come down to the present day, saw Queen Victoria reign until 1901, followed by Edward VII and George V (one of the symbols of the First World War). In **Germany**, newly reunited in the Second Reich thanks to the policies of Chancellor Otto von Bismarck, Wilhelm II of Hohenzollern (who abdicated on 28th November 1918 after of the *November Revolution*) reigns, the successor of Wilhelm I. In **Austria-Hungary** Emperor Franz Joseph I sits on the throne of an already crumbling empire. In **Russia**, the Romanov dynasty reigns: Alexander II, Alexander III and then Nicholas II (who was later killed during the Russian Revolution). **France** is the exception to the "rule" of monarchies, here the Third Republic holds sway and numerous presidents hold power in this period; among those that stand out is Marie François Sadi Carnot, who was president during the centenary of the French Revolution and the Universal Exhibition of Paris in 1889, the year that also saw the completion of the Eiffel Tower, the very symbol of La Belle Époque. In **Italy** the House of Savoy reigns. In the **Ottoman Empire**, now in decline but with a decided modernization process underway, Abdul Hamid II (known as the Great Khan) reigns before surrendering his throne to his brother Mehmet V following the Young Turks movement of 1909. Even every other little European nation had its monarchy: Belgium, Bulgaria, Greece, Netherlands, Montenegro, Serbia and Romania, for example.

Cover image

The image depicts a hypothetical meeting between the four Great Power protagonists of this game. We are in Paris in 1890, the heart of *La Belle Époque*. From this room we glimpse the symbol of the Universal Exhibition of 1889, the Eiffel Tower. Sitting at the table we have, from left to right, Marie François Sadi Carnot, President of the French Third Republic between 1887 and 1894; Queen Victoria, Queen of Great Britain from 1837 to 1901; Otto von Bismarck, German Reich Chancellor from 1871 to 1890; and Alexander III, Tsar of Russia from 1881 to 1894.

2.0 COMPONENTS

1	Mounted mapboard
4	Power Status Cards
4	Non-Player Power Status Cards
4	Player Aids
2	Card Manifests
25	Event Cards
16	National Cards (4 per Power)
28	Intrigue Cards
115	Counters
1	Sticker sheet for the Minor Nations cubes
160	Diplomatic Mission (DM) cubes (40 per Power)
33	White cubes of minor nations, on which the matching stickers will be affixed
20	Armaments cubes (black in color)
1	Set of banknotes
1	6-sided die
1	Rulebook

Promo cards: In addition, 4 promotional cards may be available (1 Event Card and 3 Intrigue Cards).

Preparing the Minor Nations' Diplomatic Mission cubes (DM cubes)

Apply the stickers with the flags of the Minor Nations onto the white cubes. On the sticker sheet there are also spare stickers, identified by the "spares" box.

At the end of the task you will have 33 minor nation DM cubes as follows:

- 7 DM cubes for Italy
- 7 DM cubes for Japan
- 7 DM cubes for the US
- 2 DM cubes for Spain
- 3 DM cubes for Portugal
- 2 DM cubes for Belgium
- 2 DM cubes for the Netherlands
- 3 DM cubes for the Boer States

2.1 DIPLOMATIC MISSION CUBES

Much of the game revolves around the use of Diplomatic Mission cubes (henceforth DM cubes) and the abstraction they express. DM cubes represent the resources, assets, diplomats, espionage and counter-espionage actions that the Powers used at the time to extend control over Colonies and build alliances with Minor Nations that one day, in the event of war, may join one or the other side or may even provide a convenient *casus belli* for the outbreak of a "great war" between the Powers. More generally, the DM cubes are the quintessence of everything that represented the imperialist diplomacy of the Powers.

2.2 LIMITATIONS ON PLAYING PIECES

The complete set of game materials is that included in the box. No additional parts may be added.

2.1.1 Banknotes. If the banknotes run out, players may add their own to the game bank.

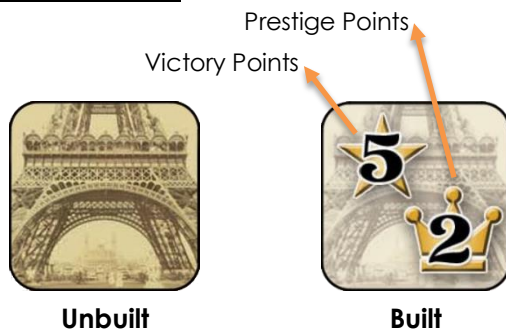
2.3 POWER COLOURS

In the game the Powers are each identified by a color:

- Russia: green
- France: blue
- Central Empires: grey
- Great Britain: red

2.4 DESCRIPTION OF COMPONENTS2.4.1 Armies and Fleets.

2.4.2 Great Works.



2.4.3 Markers.



The flags of La Belle Époque

At the time of the game, the various nations had ensigns, merchant flags, and war flags. Flags of the period are used in the game, with preference given to the most identifiable ones. The list below shows which flag we adopted for each country:

Powers

- France: ensign
- Central Empires: since this "Power" represents two allied nations (Germany and Austria-Hungary), we have two halves placed side by side: the German ensign and merchant flag and the Austrian part of the Austro-Hungarian merchant flag
- Great Britain: ensign
- Russia: ensign and merchant flag

Minor Nations

- Belgium: ensign and merchant flag
- Boer States: ensign of the Orange Free State
- Bulgaria: ensign and merchant flag
- Greece: fleet flag
- Italy: ensign and merchant flag
- Japan: ensign and merchant flag
- Netherlands: ensign and merchant flag
- Portugal: ensign
- Spain: ensign
- United States: ensign and merchant flag

Bibliographical references

- Flags of Maritime Nations, Washington 1882
- Website: <http://rbvex.it/>

2.5 HOW TO WIN THE GAME

In *La Belle Époque* Victory Points (VPs) are scored three times during the game: at the end of Era I, at the end of Era II and the end of the game. VPs are scored by winning control of Territories by owning the most DM cubes in them, by earning bonuses from Card play, by meeting various National Objectives, and by earning Prestige Points.

3.0 GAME SETUP

- 1) Place the map in the center of the table and set out the banknotes to form the bank.
- 2) Place the Minor Nations Diplomatic Mission (DM) cubes and bonuses in their respective spaces on the map. Remaining Minor Nations DM cubes are placed in the General Supply.
- 3) Shuffle the Era I Event deck, then remove 2 cards without looking at them and put them back in the box. Place the rest next to the board.
- 4) Shuffle the deck of Intrigue Cards and place it next to the board.
- 5) The players decide how to select the Power they will play (see 3.2) and each player takes their own Power Status Card along with their DM cubes, Armament Cubes, Armies, Fleets, Great Work and National Cards.
- 6) Each player prepares their initial playing pieces as indicated on their Power Status Card; places their DM cubes in the General Reserve; and places all Armies and Fleets in the Reserve space on their Power Status Card.
- 7) Each player places their power's Victory Point, Turn Order, Prestige, Prestige Bonus and Fleet markers on their correct tracks on the map.
- 8) Carry out the Initial Setup (see 3.3).
- 9) Randomly draw the First Player for Turn 1. The first turn play order will then go clockwise around the table.
- 10) Place the Turn marker on the Turn 1 box and begin the Game Sequence (see 4.0).

The total number of game pieces for each Power is as follows:

- **Russia:** 40 green DM cubes, 14 Army counters, 3 Fleet counters, 5 Armament Cubes, 4 National Cards, 1 Great Work.
- **France:** 40 blue DM cubes, 10 Army counters, 3 Fleet counters, 5 Armament Cubes, 4 National Cards, 1 Great Work.
- **Central Empires:** 40 grey DM cubes, 12 Army counters, 3 Fleet counters, 6 Armament Cubes, 4 National Cards, 1 Great Work.
- **Great Britain:** 40 red DM cubes, 8 Army counters, 3 Fleet counters, 4 Armament Cubes, 4 National Cards, 1 Great Work.

3.1 MINOR NATIONS DM CUBES

In step 2 of the *Game Setup* the various Minor Nations DM cubes must be placed on the game map, in the locations indicated by the respective flags and detailed in the table below. All other cubes are placed on the side of the game board in the General Reserve.

MINOR NATIONS DM CUBES SETUP

AFRICA	
Algeria-Morocco	1 DM Spain
Congo	2 DM Belgium
Tanganyika	1 DM Portugal
Namibia	2 DM Portugal
South Africa	3 DM the Boer States

ASIA	
Micronesia	1 DM Spain
Melanesia	2 DM the Netherlands

3.2 CHOOSING A POWER TO PLAY

In step 5 of the *Game Setup*, players have two options:



- **OPTION A:** Randomly distribute Powers among players using counters of each Power.
- **OPTION B:** Each player rolls a dice. Starting from the player who rolled the highest and then in descending order, each player chooses the Power they want to play.

2- and 3-player game

La Belle Époque can be played with fewer than 4 players.

2-player game

- Player A: Great Britain and France
- Player B: Central Empires and Russia

3-player game

- Player A: Great Britain
- Player B: Central Empires
- Player C: Russia and France

NOTE: the distributions of the Powers described above do not represent alliances or historical situations but have been designed for reasons of game balance.

Refer to chapter 12.0 to calculate Victory Points in 2- and 3-player games.

Alternatively, if you want to use the **Non-Player Powers** option, refer to chapter 13.0.

3.3 INITIAL SETUP FOR THE POWERS

In step 8 of the *Game Setup* the players, by performing several rounds in Turn Order (see 3.3.1), place DM cubes from their powers' starting pool to prepare the ground for the actual game.

Each Power takes 2 DM cubes in turn from their initial pool and places them in any available location on the game board with the following limitations:

- a Power may only place 1 DM cube at a time in a given Territory; however, it is possible, in different turns, to place more cubes in the same Territory;
- no Fleet is required for the placement of DM cubes in Africa and Asia;
- in each Territory a maximum of half of the spaces can be occupied: this includes Minor Nations DM cubes;
- Diplomatic Disputes cannot be generated (see 8.2.5) during this initial placement;
- Powers must place all their starting DM cubes;
- Powers must place the minimum number of DM cubes required in each continent as indicated on their Power Status Card (see 3.3.2).

Players continue to follow the Turn Order (see 3.3.1) until all the Powers have finished placing their starting DM cubes. If a Power runs out of its DM cubes before the others, that is the end of its turn.

It is not possible to keep unused DM cubes by passing in a turn. All the DM cubes indicated in the starting pool on the Power Status Cards must be placed on the map at this stage.

3.3.1 Turn Order during Initial Setup. During the Initial Setup the game order is as follows:

- 1) Russia
- 2) France
- 3) Central Empires
- 4) Great Britain

3.3.2 Restrictions on initial placement.

- **Russia:** begins with 7 DM cubes, at least 4 of which must be placed in Europe.
- **France:** begins with 9 DM cubes at least 2 of which must be placed in Asia, 2 in Africa and 1 in Europe.
- **Central Empires:** begins with 9 DM cubes at least 2 of which must be placed in Africa and 4 in Europe.
- **Great Britain:** begins with 10 DM cubes at least 2 of which must be placed in Asia, 3 in Africa and 2 in Europe.

Note: It is not necessary to immediately place all your DM cubes to comply with the limits described above. Players are free to place them in the territories they prefer, but the above limits

must be respected at the end of the placement. If, at the end of this set-up it is noticed that by error the minimum requirements have not been met, players make the necessary changes by rearranging the DM cubes on the map. During this rearrangement you can neither generate Diplomatic Disputes nor occupy more than half the spaces of a Territory.

EXAMPLE: Initial Setup

After placing the Minor Nations DM cubes (step 2), the Powers place their DM cubes from their Starting Pool.

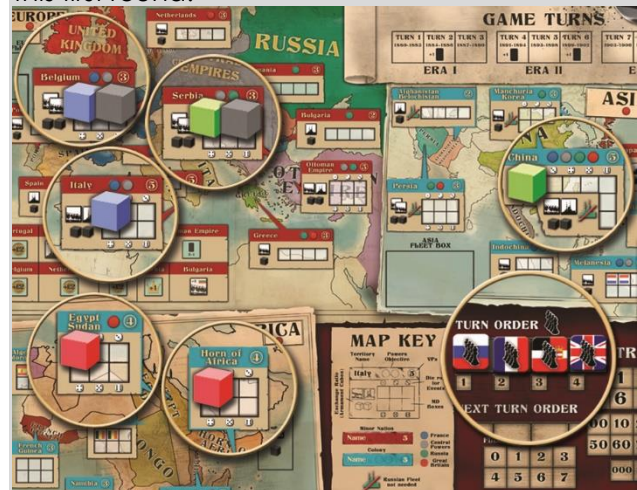
The turn order is Russia, France, Central Empires, Great Britain and 2 DM cubes are placed at a time by each Power.

1st round

Players make the following choices:

- **Russia:** Serbia, China
- **France:** Belgium, Italy
- **Central Empires:** Belgium, Serbia
- **Great Britain:** Egypt-Sudan, Horn of Africa.

The following image shows the gameboard after this first round.



2nd round

Players make the following choices:

- **Russia:** Serbia, Japan
- **France:** Belgium, Algeria-Morocco
- **Central Empires:** Ottoman Empire, Namibia
- **Great Britain:** Egypt-Sudan, Japan.

Note that in Belgium and Serbia half of the spaces are now occupied, so neither the Central Empires nor Great Britain can place further DM cubes in them. Furthermore, these Minor Nations cannot receive further DM cubes from any power for the remainder of the Initial Setup.



3rd round

Players make the following choices:

- **Russia:** Romania, Bulgaria
- **France:** Italy, Algeria-Morocco
- **Central Empires:** Ottoman Empire, Tanganyika
- **Great Britain:** Greece, the Netherlands.

Note that with the placement of the CE DM cube in Tanganyika, the Colony now has 3 DMs (1 from the Central Empires and 2 from Portugal). Since the Portuguese DM cubes are also included when determining the limit of half of the spaces, no additional DM cubes may be placed in this Colony by any Power.

Furthermore, with this latest placement, Russia has complied with its minimum DM requirement in Europe. In the following turn Russia can place its last DM cube on any continent.



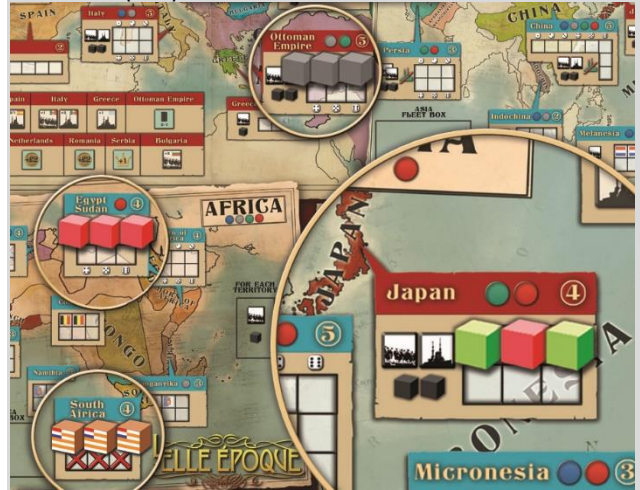
4th round

Players make the following choices:

- **Russia:** Japan
- **France:** French Guinea, Indochina
- **Central Empires:** Ottoman Empire, Melanesia
- **Great Britain:** Egypt-Sudan, Persia.

Note that Russia places its last DM cube in Asia having already placed its required minimum of 4 DM in Europe. The Central Empires and Great Britain place their third DM cubes in the Ottoman Empire and Egypt-Sudan respectively and are

one step away from taking control (CE) and alliance (GB).



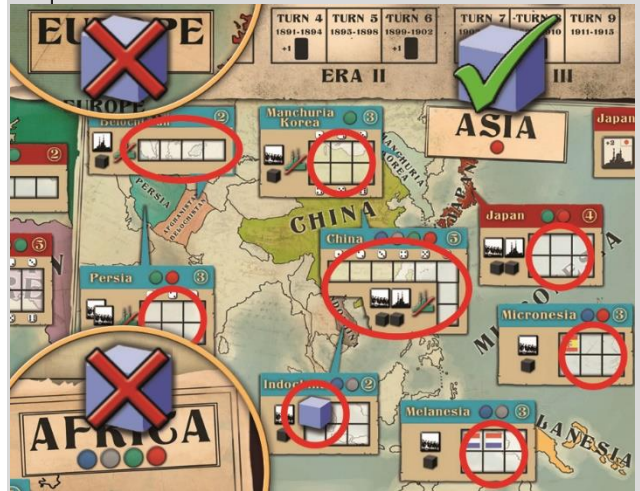
Note: South Africa already has 3 Boer States' DM cubes in the initial setup, so player Powers cannot place DM cubes there in this phase.

5th round

Players make the following choices:

- **France:** Indochina
- **Central Empires:** Congo
- **Great Britain:** the Netherlands, Persia.

Note that Russia has run out of its initial endowment of DM cubes and has ended its turn. France, having so far placed only one DM cube in Asia, is obliged to place another cube there to meet its minimum requirement. The Central Empires has already met its minimum requirements and is therefore free to place DMs wherever it wants. Great Britain has 2 DMs and can also place them freely since its previous placements have met all its minimum requirements.



4.0 SEQUENCE OF PLAY

Each Turn in *La Belle Époque* progresses through the following phases:

- Resource Phase
- Event Phase
- Intrigue Cards Phase (only on Turns 2-4-6-8)
- Action Phase
- Preparation Phase
- Victory Point Phase (only on Turns 3, 6 and at game end)

Please refer to the following paragraphs for the description and rules relating to each Phase.

5.0 RESOURCE PHASE

In this phase each power receives money according to the table below, modified by any bonuses from Alliances with Minor Nations (see 9.2.2). The money is taken directly from the game bank.

BASIC REVENUE EACH TURN

Power	Revenue
Great Britain	£ 13
Central Empires	£ 12
France	£ 11
Russia	£ 10

All Powers receive 3 DM cubes each turn, with the exception of France which, after completing the Great Opera *Eiffel Tower* (see 9.3), receives 4 each turn. DM cubes are taken from the general supply.

6.0 EVENT PHASE

In this phase, two Event Cards from the relevant deck are drawn and resolved.

Draw the top card from the Event deck and resolve it immediately. Once the first card has been resolved, draw a second card and resolve it immediately.

6.1 ERAS OF PLAY

A game of *La Belle Époque* is divided into 3 different eras:

- **Era I:** from 1880 to 1890, lasting 3 turns (Turns 1 to 3).
- **Era II:** from 1891 to 1902, lasting 3 turns (Turns 4 to 6).

- **Era III:** from 1903 to 1914, lasting 1-3 turns (from Turn 7 to Turn 9). There may be however, a possible Early End (see 6.3) of the game (if the Assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand Event Card is drawn).

To reflect this division, the Event Cards are divided into three decks (Era I, Era II and Era III):

- The Era I deck is used from **Turn 1** and is prepared by removing, before the start of the game, 2 Cards which are placed in the box without looking at them.
- At the beginning of **Turn 4**, remove 3 random cards from the Era II deck (4 if you also use the *Dreyfuss Affair* Promo Event Card), placing them in the box without looking at them. Add the remaining cards to the cards in the draw deck and shuffle (not to the discards).
- At the beginning of **Turn 7**, add the Era III Event Card deck to the cards in the draw deck and shuffle (not to the discards).

EXAMPLE



The picture shows the situation at the beginning of Turn 4 (first turn of Era II). We have 2 unplayed cards from the Era I deck. 3 cards are removed from the Era II deck (we are playing without the "Dreyfuss Affair" Promo Event Card). The remaining cards are shuffled with those left over from Era I. Discards containing 6 Era I Event Cards are ignored.

6.2 PLACEMENT OF DM CUBES THROUGH EVENT CARDS

Many Event Cards cause DM cubes to be placed on Minor Nations and Colonies.

DM cube placed in this way **always** follows these placement priorities:

- 1) first occupy any free spaces on the Territory, one DM cube at a time;
- 2) if there are no spaces available to place the DM cube, roll a dice and directly replace the DM cube in the resulting position, regardless of who owns it. Place the removed DM cube in the General Reserve.

If the position is occupied by an Armament Cube, the placement of the DM cube is canceled.

EXAMPLE



This example shows the placement of 2 Italian DM cubes in the Horn of Africa as a result of the "Italian Penetration in the Horn of Africa" Event card. Since there are free spaces, the Italian DM cubes are placed in them.

6.3 SUDDEN DEATH GAME END

If the Era III event card "Assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand" is drawn in the Event Phase, the game ends immediately and players move on to calculating the end of game Victory Points (see 13.0).

The turn in which this card is drawn is **not** played.

7.0 INTRIGUE CARDS PHASE

In this phase new Intrigue Cards are distributed from the relevant deck. **This phase occurs only in turns 2-4-6-8.** Each player draws an Intrigue card, in turn order. On turns 1-3-5-7-9 skip this step.

There is no limit to the number of Intrigue cards that each player can have in their hand.

If the deck runs out, shuffle the discards to form a new draw deck.

8.0 ACTION PHASE

In this phase, in turn order, the Powers take turns performing 1 or 2 actions of their choice.

The Action Phase turns continue until all players have passed and the game moves on to the Preparation Phase (9.0).

8.0.1 Restriction. Each Action can only be taken once in a player's Action Phase turn, (but may be taken again in a subsequent turn) and they may be taken in any order.

The possible actions are:

- Buy Military Units
- Send Diplomatic Missions
- Build a Great Work (once per game)
- Economic Investment
- Gain International Prestige (once per Turn)
- Play a Card (National or Intrigue)
- Resolve a Diplomatic Dispute
- Deploy Fleets
- Sell Armaments (starting from Turn 4)
- Pass

NOTE: These actions do not have to be done in any sequence. It is only necessary to respect the restriction of rule 8.0.1.

The following paragraphs give a detailed description of each of the game actions.

8.1 BUY MILITARY UNITS

Powers purchase Armies and Fleets, from the Reserve space of their Power Status Card. **Each Power may build a maximum of 3 fleets at a cost of £10 each.** The maximum number of **Armies** and their purchase cost are shown in the table below:

ARMIES COST PER POWER

Power	Max Armies	Army Cost
Central Empires	12	£ 3
France	10	£ 3
Great Britain	8	£ 3
Russia	14	£ 2



PROCEDURE: The player pays for the number of Armies and and/or Fleets they want to build and places them on the Arsenal space on their Power Status Card. If Fleets are built, the player updates the Fleet Track on the game board, moving it 1 space for each Fleet built.

EXAMPLE

France decides to buy 2 armies and 1 fleet, paying £10 + £6 = £16 and placing the new units on the Arsenal space. Note that there are already 3 Armies there. Finally, it moves its marker one space on the Fleet Track.



8.2 SEND DIPLOMATIC MISSIONS

Powers send their Diplomatic Missions to the Minor Nations to obtain Alliances, to the Colonies to obtain Control or to challenge another Power by fomenting a Diplomatic Dispute.

PROCEDURE: The player takes one DM cube from the Embassies space on their Power Status Card and chooses a territory on the map. The DM cube is placed either in an available space in that territory or on top of an already present opposing DM cube to foment a Diplomatic Dispute (see 8.7). Only 1 DM cube can be placed per Action. If, after the placement, the player has an absolute majority of DM cubes in the Territory, then an Alliance (Minor Nations, see 8.2.3) or Control (Colonies, see 8.2.4) is obtained.

For the purposes of determining this majority, DM cubes involved in Diplomatic Disputes (those placed on top of an opposing power's DM cube) are not counted.

8.2.1 Placement restrictions. When placing a DM cube, both on a free space or on top of an opposing DM cube, the following limitations must be respected:

- DM cubes can be sent to Africa or Asia only if the power has a Fleet in that continent's Fleet Box, even if the fleet is Exhausted;
- if a DM cube is placed on top of that of another Power to foment a Diplomatic Dispute, no power can add more DM cubes in the space in Dispute; in each Diplomatic Dispute there cannot be more than 2 DM cubes; however, other DM cubes can be sent to other areas of the territory to foment other Diplomatic Disputes; there is no limit to the number of possible disputes in a territory;
- where a Territory has spaces indicated with dice the DM cube must be placed in the lowest numbered space.

EXAMPLE

France can place a DM cube in Algeria-Morocco since it has a fleet in the African Fleet Box.

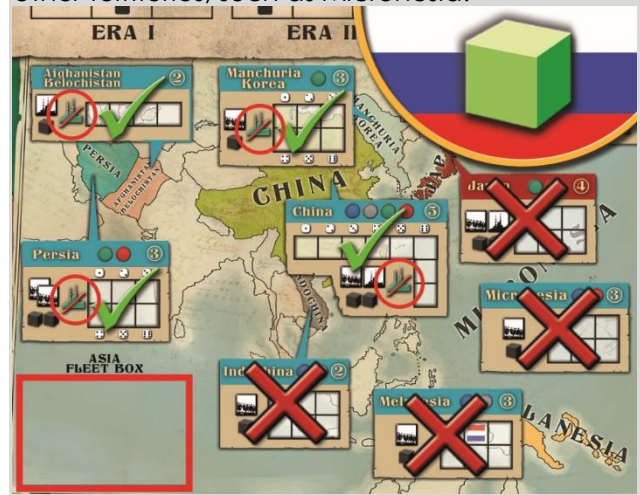
It could place the DM cube even if the Fleet was Exhausted.



8.2.2 Russia. This power does not need a Fleet in Asia to send DM cubes to Persia, Afghanistan-Baluchistan, China or Manchuria-Korea.

EXAMPLE

Russia wants to place a DM cube in Asia and does not have a fleet in the Asia Fleet Box. It can place in Persia, Afghanistan-Baluchistan, China, Manchuria-Korea, while it cannot place it in other territories, such as Micronesia.



8.2.3 Allied Minor Nations. When an absolute majority of spaces of a minor nation is occupied by DM cubes of the same power, the minor nation becomes an **Ally** of that power. The DM cubes of the Allied Minor Nation count as well as those of the Power for the control of Colonies. In addition, the Major Power obtains the Allied Minor Nation Bonus indicated in the relevant box on the map (summarized in the table below). Alliances with Minor Nations are important sources of Victory Points at the end of each Era and at the end of the game.

If the Alliance of a Minor Nation changes within the same game turn and its Armies/Fleets are Exhausted, these pieces are not reactivated. If the Armies/Fleets are still active, they can be used in the turn in which they are allied.

EFFECTS OF THE ALLIANCE OF MINOR STATES

Minor Nation	Bonus
Belgium	+£2 during the Resource Phase
Bulgaria	1 Army (usable only in Europe)
Greece	1 Fleet (usable only in Europe)
The Netherlands	+£2 during the Resource Phase
Japan	1 Fleet (usable only in Asia)
Italy	1 Army and 1 Fleet
The Ottoman Empire	Instead of drawing 1 Intrigue Card, the Power draws 2, chooses which one to keep and discards the other
Portugal	+£2 during the Resource Phase
Romania	+£2 during the Resource Phase
Serbia	+1 Prestige as long as the Alliance is in effect
Spain	1 Fleet

EXAMPLE

After Great Britain places DM cubes in its turn, Italy goes from an Alliance with France to an Alliance with Great Britain.



The Italian Fleet, located in the Africa Fleet Box, is Exhausted, because it was already used in the same turn by France. The Italian Fleet stays in the Africa box, and now allows Great Britain to send DM cubes to Africa; however it will not be able

to provide support to any Diplomatic Disputes as it is Exhausted.

The still active Italian Army on the Arsenal space on the French Power Card is moved to the Arsenal space on the British Power Card.

8.2.4 Controlled Colonies. When an absolute majority of spaces in a colony is occupied by DM cubes of the same Power, the colony becomes **Controlled** by the Power. Colony Control is an important source of Victory Points at the end of each Era and at the end of the game. At the end of the game Controlled Colonies also add modifiers to the Prestige track (see 12.1).

EXAMPLE

The picture shows some game situations that can occur:



- Algeria-Morocco is a French controlled Colony: France has DM cubes in 4 out of 6 spaces so has the absolute majority.
- Egypt-Sudan is not controlled by Great Britain as it has DM cubes in only 3 out of the 6 spaces.
- Congo is a Central Empires controlled Colony as although the CE has placed only 3 DM cubes, there are Armament Cubes in spaces 5 and 6. The Central Empires therefore occupies the majority of spaces.
- Tanganyika has spaces occupied as follows: 2 British DM cubes, 1 French DM cube, 1 Central Empires DM cube.
- Namibia is a French controlled Colony. This is because in Namibia there are 1 DM cubes from French ally Portugal and 3 DM cubes from France itself, for a total of 4 spaces occupied out of 6.
- South Africa is a British controlled colony; in fact there are 4 British DM cubes and 2 French DM cubes. Note that there is Central Empires DM cube on top of a British cube: this represents an unresolved Diplomatic Dispute. In this case, the Central Empires DM cube is not counted for the Control, while the British cube is.

8.2.5 Diplomatic Disputes (see 8.7). Once a DM cube is placed on top of an opposing DM cube, no power can add DM cubes into that Dispute. A maximum of 2 DM cubes may be present in each Diplomatic Dispute.

However, other Disputes may be formed in the same Territory.

Only the DM cube at the base of the Diplomatic Dispute can be removed due to the effect of Intrigue/Events Cards.

EXAMPLE

The image shows a hypothetical situation in Japan where Russia wishes to place a DM cube:

- 2 French DM cubes, 1 of which has a British DM cube on top of it
- 1 other British DM cube
- 1 Russian DM cube

Russia wants to foment a Diplomatic Dispute: it may place its DM cube on top on either the single British cube or on the other French DM cube. It may not place its cube on the space already in a Diplomatic Dispute.

Note also that the Japanese Fleet has not been assigned because Japan is not an Ally of any Power.



8.2.6 Saving DM cubes. A Power is never forced to play all the DM cubes it earns in the same turn and may keep them for future turns. When a Power passes (see 8.10) any DM cubes in the Embassies space on its Power Status Card remain for use in subsequent turns.

8.3 GREAT WORK

Powers can build a Great Work, one of the symbols of La Belle Époque. This Action can only be taken once per game.

Each Great Work:

- has a cost to build, indicated on the Power Card
- awards a number of Victory Points each Victory Points Phase
- awards a bonus that becomes active from the moment it is built.

Building a Great Work advances the Power 2 spaces on the Prestige track.

EFFECTS OF BUILDING A GREAT WORK

Great Work	Bonus
Kiel Canal	Mobilizing Fleets in Diplomatic Disputes costs £ 1 per Fleet
HMS Dreadnought	+1 box in the Fleet track
Eiffel Tower	+1 DM cube in the Resource Phase
Trans-Siberian Railway	Allows Russia to play the relevant National Card

PROCEDURE: The player pays to the bank the cost shown in the Great Work box on their Power Status Card then advances the power's marker on the Prestige Track, possibly also benefiting from any unlocked bonuses (see 12.0). The Great Work marker on the Power Status Card is flipped to show the Victory Points.

EXAMPLE

France decides to build its Great Work: the Eiffel Tower. The player pays £16, and flips the Great Work marker on its Power Card.



France advances 2 spaces on the Prestige Track.



France immediately gets 1 Intrigue Card and £3.

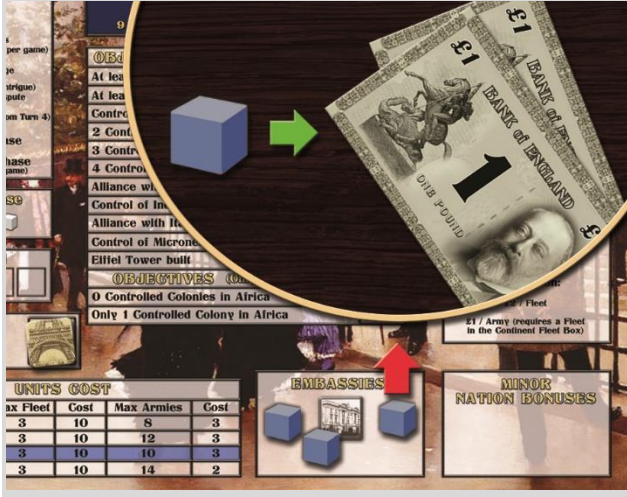
8.4 ECONOMIC INVESTMENT

Powers can invest their DM cubes to make money.

PROCEDURE: the player takes a DM cube from the Embassies space on the Power Card and places it in the General Reserve, then takes £2 from the bank.

EXAMPLE

The French player decides to sacrifice a DM cube for money. A DM cube is moved from the Embassies space to the General Reserve and France receives £2 from the bank.



8.5 INTERNATIONAL PRESTIGE



Once per game turn a Power can improve its Prestige, by increasing its position on the Prestige Track. Even if this action has already been carried out in the current turn, the Power's Prestige may still change due to the use of Intrigue Cards.

PROCEDURE: The player pays £5 to the bank to advance the power's marker 1 space on the Prestige track, possibly also benefiting from any unlocked bonuses (see 12.0). The Prestige marker is turned over to indicate that the action has been taken this turn.

EXAMPLE

Great Britain decides to use one of its actions to increase its Prestige. The British player pays £5 and moves the British marker on the Prestige Track one space to the right, to a space with a DM cube symbol. Great Britain immediately receives a DM cube in the Embassies space on its Power Card.



8.6 PLAY A CARD

Players can play the Intrigue Cards and National Cards they hold.

PROCEDURE (Intrigue Card): the player chooses an Intrigue Card from their hand and decides which half to use, applying its effects. If one or more opposing Powers suffer the effects of the card played, each of them places one of their DM cubes from the General Reserve on the card, keeping it next to the board. Otherwise the card is placed in the discard pile.

PROCEDURE (National Card): the player chooses a National Card from their hand, and if they meet the possible prerequisites, pays the cost and applies its effects. If one or more opposing Powers suffer the effects of the card played, each of them places one of its DM cubes from the general supply on the card, keeping it next to the board. Otherwise the Card is placed directly in the box.



8.6.1 Limits of effects. A Power that has its Intrigue Card Marker on an Intrigue Card on the side of the board or on a National Card next to a Power Status Card cannot be targeted by the effects of additional Intrigue or National Cards in the current turn.

8.6.2 Placement of DM cubes via Intrigue Cards. Some Intrigue Cards (*Italian Diplomacy*, *Big Stick Policy*, *Rising Sun*) cause DM cubes to be placed on Territories. Any DM placed in this way can:

- be placed on empty spaces, if available, in the Territory; or
- directly replace a DM cube in the selected Territory, chosen by the active player, even if empty spaces are available.

EXAMPLE

The British player decides to use an Intrigue Card in hand. Choosing the "Big Stick Policy" half, the player places 1 US DM cube in each of:

- Japan
- China
- Either Micronesia or Melanesia (they choose Micronesia)

In China the British player decides to replace a French DM cube, in Japan to add an US DM cube in the first free space, and in Micronesia they add an US DM cube in a free space.

Note that:

- spaces were available in China, but the player chose to remove an opposing DM cube;
- this replacement is immediate and do not generate a Diplomatic Dispute.



8.7 RESOLVE A DIPLOMATIC DISPUTE

This action resolves one Diplomatic Dispute which was previously fomented using the "Send Diplomatic Missions" action (see 8.2).

Only a player with their own DM cube on top of an opposing Power's DM cube can take this action.

PROCEDURE: the player who resolves the action is the "attacker" while the other player is the "defender". A player who has already passed (see 8.10) is still entitled to be a "defender" and to react.

The following steps are then solved in sequence to calculate the Dispute Bonus of the Powers involved in the Diplomatic Dispute:

- the attacker can use its Fleets present in the Fleet Box of the Continent where the Dispute is resolved. Each fleet used costs £ 2 and must be turned to the "exhausted" side;
- the defender does the same with its Fleets. Each fleet used costs £ 2 and must be turned to the "exhausted" side;
- the defender checks whether they can send Armies (see 8.8), and takes them from their Arsenal and places them on their "exhausted"

side alongside the Territory in Dispute. Each Army sent costs £ 1;

- the attacker does the same. Each Army sent costs £ 1;
- each player has a dice modifier of +2 for each Fleet used and +1 for each Army used; the maximum bonus achievable this way is +4;
- if the Central Empires player has played the National Card "Superior Doctrine" a further +2 is added, up to a maximum of +6;
- if the British player uses a British fleet in the dispute, they gains a +1 dispute bonus and the maximum is increased to +5;
- if the Central Empires player uses in attack one of its Armies, they gains a +1 dispute bonus;
- both players roll a die and add their modifiers;
- the Power that obtains the highest modified dice result keeps its DM cube on the territory space and removes that of the defeated Power, placing it in the General Reserve; if the result is a tie, the Power with the greatest prestige wins; if the powers' Prestige is the same, both DM cubes are removed to the general reserve, leaving the space on the territory free.

NOTE: Remember that an Army can only be sent to a Dispute if there is a Fleet (Active or Exhausted) in the Fleet Box of the Continent where the Dispute takes place.

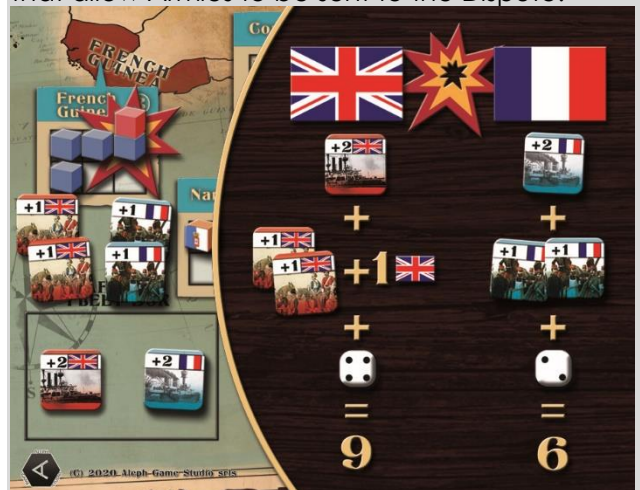


Exception: in Europe for all the Powers and in Asia for Russia in the 4 Territories with the symbol on the left).

EXAMPLE

Great Britain decides to resolve a Diplomatic Dispute with France in French Guinea.

Both Powers have Fleets in the Africa Fleet Box that allow Armies to be sent to the Dispute.



- Britain decides to use its fleet, pays £2 and flips the fleet marker to the "exhausted" side.
- France does the same.

- Then France decides to also use 2 Armies, pays £2 (1 + 1) and flips the Army markers to their exhausted side, placing them next to the territory.
- Great Britain does the same.
- France's modifier is $+2 + 1 + 1 = +4$ (which is the maximum it can have), while Great Britain has a modifier of $+2 + 1 + 1 + 1 = +5$ due to the British fleet (see 8.7).
- France rolls a 2 and Great Britain rolls a 4. The final results are Great Britain $4 + 5 = 9$, and France $2 + 4 = 6$.
- Britain wins the Dispute and the French DM cube is removed to the reserve.

8.7.1 Disputes against neutral Minor Nations. All DM cubes of a Minor Nation not Allied to any Power defend themselves with a fixed +1 modifier, with the exception of those of the United States, Italy and Japan who defend themselves at +2.

EXAMPLE

Great Britain decides to resolve a Dispute with Italy in the Horn of Africa. Italy is not an Ally of any power. Great Britain supports the attack with a fleet (+2) and 2 Armies (+2) and then adds a +1 bonus (British fleet in a Dispute) for a total of +5. Italy has an intrinsic defense value of +2. Great Britain rolls a 2 which added to the modifiers becomes 7, while Italy rolls a 3 which added to the modifiers becomes a 5. Great Britain wins the Dispute.



8.7.2 Armies and Fleets of Minor Nations. The armies and fleets of the minor nations are mobilized free of charge in any disputes by the powers with which they are allied.

EXAMPLE

Here we see a Dispute between Great Britain and France. France is Allied with Italy and can therefore control and use the Italian Army and Fleet. In this case the French player decides to

use the Italian Army too as there is no cost to France to do so.



8.7.3 Territorial restrictions on Minor Nations. The Bulgarian Army and the Greek Fleet cannot be mobilized outside Europe. The Japanese fleet cannot be mobilized outside Asia.

8.7.4 Disputes involving Allied Minor Nations. If a Power attacks an Allied Minor Nation then the allied Power may intervene on its side, according to the normal rules, with its Armies and Fleets.

EXAMPLE

Great Britain decides to resolve a Dispute with Italy in the Horn of Africa. Italy is allied to France. France may decide to help its Ally and use its Fleets and Armies in resolving the Dispute.



8.8 DEPLOY FLEETS

With this action, the Powers deploy their Fleets around the world.

A fleet deployed in a continent's fleet box:

- allows the power to send DM cubes to territories on that Continent (even if exhausted);
- can be used to intervene in Disputes on that continent;

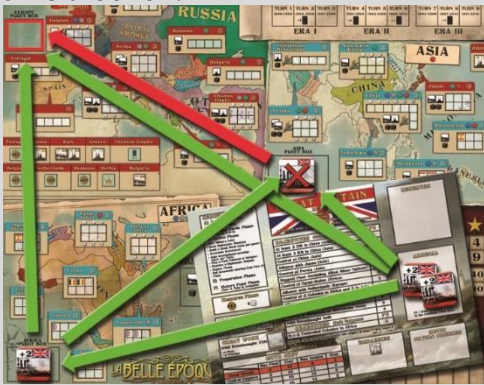
- allows the power to send Armies into Disputes on that Continent (even if the fleet is exhausted).

At the end of the turn the Fleets remain in the boxes on the map and they are only flipped to the Active side.

PROCEDURE: the player chooses which Fleets to move to or between Continents on the map. If the Fleet comes from the power's Arsenal it is placed directly in the Fleet Box of the chosen Continent. If the Fleet comes from another Continent on the map, it is moved to the Fleet Box of the chosen Continent and turned to the "exhausted" side. **"Exhausted" fleets cannot be moved with this action.**

EXAMPLE

Let's analyze the movement of the British fleets in this game situation:



- the fleet in Africa is not exhausted, so can move to both Europe or Asia;
- the exhausted Fleet in Asia cannot move and therefore cannot, for example, go to Europe;
- the Fleet on the Power Status Card can go to any continent or continents.

In this example, the exhausted Fleet in Asia still allows the placement of DM cubes there. The fleet in Africa also allows army movement and can provide support in a possible Diplomatic Dispute.



8.9 SELL ARMAMENTS

This action is only available from Turn 4 onwards.

With this action, the Powers can sell their Armies and Fleets to Colonies and Minor Nations to secure potential allies and resources.

The presence of Armament Cubes makes it easier for a Major Power to ally a Minor State or control a Colony as they reduce the overall number of spaces in a Territory and therefore also reduce the number of DM cubes necessary to obtain an absolute majority.

PROCEDURE: the player chooses a Territory that does not already have Armament Cubes (black in color) present in one or more spaces. Check the exchange rate between Armies and/or Fleets and Armament Cubes (represented in the space of the chosen Territory by the symbols of Armies/Fleets and black cubes). **Exception:** for Africa there is a box on the side of the continent that indicates the rate for all its territories.

Next, the power removes that number of Armies and/or Fleets from the game by placing them in the box and places a number of Armament Cubes from its Arsenal in the chosen Territory. If there are free spaces in the Territory, they must be occupied first. If there are none, the player decides which DM cubes to remove in the Territory and replaces them directly with the Armament Cubes. DM cubes removed in this way return to the general supply.

8.9.1 Placement restrictions. The placement of Armament Cubes has the following restrictions:

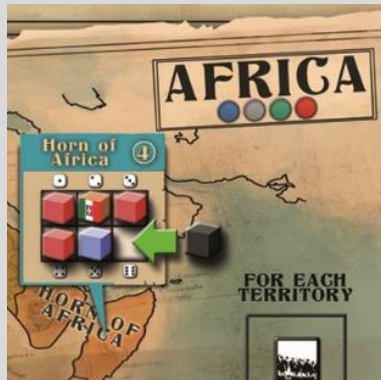
- it is not possible to use this action on a Territory that already has at least 1 Armament Cube;
- the exchange rate indicated in the space on each Territory must be fully satisfied; it is not possible to use it only partially for those Territories that for example have indicated the expenditure of more Armies/Fleets for 2 Armament Cubes (eg: Italy);
- if there are free spaces in the Territory, these must be occupied first, starting from the one on the bottom right; if a second cube must also be placed, it will be placed in the space next to the first cube;
- if there are no free spaces in the Territory, the player can freely choose which DM cube to directly replace with the Armament Cube. The DM cubes thus removed return to the General Reserve;
- it is not possible to place an Armament Cube on an unresolved Diplomatic Dispute.

Armament Cubes cannot be disputed or removed by Events or by Intrigue or National Cards.

EXAMPLE



The British player decides to sell armaments to the Horn of Africa. In the Horn of Africa the exchange rate is equal to 1 Armament Cube for 1 Army. Once this Armament Cube is placed, no Power (including Great Britain) will be able to perform this action in this Territory. Now the player decides where to place the armament cube.

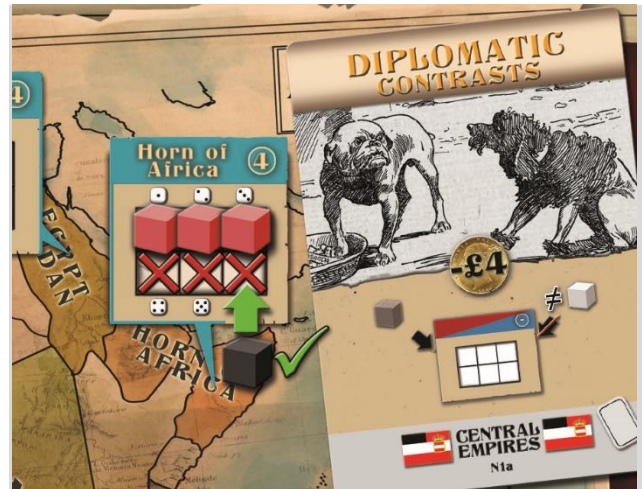


The player chooses to place it in a free space, placing it in the box at the bottom right.

8.9.2 National Card "Diplomatic Contrasts" and Armament Cubes. It is still possible to play the "Sell Armaments" action on a Territory subject to the "Diplomatic Contrasts" National Card, provided that this action has not already been done in the Territory.

EXAMPLE

Let's look in detail at the Horn of Africa colony. The Central Empires played its "Diplomatic Tackles" National Card, effectively stopping other powers placing DM cubes there. However, Great Britain decides to "Sell Armaments" there to reduce the available space occupied by DM cubes and also reduce the DM cubes necessary to obtain an absolute majority in the Territory. After checking the exchange rate (1 Army for 1 Armament Cube), GB places the black cube in the space on the bottom right.



In addition, Great Britain also gains control of the Horn of Africa since it now owns the absolute majority of the DM cubes there.

8.10 PASS



When a player passes, they place their Power's Turn Marker on the first available space on the Next Turn Order Track. The remaining players continue their game turns. As they pass, they place their Turn Markers in the next available box on the track. If a player passes, they can no longer take actions in the current turn, except for defending in any Diplomatic Disputes (see 8.7).

8.11 REMOVAL OF UNRESOLVED DISPUTES

After all players have passed, undo any unresolved Dispute by removing the DM cube that fomented it: that is by removing the DM cube placed on top of the DM cube that was originally present.

9.0 PREPARATION PHASE

In this phase, the players perform the following activities, in this order:

- 1) all Armies sent to Territories during Diplomatic Disputes that were resolved in the current turn are placed on their active side in the power's Arsenal;
- 2) all fleets used during Diplomatic Disputes resolved in the current turn are turned to their active side and remain in the relevant Fleet Box on the game map;
- 3) the Powers' Turn Markers from the Next Turn Order Track are moved, without changing their order, to the Turn Order Track;
- 4) all Intrigue cards played in the current turn are discarded and any DM cubes placed above them as a reminder are returned to the General Reserve;
- 5) the Turn marker is advanced to the next box.

10.0 SCORING VICTORY POINTS

10.1 SCORING VPS IN ERAS I AND II



Victory Points are scored immediately at the end of Era I (Turn 3) and Era II (Turn 6). Scoring is done on the basis of the National Objectives, shown on the Power Cards, along with counting the VPs shown on the map for each Allied Minor Nation and Controlled Colony by a Power. The Powers' markers are then moved on the Victory Points Track.

In these turns, objectives that subtract VPs are not taken into account, as indicated on the Power Card.

EXAMPLE

The picture shows the situation at the end of Turn 3 in Europe.



- **Great Britain (6 VP):** obtains 3 VP for the Alliance with the Netherlands and another 3 VP for having fulfilled its "Alliance with the Netherlands" objective.
- **Central Empires (12 VP):** earns 3 VP for the Alliance with Serbia and another 3 VP for the Alliance with Belgium. It also earns 3 VPs for fulfilling the "Alliance with Serbia" objective and another 3 VPs for fulfilling the "Alliance with Belgium" objective.
- **Russia (12 VP):** earns 2 VP for its Alliance with Portugal, 3 VP for its Alliance with Romania and 3 VP for its Alliance with Bulgaria. Russia also earns 2 VPs for fulfilling its "Alliance with Romania" objective and another 2 VPs for fulfilling its "Alliance with Bulgaria" objective.
- **France (8 VP):** earns 5 VP for its Alliance with Italy. It also earns 3 VPs for meeting its "Alliance with Italy" objective.

Spain, Greece, Ottoman Empire do not give points to any Power.

The same procedure is also done for Africa and Asia.

Each player verifies the achievement of their objectives and adds the related Victory Points, considering each objective individually.

EXAMPLE

Britain has 5 DM cubes in China, and holds control.

Therefore the player obtains the Victory Points related to the following objectives present on the Power Card:

- at least 2 DM cubes in China: 2 VP
- at least 4 DM cubes in China: 5 VP
- Control of China: 3 VP

10.2 FINAL SCORING

At the end of the game, whether it ends on Turn 9 or ends by the drawing of the "Assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand" Event Card (Era III), there is a final Victory Points calculation that includes the following and it's added to the VPs obtained during the previous 2 Scoring phases:

- 1) Prestige Bonus for Controlled Colonies
- 2) Scoring of Victory Points by adding:
 - Victory Points for Allied Minor Nations
 - Victory Points for Controlled Colonies
 - Prestige Track Victory Points (whether positive or negative)
 - National Objectives
 - "Balkan Wars" Event Card (Era III) if it has been assigned to a Power

The Power with the most Victory Points is the winner.

In case of a tie, the following tiebreaker priority is followed:

- Prestige
- Money
- Otherwise the Victory is shared.

Victory Points in 2- and 3-player games

In 2 and 3 player games, calculate Victory Points for each Power normally. If a player controls 2 Powers, average their Victory Points and round down. The winning player will be the one with the most Victory Points.

10.2.1 Prestige Bonus for Controlled Colonies.
Before calculating end of game Victory Points, first adjust each Power's position on the Prestige Track one space for each Controlled Colony. No bonuses are unlocked when moving the prestige markers in this action.

EXAMPLE

The Powers' Prestige is updated based on the Controlled Colonies only:

- **France** increases by 3 for Control of Algeria-Morocco, French Guinea and Indochina
- **Russia** increases by 2 for Control of Persia and Manchuria-Korea

- **Central Empires** increases by 2 for Control of Tanganyika and Micronesia
- **Great Britain** increases by 3 for Control of Namibia, South Africa and the Horn of Africa. Japan is a Minor Nation and therefore, like all Minor Nations, it is NOT counted, even if in this case it is Allied with a Power.



11.0 PRESTIGE TRACK

The Prestige Track indicates a Power's reputation on the global chessboard based on its diplomatic and military strength.

Each space on the Track corresponds to a Victory Points modifier at the end of the game (see 12.0) and also unlocks an instant one-off bonus. When moving a Power's prestige marker unlocks an instant bonus that it has not previously obtained, the Power's bonus marker is moved onto that bonus, indicating that it is no longer available to the Power. Other Powers can still obtain the bonus.

If a Power's Prestige falls back to a space lower than the number in a space with its bonus indicator, do not move the latter. **Once obtained, bonuses cannot be lost or earned again.**

11.1 PRESTIGE BONUSES

The Prestige bonuses on the track are as follows:

- **+1 DM:** the Power immediately takes a DM cube from its General Reserve;
- **+2/3/4 £:** the Power adds the indicated amount of money to its treasury;
- **+1 Intrigue Card:** the player draws an Intrigue Card from the deck and adds it to their hand.

12.0 EXTENDED EXAMPLE OF A GAME TURN

We are at the beginning of turn 5.



The turn order is as follows:

- 1) Great Britain
- 2) France
- 3) Russia
- 4) Central Empires

Resource Phase

Great Britain collects £15 and 3 DM (Allied with the Netherlands), France collects £11 and 4 DM (Great Work Eiffel Tower), Russia collects £10 and 3 DM and Central Empires collects £12 and 3 DM. Overall Britain has £32, France has £11, Russia £13, Central Empires £23 (counting money in advance from previous turn).



Event Phase

The two cards drawn, resolved in sequence, are:

- *Bankruptcy in Portugal*: all the Portuguese DM cubes in Africa are eliminated;
- *Italian penetration in the Horn of Africa*: 2 Italian DM cubes must be placed in the Horn of Africa. There is only one empty space in the territory as 4 spaces are occupied by British DM cubes and one space by a French DM cube. Italy's first DM cube is placed in the empty space while a die must be rolled for the second. The result is 5 and the British DM cube in that space is replaced directly and returned to the General Reserve.

Note that Great Britain has lost control of the Horn of Africa at this time.

Furthermore, if the die result had been a 6, the Italian DM cube would have been placed directly positioned first in the resolution of the Event Cards.

Intrigue Cards Phase

No Intrigue Cards are dealt in Turn 5.

Action Phase

1st round

- **Great Britain** performs 2 actions: send a DM cube to South Africa and buy 1 Army for £3. The army is placed in its Arsenal.
- **France** takes only 1 action: send a DM cube to Namibia.
- **Russia** takes 2 actions: send a Fleet to Asia from its Arsenal; and send a DM cube to Japan.
- **Central Empires** takes only one action: send a DM cube to Belgium to Ally it and take the Belgian bonus marker (+£2).



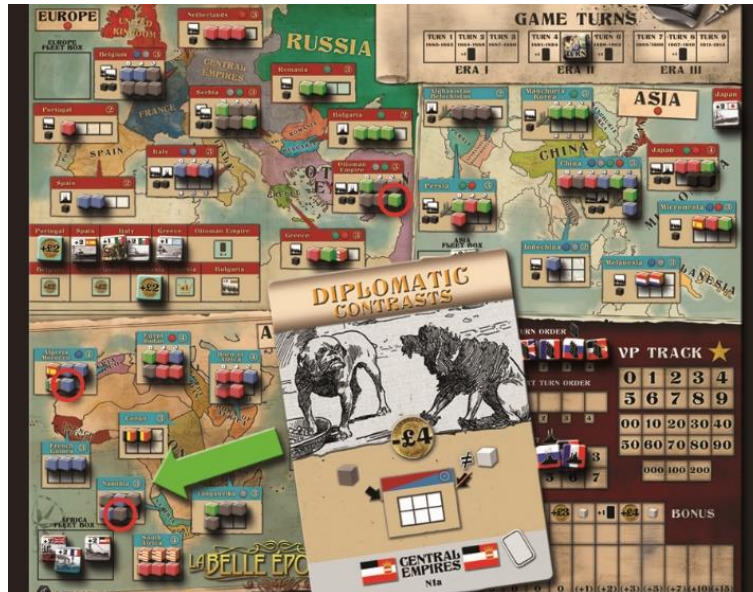
2nd round

- **Great Britain** takes 2 actions: the first action is to send a DM cube to China creating a Diplomatic Dispute with the Central Empires and the second action is to immediately resolve the Dispute. Great Britain decides to use its Fleet and the Central Empires does the same along with adding 2 Armies to bringing its modifier to +4 (maximum value achievable with Armies and Fleets). Great Britain decides to employ 2 Armies bringing its modifier to +5 (maximum possible value if Great Britain employ at least one Fleet in a Dispute). The cost for both Great Britain and Central Empires is £4. The dice are rolled and both roll a "2". Great Britain wins the Dispute 7 to 6 and eliminates the



Central Empires DM cube, which is put back in the General Reserve.

- **France** takes 1 action: send a DM cube to Algeria-Morocco.
- **Russia** takes 1 action: send a DM cube to the Ottoman Empire.
- **Central Empires** takes 2 actions: send a DM cube to Namibia and then play the National "Diplomatic Contrasts" card in Namibia, paying £4.



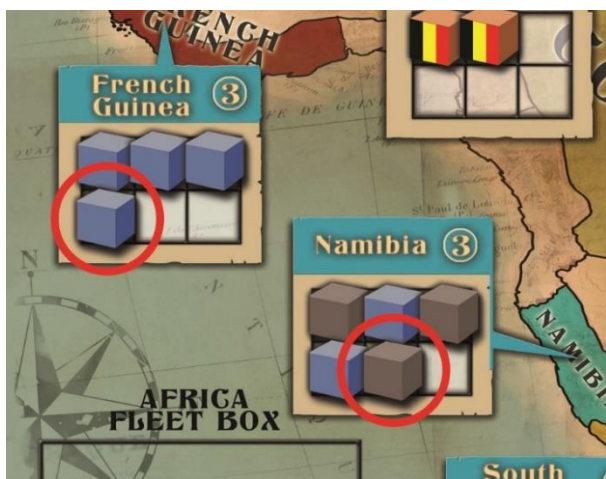
3rd round

- **Great Britain** takes 1 action: send a DM cube to Portugal and then play its "Social Policy" National Card paying £6; the British player then chooses to advance the GB marker 2 spaces on the Prestige Track, receiving a £2 bonus and a DM cube which is immediately placed in the Embassies space on the Power Card.
- **France** takes 1 action: send a DM cube to Melanesia.
- **Russia** takes 2 actions: first, it sends a DM cube to Serbia and places it on top of a Central Empires DM cube, creating a Diplomatic Dispute; and then second, it immediately resolves the Dispute. No Power has Fleets in the Europe Fleet Box. Central Empires deploys 4 Armies and Russia does the same. The cost for both Russia and the Central Empires is £4. Russia rolls a "6" while the Central Empires roll a "1". Russia wins (with a result of 10 against the Central Empires' 5) and Central Empires removes its DM cube to the General Reserve. In addition, Central Empires is no longer allied with Serbia and therefore immediately loses 1 Prestige (its Minor Nation Bonus).
- **Central Empires** purchases 3 Armies, which are placed in its Arsenal, paying £9.



4th round

- **Great Britain** takes 2 actions: first it builds its Great Work "HMS Dreadnought" by paying £20, flipping the Great Works marker on its Power Status Card to show the Victory Points and moving its Fleet up on the fleet track (this is a bonus specific to this Great Work); next it sells armaments to Egypt-Sudan by placing an armaments cube in the Territory and removing 1 Army from its Arsenal. As there are no empty spaces available, the GB player chooses to directly replace a French DM cube, placing it in the General Reserve and by doing so also gains control of the colony with 3 DM cubes.



- **France** built the Eiffel Tower Great Work in a previous round so now has a 4th DM cube it can use. France takes 2 actions: send this last DM cube to French Guinea and pass. France places its Turn Order Marker on space 1 on the Next Turn Order Track.
- **Russia** also passes; the Russian Turn Marker is placed on space 2 of the Next Turn Order Track.
- **Central Empires** takes 2 actions: send a DM cube to Namibia to gain Control with 4 DM cubes, and then pass. The Central Empires Turn Marker is placed on space 3 of the Next Turn Order Track.



5th round

- **Great Britain** takes 2 actions: it sends its 4th and last DM cube to Portugal and then passes, then places its Turn Marker on space 4 of the Next Turn Order Track.

Since all Powers have now passed, the Action Phase ends.

Preparation Phase

Players retrieve their Armies from the map and place them in their Arsenal, on their active sides. Fleets remain in the Continent Fleet Boxes and are turned to their active sides.

The Powers' Turn Markers on the Next Turn Order Track are moved to the Order of the Turn Order Track, without changing their order.

Finally, the Game Turn marker is moved to the "Turn 6" box.

At the end of this round, Great Britain has £1, France £11, Russia £9 and Central Empires £2.

The picture below shows the game situation at the end of the turn:



In Turn 6 the Powers' order of play will be:

- 1) France
- 2) Russia
- 3) Central Empires
- 4) Great Britain

13.0 NON-PLAYER POWERS

This chapter provides an alternative to the basic rules to allow playing La Belle Époque with only 2-3 players, or even solo.

Non-Player Powers (henceforth NP Powers) are in all respects treated as players who, with their actions, hinder the possibility of winning by human players. A NP Power never calculates VPs, but does affect the Final Victory determination for human players (see 12.0).

Except where otherwise noted in this chapter, all rules of the base game remain unchanged.

13.1 GAME SETUP

Step 8 of the *Game Setup* (see 3.0) is changed as follows:

- 8) setup the NP Powers according to their NP Power Cards and then do the Initial Setup for human players, according to the normal rules (see 3.3). Also place the Fleet marker of each NP Power on 0-space of the Fleet Track on the map.

The NP Powers do not use the specific National Cards of each Power; they never come into play. Only the 3 National Cards common to the various Powers are used.

13.2 TURN ORDER



NP Powers take all their actions before the human players. In the event that there are 2 or more NP Powers in play:

- for the first turn the order of their moves will be drawn as usual;
- for subsequent turns the order will operate such so the NP Power that acted first becomes last, the one that acted second becomes first while the one that acted last becomes second.

EXAMPLE

On Turn 2 of a game with NP Powers, the 3 NP Powers took their actions in this order:

- 1) Great Britain
- 2) France
- 3) Russia

In Turn 3 therefore, the order will change to:

- 1) France (acting as second)
- 2) Russia (acting as the last)
- 3) Great Britain (acting as first)

13.3 SEQUENCE OF PLAY

With NP Powers the game sequence changes as follows:

- a) Resource Phase (only human players)
- b) Event Phase
- c) Intrigue Cards Phase (only on Turns 2-4-6-8)
- d) Action Phase
- e) Dispute Resolution with NP Powers (whether they are attacker or defender)
- f) Preparation Phase
- g) Scoring Victory Point (only on turns 3, 6 and at game end)

NOTE: The Action Phase is played in accordance with the normal rules of the game with some exceptions:

- each NP Power completes its entire Action Phase, however, it does not resolve any Diplomatic Disputes it creates. Instead, these are resolved in a separate specific phase (phase "e");
- the NP Powers perform their actions according to the modified Turn Order (see 13.2);
- Human Players cannot use the "Solve Diplomatic Disputes" action to resolve Disputes involving NP Power DM cubes.

13.3 NP POWER ACTION PHASE

The following changes are applied to the base game:

- an NP Power does not have or "spend" any money;
- an NP Power completes all its Action Phase, without however resolving any Diplomatic Disputes;
- NP Power DM cube placements do not require Fleets;
- an NP Power never uses Fleets or Armies but instead has a Military Strength value that increases according to a table on its Power Status Card and this is used during the Resolution of Diplomatic Disputes (see 13.9);
- Diplomatic Disputes involving an NP Power DM cube are resolved after the Action Phase (phase e).

Each Action Phase of an NP Power is resolved according to the following steps, carried out in order:


- 1) Resolution of Intrigue Cards
- 2) Fleet Construction
- 3) Increasing Prestige
- 4) Sending Diplomatic Missions
- 5) Selling Armaments

13.4 RESOLUTION OF INTRIGUE CARDS


The NP Powers are still dealt Intrigue Cards, as in the base game, but these are played and solved differently than for player Powers.

An NP Power has a hand of Intrigue and National Cards that is always face down. Human Players cannot examine them.

Human Players and Intrigue Cards

- Human players who play an Intrigue Card against NP Powers cannot resolve the half with the symbol 
- Effects that target both human players and NP Powers as possible can be freely resolved against targets, be they humans or non-player. The restriction remains that a Power cannot be the target of more than 1 Intrigue/National Card per game turn.

13.4.1 Playing Intrigue Cards. At the beginning of each Action Phase, check the Progress Chart on the NP Power Status Card. If an Intrigue Card symbol is shown for the current turn, randomly draw an available NP Power Intrigue card.

If the Intrigue Card is drawn randomly, it is verified which of the two halves has the symbol  which indicates which half is resolved.

At this point, the effect of half of the Intrigue Card is applied.

If an NP Power must play an Intrigue Card and does not have any in hand, the action is still considered resolved without the resolution of the Intrigue Card.

13.4.2 Playing National Cards. At the beginning of each Action Phase, check the Progress Chart on the NP Power Card. If a National Card symbol is shown for the current turn, randomly draw an available card and play it (ignoring any cost printed on it).

13.4.3 Choosing the targets of card effect. Effects resolved by Intrigue/National Cards played by NP Powers target one of the following:

- an opposing Power (in the case of loss of Prestige, money, cards or DM cubes from the Embassies); or
- DM cubes positioned on Territories on the map.

If the target is a **Power**, the choice will fall on the Power that has the most Prestige, money, cards or DM cubes from the Embassies (depending on the effect of the card played). In the event of a tie, the target opposing Power is drawn with a simple die roll, attributing the results of even and odd or, in the case of 3 opposing Powers tied, attributing the intervals 1-2, 3-4 and 5-6 to the Powers.

If the target is **DM cubes on the map**, they are chosen as follows, if the Intrigue Card provides for the **removal of opposing DM cubes**:

- consult the "Objectives Priority Table" on the NP Power Card. Each objective is listed in order of priority (from major to minor);
- the target Territory, in order of priority, is the first Territory which is not under the NP's Control or

- which is not an Ally; in this Territory, determine which DM cube(s) are removed (see 13.4.4);
- after applying the effect, check whether the card has any additional effect not yet satisfied by point b). If there is an additional effect, look at the next objective and apply point b) again. It continues in this way until the full effect of the card has been applied. If there are no objectives to which the effects can be applied, the Card Resolution Phase ends and the card is discarded.

Note: the limit for which 1 Power (human or NP) can be affected by a maximum of 1 Intrigue/National Card per game turn remains in force.

13.4.4 Evaluating DM cubes to be removed. Once the target Territory has been identified, determine which opposing Power has the greatest number of DM cubes there; in the event of a tie, the target opposing Power is chosen with a simple dice roll. The chosen Power loses a DM cube to the reserve.

In the event of a tie, the target opposing Power is decided by a simple dice roll, attributing the odd and even results or, in the case of 3 opposing Powers with equal merit, attributing the Powers the intervals 1-2, 3-4 and 5-6. At the chosen Power, the DM cube is removed.

If more DM cubes are to be removed from the territory, after eliminating the first DM cube, this procedure must be re-evaluated from the beginning to determine which is the target Power for the elimination of the next cube and so on for any further DM cube to be removed.

EXAMPLE

On Turn 3, NP France must play a National Card, as shown on the NP Power Card.

The card "*Nationalist Disorder*" is drawn from among the three cards common to all Powers. Ignore the cost to play the card and follow the process to determine the removal of 4 DM cubes, with a maximum of 2 for each opposing Power.



The image shows a collection of game components. At the top is a map of Africa with various territories labeled. Below the map is a France NP Power Card with a 'NATIONALIST DISORDERS' card attached. The card has a cost of £7 and a 'Max 2 per' limit. To the right is a Progress Chart with columns for Turn, Arsenal Bonus, Card Type, and Other Info. The chart shows a sequence of events for Turn 3. Below the chart is an Objectives Priority Table for France, listing targets like Belgium, Italy, Melanesia, French Guinea, Namibia, Indochina, and China. At the bottom is an Arsenal Bonus table with columns for +1, +2, +3, and +4, and a formula for Dispute Bonus.

TURN	ARSENAL BONUS	CARD TYPE	OTHER INFO
1	3	INTRIGUE	+1
2	5	INTRIGUE	
3	7	NATIONAL	+1
4	7	INTRIGUE	+1
5	7	INTRIGUE	+1
6	9	INTRIGUE	
7	10	NATIONAL	+1
8	12	NATIONAL	+1
9	14	NATIONAL	+1

OBJECTIVES
Belgium
Italy
Melanesia
French Guinea
Namibia
Indochina
China

ARSENAL BONUS
+1 +2 +3 +4

Dispute Bonus = Arsenal Bonus / or Disputes rounded to nearest whole number (0.5 up)

First of all, check the Objectives Priority Table on the NP Power Status Card, which indicates this sequence:



In **Belgium** the situation is as follows:



Therefore France removes 2 DM cubes of the Central Empires, placing one on the National Card that it played, as a reminder that in this turn no other National or Intrigue Card will be able to target the Central Empires.

In **Italy** the situation is as follows:



Therefore France only removes 1 DM from Great Britain, placing it on the National Card that it played, as a reminder that in this turn no other National or Intrigue Card can target Great Britain.

In **Melanesia** the situation is as follows:



Since the National Card only removes Major Power DM cubes, the two Spanish DM cubes cannot be chosen (Spain is a Minor Nation).

Among the rest (Great Britain, Central Empires and Russia), the Power with the highest number of cubes should be chosen, but they all have 1 DM cube.

Great Britain and the Central Empires have already suffered the effects of a card, as indicated by their DM cubes on it, therefore the choice automatically becomes the Russian DM cube, which is then removed from the Territory and placed on the National Card, as a reminder that no other National and Intrigue Cards may target Russia this turn.

Note that if Great Britain and Central Empires had not suffered the effects of a card, there are 3 eligible DM cubes, so a die should be rolled by arbitrarily assigning the following intervals, for example: 1-2 Great Britain, 3-4 Central Empires, 5-6 Russia.

13.4.5 Placement of Minor Nation DM cubes.

Some Intrigue Cards such as "Big Stick Policy", "Italian Diplomacy" and "Rising Sun", place Neutral Nations' DM cubes in various Territories. Placing these cubes follows the same procedure as in paragraph 13.4.4.

13.4.6 Special cases of Intrigue Cards.

Some Intrigue cards have very specific effects:

- **"Sabotage"**: if played by an NP Power, it is evaluated how many opposing Powers can be targeted by the effect (based on which ones have already suffered the effects of a Intrigue or National Card) and a die is rolled, assigning each opposing Power an interval of equivalent results, in case there is more than one target. The result of the die will indicate what the target Power is. If there is only one target Power, that will be the Power chosen for the card's effect;
- **"Financial Scandal"**: if played by an NP Power, the card's primary target is the Power holding the largest amount of money. Only

Powers with Human Players can be valid targets;

- **"Press Campaign"**: if played by an NP Power, the target is the opposing Power with the highest Prestige score. In the event of a tie, the target opposing Power is drawn with a simple die roll, attributing the results of even and odd or, in the case of 3 opposing Powers tied, attributing the intervals 1-2, 3-4 and 5-6 to the Powers;
- **"Political Scandal"**: if the target of the card is an NP Power, roll a dice to see which effect it applies: an even result causes it to lose 1 Prestige, an odd result causes it to lose 1 DM from the Embassies;
- **"Big Stick Policy"**: if played by an NP Power, it rolls a die to decide where the first DM cube is placed: with an even result in Micronesia and with an odd result in Melanesia;
- **"Diplomatic Attack"**: if played by an NP Power, following the procedure in paragraph 13.4.3, the first DM cube to be removed is identified, which in fact determines the target Power of the card effect. Then the second DM cube must be removed from a Territory in order of priority, as indicated in paragraph 13.4.3, that contains 1 DM cube of that target Power;
- **"Change of strategy"**: this card must be used by the NP Power in the first Diplomatic Dispute where it has a chance of victory, by rerolling the die after evaluating the result obtained by the opponent.

13.4.7 Special cases of National Card. There are some National cards that represent special cases:

- **"Social Policy"**: an NP Power always chooses the option that increases its Prestige by 2.
- **"Diplomatic Contrasts"**: This card always applies for the next turn.
- **"Empire of the Seas"**: if Great Britain is the only human player in the game, the card can be played during phase E of the "NP Power Dispute Resolution" turn.

13.5 FLEET CONSTRUCTION

An NP Power automatically builds its Fleets. Consult the table on the NP Power Status Card. When fleet symbol is shown for the current turn, increase the Power's Fleet value on the track on the game board by 1.

13.6 INCREASING PRESTIGE

An NP Power increases its Prestige automatically. Consult the Progress Chart on the NP Power Card. When "+1 Prestige" is shown for the current turn, move the NP Power's Prestige Track marker one space to the right. An NP Power only gets

DM cubes and Intrigue cards as a bonus, never money.

13.7 SENDING DIPLOMATIC MISSIONS

In this step of its Action Phase turn, the NP Power sends its DM cubes to the Territories. Place one DM cube at the top of the first column, another at the top of the second and all remaining cubes at the top of the third column.

Note that when sending an NP Power DM cube a fleet is not necessary.

Next roll a die to choose which row of the table is used to determine which territories the NP Power sends its DM cubes to.

If a 1 or a 5 is rolled, place an Armament Cube from the Reserve on the NP Power Sheet (if any are still available) and place it on the last column of the table, as a reminder for the last step of the Action Phase (see 13.8).

Place the newly rolled die to the left of the row in the table as a reminder.

After determining which row is to be used, for each box follow the indicated priority to choose which Territory to place the DM cube in:

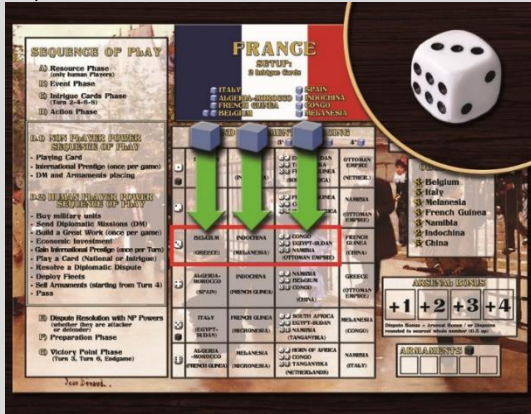
- a) In the first box to the right of the number, check that the Territory without parentheses is not an Ally or under its Control; if yes, place the DM cube in this Territory;
- b) If the Territory is already an Ally or under its Control, the same verification is carried out for the Territory in brackets in the same box of the table; if the condition referred to in point a is verified, place the DM cube in this Territory;
- c) If the Territory referred to in point b) is already an Ally or under its Control, the die is withdrawn only for that column and the following procedure is repeated starting from point b.

The box corresponding to the last column lists several Territories. To place the correct DM cube roll the die and place the cube in the resulting Territory. If there are more DM cubes on the last column (see 13.7.1), a dice must be rolled for each DM cube to be placed.

NOTE: If all spaces of the target Territory are occupied but the previous rules indicate the placement of a DM cube in that Territory, then a Diplomatic Dispute is fomented. The DM cube is placed on the opposing Power that has the largest number of DM cubes; in the event of a tie roll a die to determine the affected Power.

EXAMPLE

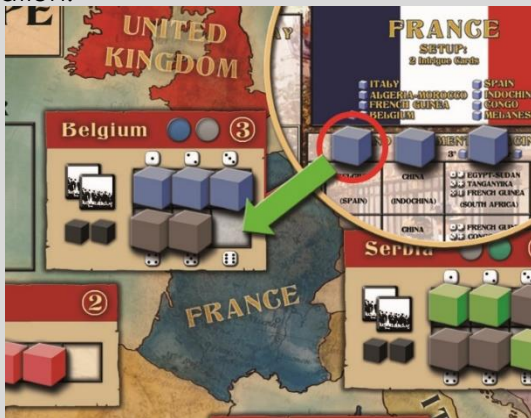
An NP Power France is in the "Sending a Diplomatic Missions" step of its Action Phase. It has only 3 DM cubes available, which it places at the top of each column on its Power Status Card.



Let's analyze some placements of the first DM cube in the first column. The die rolled is a 3.

Case a)

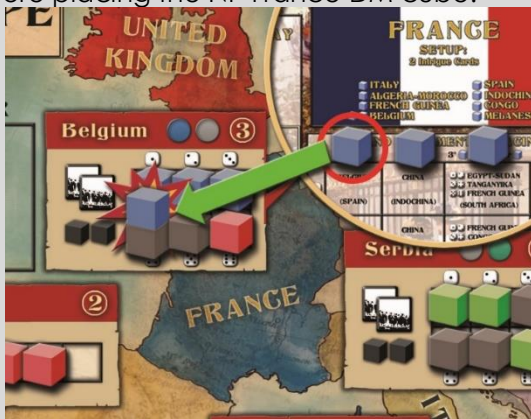
Placement priority goes to Belgium which is in this situation:



Not being an Ally, the DM cube is placed on the only available free space and France thus obtains an Alliance with Belgium.

Case b)

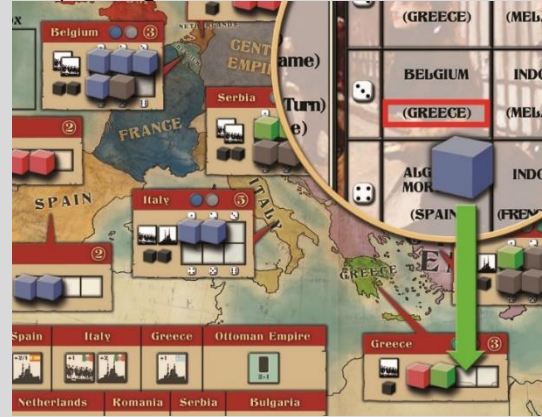
Let's analyze the following situation in Belgium before placing the NP France DM cube:



The French DM cube is placed on one of the two Central Empires DM cubes, since they are the most present (2), thus fomenting a Diplomatic Dispute.

Case c)

Let's analyze the following situation in Belgium before placing the NP France DM cube:



As Belgium is already an ally of France, we move on to analyze the situation of Greece, the Territory indicated in brackets in the table.

13.7.1 DM Cubes received with Intrigue Cards or Prestige Bonus. All DM cubes obtained as a result of an Intrigue Card or as a result of achieving a Prestige Bonus are placed on the column marked "3rd DM and following". For each DM cube in addition to the first present on this column, the die must be rolled to determine the resolution row of the placement on the map.

13.7.2 France. France from the 4th game turn onwards places a 4th DM cube which must be placed on the dedicated column.

NOTE: only Fleets (for quantity, not for bonuses) and Prestige bonuses for Allied Minor Nations apply to NP Powers.

13.8 SELLING ARMAMENTS

If in the Sending Diplomatic Missions Chart, as a result of the die roll, Armament Cubes are indicated, in this Action Phase they are placed on the map.

Placing them follows the same limitations and rules as the base game.

The target Territory is chosen using the Objectives Priority table with the following criteria:

- from the listed Territories, the one that provides the greatest number of Victory Points for Control or the Alliance is chosen; in the event of a tie in VP between 2 or more Territories, the one that comes first as Order of Priority will be chosen and which verifies the criteria of the following point; in any case, the NP Power must place the exact number of Armament Cubes indicated in the Territory and if this is not possible, it will go to the next Territory which verifies all the requirements of this point; if there is no such Territory, the NP Power will not place them;

- b) if the placement of Armament Cubes in this Territory causes a change in Control or Alliance (i.e. an opposing Power loses it or the Territory becomes Controlled/Ally of the NP Power), then this becomes the target Territory and Armament Cubes are placed as indicated by the exchange rate;
- c) otherwise, go to the next Territory that meets point a) and follow the criteria again, until a Target Territory is found.

If no target Territory is found, the Armament Cube is discarded to the General Reserve.

Place an Armament Cube in a Territory according to the following priorities:

- Empty spaces are occupied first
- If there are not enough empty spaces available, replace a DM cube of the opposing Power that has the greatest number of DM cubes; in the event of a tie, the target opposing Power is drawn with a simple die roll, assigning the results of even and odd or, in the case of 3 opposing Powers tied, assigning the intervals 1-2, 3-4 and 5-6 to the Powers.

EXAMPLE

France must place Armament Cubes.

To identify the target territory, first check the objectives with the most victory points among its objectives. With 5 VP we have Italy and China, but the positioning of the Armament Cubes will not lead either of them to lose the Alliance/Control or to gain it in favor of France. So let's look at the other objectives and with 3 VPs we find different territories.

In Belgium there are already Armament Cubes so we evaluate the order of priority of the remaining territories: Melanesia, French Guinea and Namibia. In all three the presence of an Armament Cube will lead to the control of the territory, therefore Melanesia is chosen because it appears first as an Order of Priority.



13.9 DISPUTE RESOLUTION WITH NP POWERS



Player Powers cannot perform a "Resolve Dispute" action involving a DM cube of an NP Power.

These Diplomatic Disputes are resolved in a special Phase at the end of the Action Phase.

13.9.1 Dispute Bonus Calculation. To know the Dispute Bonus of an NP Power, follow this procedure:

- check the Arsenal Bonus for the current turn on the NP Power Card;
- determine how many Diplomatic Disputes need to be resolved;
- divide the Arsenal Bonus by the number of Diplomatic Disputes to be resolved, rounding the result to the nearest whole number (.5 goes up);
- the Dispute Bonus valid for all Disputes in which the NP Power participates, to be marked as a reminder on the track present on the NP Power Card, will be equal to the result obtained, without prejudice to the maximum bonus of +4 for each Diplomatic Dispute (regardless of the Power Automated).

Note: Therefore, in case Great Britain is an NP Power, its modifier can be at most +4.

EXAMPLE

On Turn 4, the Central Empires Arsenal Bonus is equal to +9. Central Empires is involved in 3 Diplomatic Disputes for which the Bonus is equal to $+9 : 3 = +3$.

13.9.2 Diplomatic dispute between two NP Powers. Once the Dispute Bonus of both NP Powers has been calculated, roll a die for each NP Power and add it to its Dispute Bonus.

The Power that rolls the highest result keeps its DM cube on the Territory space and removes that of the defeated Power, returning it to the general supply; if the result is a tie, the Power occupying the higher position on the Prestige wins; if the Prestige is the same, both DM cubes are removed from the general supply, leaving free space on the territory.

13.9.3 Contest between human player and NP Power. Once the Dispute Bonus for the NP Power has been calculated, the human player Power decides which pieces to support the Dispute with, paying the relative activation cost and determines its own Dispute Bonus.

You roll a dice for each Power and add it to their respective Dispute Bonus.

The Power that rolls the highest result keeps its DM cube on the territory space and removes that of

the defeated Power, returning it to the general supply; if the result is a tie, the Power occupying the higher position on the Prestige wins; if the Prestige is the same, both DM cubes are removed from the general supply, leaving free space on the territory.

13.10 VICTORY

This method is only valid if you are playing solo.

The Player Power calculate Victory Points at the end of the game according to the rules of the basic game (see 10.2).

Add VPs if the last turn is 7 or 8:

- Turn 7: +10
- Turn 8: +5

Then they consult the following table:

- **Fewer than 75 VP:** Overwhelming defeat
- **75-84 VP:** Marginal defeat
- **85-94 VP:** Minor victory
- **95-109 VP:** Significant victory
- **110+ VP:** Overwhelming victory

NOTE: in a game with NP Powers, Players still calculate their Victory Points at the end of Turn 3 and Turn 6, just as in the basic game.

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DESIGN NOTES

by Paolo Carraro

The idea for this game that you are playing had a very long and troubled birth that began in the early 1980s.

At the time, I struck on the idea of creating a simulation game that recreated all aspects of the national and international politics of the main European powers, the major actors on the world stage at the turn of the 19th century, an era that has passed into history known as the *Belle Époque*.

The first prototype was the result of careful cartographic and economic research based on atlases of the time and works of study such as the Cambridge Economic Encyclopedia, French, English, Italian geographic dictionaries and individual essays on international relations and the wars fought in the various continents subject to the colonial struggles of the European powers. Europe, Africa and Asia were divided into states and regions where the game rules provided for the agricultural, industrial and commercial development of each individual region, the level of taxation and popular support for governments. This was only for national politics, for international politics there was a series of rules related to the armed forces, espionage and international treaties. In short, for the *grogards* of the historical boardgame the game was a middle ground between the SPI published titles *The Campaign for North Africa* and *After the Holocaust*. In practice, the game was playable only if the participants were sentenced to prison terms of several years.

While I was trying to slim down and simplify the more "cumbersome" aspects of the simulation, Victory Games' *Pax Britannica* came out, which took up many ideas that I was applying, and I decided to abandon the project because I no longer saw it as feasible.

Towards the end of the century I tried to take it back in hand by exploiting the new systems of using cards instead of tables, to speed up the procedures, but the game was still too complicated compared to the tastes of the new boardgame players who were not only comprised of fans of historical simulations but also by people who certainly appreciated the historical setting but considered the time spent playing a hobby should not be too much.

We came to an end four years ago when I decided to completely review the project and limit it to the simple struggle for expansion by the powers through colonialism and the creation of networks of alliances with minor states.

The concept of Prestige remains from the initial project, an indicator of its importance to the Powers when conducting foreign policy. Another

aspect maintained was the "International Events" which influence player policies. There are more event cards available than those actually drawn in a game so as to avoid mathematical calculations and give more variety to the gameplay, and to also avoid games where many long boring scenarios are repeated.

The economics of the game have been simplified to a minimum, based on the studies carried out in the past, I have differentiated of the incomes of the powers based on the development of their gross domestic product and the value of their historical international trade. Player actions can affect these values, but not too decisively.

In the basic version of the game, there are four players representing Great Britain, Russia, France and the Central Empires (Germany and Austria-Hungary). In the original game Austria-Hungary was playable on its own and there was also Italy as a sixth power. The decision to remove these two powers as players is due to the fact that both powers only carried out a regional policy as they did not have the necessary strength to compete on all continents as the other powers could have done. In the playtests it was seen that in the long run Austria-Hungary and Italy always made the same moves and that allowing greater freedom to those players (such as a colonial penetration of Austria into Asia) was going to totally debase the historical aspect that I wanted to give to the game. However, this is not strictly a simulation game, it is a middle ground between a simulation and a board game whose aim is to entertain the players in a very specific historical setting.

The game does not even belong to the category of Card Driven Games: the cards in the game are those related to international events, which have no other function than to shake the progress of the game, and allow players to maneuver from "behind the scenes" to advance themselves or hinder their opponents. In every move players have the freedom to develop their strategies without being too dependent on external events.

After numerous playtest games we found that a fair balance was reached between the players who can, at the helm of each power, be equally victorious; moreover, a game rarely lasts more than 2-3 hours, allowing a game to take place in half a day. These were the initial expectations and I hope players will like it.

APPENDIX 1: HISTORICAL NOTES

A1.1 ERA I EVENT CARDS

AUSTRIA RECOGNIZES THE KINGDOM OF SERBIA

In 1867, after Prince Mihailo III achieved the removal of the last Turkish garrison from Serbian territory, effectively establishing the country's independence, he moved the Serbian capital from Kragujevac to Belgrade. Independence was internationally ratified by the Treaty of Berlin in 1878, at the end of the Russo-Turkish war, when Prince Milan IV reigned over Serbia.

The independence of Serbia, during the peace conference, was advocated by the Austro-Hungarian Empire with which, therefore, Prince Milan owed a debt of gratitude. Vienna requested that Serbia create a railway system that would connect it with the territories of the Empire and that the Serbian economy be linked to the Austrian one. Two Serbian factions arose, a pro-Austrian faction and a pro-Russian one that preferred economic relations and railways to link the principality to the tsarist empire. Milan IV resolved to comply with Austrian requests and developed infrastructure connecting with the territories of Austria-Hungary and concluded important commercial and customs agreements with Vienna which made Serbia, in fact, dependent on Austria. The prince appointed politicians from the pro-Austrian faction as ministers in his government.

The Austro-Hungarian Empire responded to Prince Milan's friendship policies by supporting his self-proclamation as king: in 1882, he took the name of King Milan I of the Kingdom of Serbia.

ECONOMIC CRISIS

The Great Depression of 1873-1895, the first to be so-named due to its vast scope and length of time, was a worldwide economic crisis that began in Vienna and spread globally, including to America during the presidency of Ulysses S Grant. The Great Depression occurred after more than twenty years of continuous economic growth brought about by the second industrial revolution and continued almost until the end of the 19th century.

The more developed national economies first experienced an agrarian crisis, to which was then added a parallel industrial crisis, with sharp reductions in demand, declining marginal profits and poor monetary circulation (which did not affect all countries), even though gross domestic product (GDP) overall remained steadily growing, without showing purely recessive characteristics. A strong and persistent deflation, at structural levels, during the whole twenty years triggered massive layoffs and wage reductions,

repression against trade unions and vast migratory movements from the countryside to the cities and from the least developed to the economically strongest areas of the world.

ECONOMIC PROGRESS

The second industrial revolution opened with the beginning of industrialization in countries such as Germany, Japan, Italy and the United States. It is chronologically ascribed by historians to the period between the Congress of Paris (1856) and The Congress of Berlin (1878), reaching full development in the last decade of the nineteenth century, albeit in conjunction with the great depression of that time.

In the second half of the nineteenth century, Western Europe extended and consolidated its presence in the world. Its prestige was based on superiority in the scientific and technological fields; on industrial and capitalist power, strengthened following the discovery of new sources of energy, such as oil and electricity; on the use of new communication and transport systems; and upon an undisputed dominance of world trade.

Meanwhile, the great European powers brought colonial conquests to an end, especially in Africa, driven by the desire to obtain new markets for national products and to acquire low-cost raw materials and energy resources. This prodigious industrial development, which lasted until the early twentieth century was named the Second Industrial Revolution.

ITALIAN PENETRATION IN THE HORN OF AFRICA

Italian colonialism began in the late 19th century, with the peaceful acquisition of the African ports of Assab and Massaua on the Red Sea.

In addition to the purchase of Assab by the Rubattino company (in 1882), the Italian state tried to buy and occupy the port of Zeila, at that time controlled by the Egyptians, but without success. When the Egyptians had to withdraw from the Horn of Africa in 1884, Italian diplomats made an agreement with Great Britain for the occupation of the port of Massaua which together with Assab formed the so-called Italian possessions in the Red Sea (In 1890 these were named the Colony of Eritrea).

The first Italian colony was established in southern Somalia between 1889 and 1890, initially as a protectorate.

In 1889 Italy obtained, through an agreement by the Italian consul in Aden with the respective sultans, protectorates on the sultanates of Obbia and Migiurtinia. In 1892 the Sultan of Zanzibar leased the ports of Benadir (including Mogadishu and Brava) to the commercial company "Filonardi". Benadir, although managed by a private company, was exploited by the Kingdom

of Italy as a starting point for exploratory expeditions to the mouths of the Juba and Omo and for the establishment of a protectorate over the city of Lugh.

NATIONALIST TURMOIL IN AUSTRIA

After its 1866 military defeat by Prussia, the Habsburg state reorganized itself into two distinct entities, Austria and Hungary, over which the same sovereign reigned (in the first he was Emperor, in the second he was King). Austria-Hungary was officially formed in 1867 after the signing of an agreement in which the two nations kept their own laws and institutions while maintaining common bodies for defense, finance and foreign affairs. This agreement aggravated the country's problem of nationalities by accentuating the privileged position of the German and Magyar (Hungarian) ethnicities. However, these two dominant groups represented only 40% of the country's population and therefore the national question always presented the greatest limitation to the power of the Habsburg Empire's government between the late 19th century and the First World War.

PORTUGUESE BANKRUPTCY

The issue of its African colonies was to lead Portugal to a political crisis. After several negotiations, the Treaty of London was signed (1890) in which the borders between Angola and Mozambique and British possessions in Africa were formally defined. When the government presented the treaty to Parliament for ratification, the parliament intended that Portugal would surrender to the British ultimatum. Then moments of tension followed. Prime Minister Antonio De Serpa Pimentel resigned and King Charles of Braganza appointed a new government. Between 1890 and 1891 several governments of short duration followed one another. At the beginning of 1891 there was a republican uprising in Porto. A republic was proclaimed, but the revolt was suppressed. In the meantime, the country's economic problems deepened and Portugal saw an increased dependence on foreign powers. The Portuguese currency was devalued and the country's financial situation was very delicate. With Brazil's independence, Portugal's largest source of revenue was lost. Although Portugal had tried to start the road to industrialization, it remained a strongly agrarian nation. State bankruptcy was declared on May 7, 1891. The value of the Portuguese currency fell by 10%. The bankruptcy of the state implied the fall of the popularity of the king and his government. Portuguese sovereignty was encroached upon by foreign creditors (France, Great Britain and Germany). Various plans were proposed to

revive the country's economy. The king reduced his income by up to 20% and the possibility of selling colonies was also discussed in parliament.

REVOLTS IN MACEDONIA

The awakening of nationalisms in South-Eastern Europe which started in the first half of the 19th century in Serbia and Greece, caused the progressive destabilization of the Balkan Peninsula which saw Macedonia become the center of the struggles between opposing ethnic and religious groups. In Macedonia the various Balkan ethnic groups were so intermixed that they could not draw precise boundaries between them. The impossibility of peaceful coexistence created continuous conflicts between the dominant elements linked to the Ottoman Empire, which in turn was not ethnically homogeneous, and the minority nationalities (the largest of which was Bulgarian) subject to the government of Constantinople. There were countless mutual atrocities committed between these groups, so much so that the European Powers persistently pressured the Turkish government for reforms which, while legislating in the sense requested by Europe, never actually applied the laws on the ground.

At the beginning of the 20th century, the situation had deteriorated in such a way that the Great Powers forced Constantinople to accept the presence of a European police force in Macedonia that would help pacify the region. The Young Turks Revolution of 1908, which at first gave hope for a policy of reform and modernization of the Turkish state, failed due to its desire to strengthen control over all territories of the empire and reduce the autonomy of local ethnic groups.

SINO-FRENCH WAR

The Sino-French War, also known as the Tonkin War (1884-1885), was a conflict that pitted the Chinese Empire under the Qing Dynasty against France for control of the Tonkin, now known as North Vietnam. The treaties of Tianjin of 1885 ended the conflict, whereby China renounced its rights in Tonkin in favor of France, which made the region a de facto French colonial possession.

SINO-JAPANESE WAR

The first Sino-Japanese war was fought from August 1, 1894 to April 17, 1895 between the Qing Empire and the Japanese Empire of the Meiji for control of Korea.

The Sino-Japanese war would become the symbol of the degeneration and weaknesses of the Qing dynasty and a demonstration of the success of the westernization and modernization of Japan by the Meiji Renewal compared to the Chinese self-sufficiency. The main consequence

was the shift of regional domination in Asia from China to Japan and in a loss of legitimacy of both of the Qing dynasty and of the classical Chinese tradition. This would later lead to the 1911 Chinese revolution.

THE MAHDI REBELLION

The Mahdist war was a conflict fought between Muhammad Ahmad's troops and the Anglo-Egyptian army that occupied Sudan in the late 19th century.

War had a religious dimension but also an anti-colonial dimension. The British have always referred to this conflict as the "Sudanese campaign".

In the late 1870s, Muhammad Ahmad - a Muslim ascetic who had found refuge on the island of Aba, on the White Nile - began to preach in Khartoum and other urban centers, demanding the renewal of the Islamic faith, the liberation of the Sudanese land and the return to the government structures foreseen by the Koran. Once his followers reached a considerable number, Ahmad proclaimed himself mahdi (1881), the redeemer of Islam, that Islamic tradition wants to appear towards the end of time to restore primitive pure Islam.

The governor of Sudan, Ra'ūf Pasha, decided to arrest Ahmad and sent two companies of foot soldiers to Abba. Government soldiers were unable to arrest the wanted man and instead suffered a stinging defeat by Ahmad's followers. The Mahdi, as he was called thereafter, then retired to Kordofan to reorganize his men. In Kordofan the mahdi declared *jihād* (a mandatory commitment - sometimes even armed) against the Turkish oppressor. On the night of December 9, in Fashoda, Mahdist troops attacked the Egyptian camp and defeated the expeditionary force. The attack allowed the seizure of weapons, ammunition, uniforms and food supplies of which the rebels had a great need.

A similar result occurred with the battle of June 7, 1882, when the troops of Yūsuf Pashà, at least 4,000 men, were defeated by the *anṣār* - allies - Mahdists. The British present in Sudan decided to leave the country, while an Egyptian garrison barricaded themselves in Khartoum, the administrative center of Sudan. The *anṣār* group continued to grow and soon the Mahdi found himself in a position to control all of Sudan. The Mahdi died of typhus in 1885, but his three successors were unable to hold the revolt together and succumbed to British attacks.

A1.2 ERA II EVENT CARDS

ANGLO-BOER WAR

The Boer wars or Anglo-Boer wars took place in South Africa, in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, between the British Empire and South African colonists of Dutch origin, called Boers.

The first Boer war took place from 1880 to 1881 and the second from 1899 to 1902. The two conflicts led to British supremacy in South Africa and ended the Boer states, namely the Republic of Transvaal and the Orange Free State, incorporating them into Britain's Cape Colony.

The first clash was caused by the policy of Sir Theophilus Shepstone who decided to annex the Transvaal (the South African Republic) to the British Empire in 1877. The Boers protested and rebelled in 1880. After a British force commanded by George Pomeroy-Collery was severely defeated in the Battle of Majuba Hill in February 1881, the British government of Gladstone gave the Boers self-government in the Transvaal, under theoretical British supervision.

The Second Boer War, also called the Great Boer War, South African War or Second Anglo-Boer War was a military conflict fought between 11 October 1899 and 31 May 1902 by the British Empire against the two independent Boer Republics, the Republic of Transvaal and the Orange Free State. The war, which originated mainly from British imperialist and economic aims, was characterized by some unexpected initial successes by the Boers who put British garrisons in great difficulty. The war, which partially ruined the international prestige of the British Empire, ended after direct negotiations in 1902 with the official annexation of the Boer republics which nevertheless maintained their national identity.

ASSASSINATION OF UMBERTO I

The regicide of Italian King Umberto I of Savoy was carried out by the anarchist Gaetano Bresci during an official visit of the king to Monza on 29 July 1900. The monarch had already escaped two previous attacks by the anarchists Giovanni Passannante on 17 November 1878 and Pietro Acciarito on 20 April 1897.

In Milan between 6 and 8 May 1898 the population took to the streets in protest against poor working conditions and the increase in the price of bread in the previous months. The government of Antonio Starabba di Rudinì declared a state of siege and gave full powers to General Fiorenzo Bava Beccaris to suppress the revolt. In Milan in those days there were about 15,000 troops, the revolt was suppressed in blood and there were 81 dead and 450 injured among the population. After the events in Milan,

General Fiorenzo Bava Beccaris on 5 June received the honor of Grand Officer of the Military Order of Savoy from King Umberto I of Savoy and on 4 July he was appointed by the King as a Senator of the Kingdom, a position he held until 1924 when at the dawn of fascism he became a supporter. Bava Beccaris' bloody suppression of the revolt, his honor from the King, and his appointment as Senator aroused strong indignation among the population, including Bresci himself who on 29 July 1900 explicitly declared that he wanted to "avenge the dead of May 1898 and the offense of honoring the criminal Bava Beccaris".

The king had been invited to the closing ceremony of the Forti e Liberi gymnastics club in Monza; after the ceremony, he was preparing to return, in a carriage as always, to the Villa Reale in Monza when the anarchist Gaetano Bresci approached him and shot him three times. The king was brought urgently to the Villa Reale, but was dead on arrival. Bresci was surrounded by the crowd and had a scuffle with the carabinieri, snatched a uniform from one of them and was finally captured by the carabinieri marshal Andrea Braggio and a fireman and taken to the carabinieri barracks.

COUP IN PERSIA

In the 19th century Persia became the scene of the rivalry between the British Empire and the Tsarist Russian Empire, which in 1907 agreed to divide the country into areas of influence. Western conquests and influence led to the constitutional revolution of 1906 in which a coalition of intellectuals, 'ulamā' (Moslim Clerics) and merchants attempted to create a parliamentary regime with the establishment of the Majlis (legislative assembly). The constitutional movement was suppressed in two stages by Russian military intervention (1908 and 1911), but the Majlis survived.

DREYFUS AFFAIR (Promo Card)

The Dreyfus affair was the major political and social conflict of the French Third Republic, which divided the country between 1894 and 1906, following the accusation of treason and espionage in favor of Germany against an Alsatian captain of Jewish origin Alfred Dreyfus, who was in fact innocent. The real culprit was in fact Colonel Ferdinand Walsin Esterhazy. The Dreyfus Affair was a watershed in French life between the disasters of the Franco-Prussian War and the First World War: it forced ministers to resign, created new power balances and political groupings, and even led to an attempted coup d'état. Two profoundly opposing camps clashed through two decades: the "dreyfusard", who defended the innocence

of Dreyfus (Émile Zola stood out among them with his journalistic intervention called "J'accuse"), and the "anti-dreyfusard" partisans convinced of his guilt.

The condemnation of Dreyfus was a judicial error, which occurred in the context of military espionage, raging anti-Semitism in French society and in a political climate poisoned by the recent loss of Alsace and part of Lorraine, to the German Empire of Bismarck in 1871.

Dreyfus was fully rehabilitated in 1906, with the cancellation of his sentence and readmission to the army with the rank of major.

ITALIAN IRREDENTISM

The Italian irredentist movement was an expression of the Italian aspiration to perfect its national unity territorially, freeing the lands subject to foreign domination.

The movement was active mainly in Italy, during the second half of the 19th century and the first decade of the 20th century, agitating for the integration into the Kingdom of Italy of all the territories included in the Italian geographic region or populated by Italian speakers and connected to Italy by centuries-old historical, linguistic and cultural ties. The movement had no unitary character, being made up of several groups and associations, generally not coordinated with each other.

JAPANESE ANNEXION OF KOREA

In 1905 Korea became a Japanese protectorate and subsequently, in 1910, it was completely annexed as a colony within the Japanese Empire with the name of Chōsen.

Under the protectorate, Japanese officials took over the administration and the courts and introduced Japanese administrative practices, such as for the police and justice system, while the Korean army was disarmed and disbanded. In June 1910, the Japanese military police commander-in-chief also had control over the civilian police.

On 26 October 1909, influential Japanese politician Itō Hirobumi was assassinated by the Korean nationalist An Jung-geun in Harbin during a trip to Manchuria. On August 22, 1910, the Japanese-Korean annexation treaty was signed and a week later, on August 29, Korean Emperor Sunjong renounced his throne.

MASSACRE IN ARMENIA

The tragic Armenian genocide, which occurred during the First World War, originated in the period following the Russian Turkish War of 1877-1878. Part of the territories between Anatolia and the Caucasus were ceded to Russia, but Russia had greater demands and would have liked to annex all Armenia. The 1878 Treaty of Berlin

established that Turkey had to grant some autonomy to its Armenian population, to maintain their sovereignty, but Sultan Abdul Hamid II pursued such an oppressive policy that in 1890 riots broke out with the usual bloody repression. This situation worsened with the coming to power of the Young Turks and led to the genocide that took place during the World War.

REVOLUTION OF THE YOUNG TURKS

Young Turks is the name given in historiography to members of a political movement of the late nineteenth century (formerly known as the Ottoman youth) which established itself in the Ottoman Empire, inspired by the Mazzinian Giovine Italia, established for the purpose of transforming the empire, then autocratic and inefficient, into a constitutional monarchy, with a modern trained and equipped army. They also followed the legacy of the Ottoman Youth, a semi-clandestine movement of the second half of the nineteenth century that set itself liberal and constitutional goals, contributing to the constitution (Kanun-i Esasi) of 1876. In 1915 they were responsible for the genocide of the Armenian people, and that of the Greeks of Pontus.

ROYAL SCANDAL IN GREAT BRITAIN

The Prince of Wales, who would become King Edward VII after Queen Victoria died, was a well-known womanizer who maintained relationships with various actresses and high society ladies. On several occasions the tabloid press reported his "escapades" and embarrassed both the Court and the British Government.

SPANISH-AMERICAN WAR

The Spanish-American War was fought in 1898 between the United States and Spain over the issue of Cuba. According to some scholars, the conflict marked the birth of American imperialism.

During a period of heightened diplomatic tension between the two governments, the explosion of the US battleship Maine in Havana harbor, which cost the lives of 266 sailors, focused the attention of American public opinion on Cuba. The sensationalist press of the time, the so-called yellow press of the tycoon William Randolph Hearst, together with the propaganda of Cuban dissidents in the United States, contributed decisively in guiding the opinion of Americans in favor of war against Spain.

The Americans won very quickly and with relatively low losses, so much so that the war was even called "a splendid little war". On August 12 Spain and the United States signed an armistice resulting in: Spain recognizing the independence

of Cuba, which became an effective American protectorate; the transfer to the USA of the islands of Puerto Rico and Guam; acceptance of US occupation of the Philippines; and a payment of \$20 million by Spain to the US. These results were then ratified on the 10th December 1898 following the Treaty of Paris.

THE BOXER REBELLION

The Boxer Rebellion (November 2, 1899 - September 7, 1901), or Boxer uprising or even Boxer war, was a rebellion in China by a large number of popular Chinese organizations against foreign colonialist influence, gathered under the name of Yihetuan (i.e. self-defense groups of the villages of justice and concord).

The revolt had many martial arts schools as its social base (identified as "boxing schools"), which initially used the name "boxers of justice and concord", which the missionaries in their stories rendered only as "boxers".

This episode culminated in the famous siege of the legations in Beijing told in the film "55 Days at Peking". It was the only event in which all the major world powers organized a single army with the garrisons present at each legation, to repel the Boxer assault. The international rescue army thought it was too late to save foreign civilians and military personnel present in Beijing but it succeeded. From that moment China ceased for years to be able to act as a sovereign state in its full powers.

THE MAY COUP IN SERBIA

In the second half of the 19th century, Serbia was linked to Austria, which had favored the elevation of the principality into a kingdom.

While King Milan Obrenovich was a loyal Habsburg ally, his son Alexander instead sought more support from the Russian court, and to obtain the "blessing" of the Tsar at his 1903 marriage to the bourgeois Draga Lunjevitz, an event that filled the pages of newspapers throughout Europe, where the queen was presented as an unscrupulous new arrival.

This affair, combined with the authoritarian policies of the two Obrenovich kings, destabilized Serbia until finally on the night of 10-11 June 1903 army officers entered the royal residence in Belgrade with the intention of killing both royals. The two, alarmed by the confusion and the first shots against the staff loyal to them, took refuge in a sitting room connected to the room from the bedroom, which served as the queen's wardrobe. Access to the wardrobe was through a wall door which was not immediately discovered by the conspirators. In the wardrobe was a trap door that led to the lower floors of the residence, but it happened that it was closed.

The queen, seeing soldiers in the garden, and still not having understood that the conspirators were members of the army, called to them from the wardrobe window thinking that they would come to their aid, instead she condemned herself and her husband to death. The two unfortunates were shot several times, their bodies suffered many injuries and were thrown into the garden below.

A1.3 ERA III EVENT CARDS

ASSASSINATION OF ARCHDUKE FRANZ FERDINAND

The Sarajevo attack was the murderous gesture made by the young Serbian-Bosnian attacker Gavrilo Princip against Archduke Franz Ferdinand, heir to the throne of Austria-Hungary, and his wife Sofia during an official visit to the Bosnian city on June 28, 1914.

On that day of solemn celebrations in honor of San Vito and the Serbian national holiday, Franz Ferdinand and Sofia were shot to death while being driven through the streets of Sarajevo. Two pistol shots were fired by Princip, a young nationalist member of the Mlada Bosna (Young Bosnia). In the months preceding the attack Princip came into contact with the ultra-nationalist terrorist group Crna ruka (Black Hand), which aimed to free Bosnia from the Austrian yoke to become an integral part of the Kingdom of Serbia, and he planned the attack together with this organization. The archduke and his consort escaped a first bomb attack carried out by some accomplices of Princip, who missed the target and wounded two officers in the car following the archduke. Having ascertained the condition of the wounded in hospital, Franz Ferdinand continued his visit along the main street parallel to the river that runs through the city, along which Princip had the opportunity to complete his intended task. However, even today there is no absolute certainty about the exact development of the events mainly due to inconsistencies in the witness accounts.

The assassination was used by the government in Vienna as a casus belli for the beginning of the First World War, even though the intention of Vienna was that of a war limited to Serbia alone. On July 28, a month after the attack, Austria-Hungary declared war on Serbia, starting a chain of events that led to an unprecedented conflict in history: 70 million soldiers involved, more than 9 million military deaths and at least 5 million civilian deaths explain the name "The Great War".

ITALIAN-TURKISH WAR

The Italian-Turkish war (also known in Italian as the Libyan war) was fought by the Kingdom of

Italy against the Ottoman Empire between 29 September 1911 and 18 October 1912, in which Italy sought to conquer the North African regions of Tripolitania and Cyrenaica.

Colonial ambitions pushed Italy to take over the two Ottoman provinces which in 1934, together with Fezzan, formed Libya, which became an Italian colony and then an independent state. During the conflict the Dodecanese Islands in the Aegean Sea were also occupied by Italy; the latter were supposed to be returned to Ottoman Empire at the end of the war, but remained under provisional administration by Italy until, with the signing of the Treaty of Lausanne in 1923, Turkey renounced all claims and officially recognized Italian sovereignty over the territories lost in the conflict. During the war, the Ottoman Empire found itself significantly disadvantaged, as it could only supply its small forces in Libya across the Mediterranean Sea. The Turkish fleet was unable to compete with the Royal Italian Navy, and the Ottomans were unable to send reinforcements to their North African provinces. Although minor, this war was another important precursor to the First World War, because it contributed to the acceleration of the Balkan conflicts. Observing the ease with which the Italians had defeated the disorganized Ottoman Turks, members of the Balkan League attacked the Empire even before the end of the conflict with Italy.

RUSSO-JAPANESE WAR

The Russo-Japanese War (February 8, 1904 - September 5, 1905) brought into contention the imperialist ambitions of the Russian Empire and the Japanese Empire for control of Manchuria and Korea. The main theaters of operation were southern Manchuria, in particular the areas around the Liaodong peninsula and Mukden and the waters surrounding Korea, Japan and the Yellow Sea.

Russia sought to obtain an ice-free port in the Pacific Ocean as a military base, as well as for maritime trade. From the end of the first Sino-Japanese war in 1903 the negotiations between Russia and Japan proved inconclusive. Japan offered to recognize Russian influence in Manchuria in exchange for Russia recognizing Korea as being in the Japanese sphere of influence. Russia refused, so Japan decided to go to war to fight what it called Russian aggression in Asia. After the negotiations broke down in 1904, the Japanese Imperial Navy began the war by attacking the Russian eastern fleet in Port Arthur, a naval base in the province of Liaotung leased to Russia by China.

The military campaign that followed, in which the Japanese armed forces defeated the Russians in a series of naval and land battles, was

a surprise to the military observers who followed it. Over time the consequences of these battles transformed the balance of power in East Asia, giving ever greater weight to Japan's entry on the stage of history.

THE BALKAN WARS

The Balkan wars were two wars fought in South-Eastern Europe in 1912-1913 during which the member states of the Balkan League (Bulgaria, Greece, Montenegro and Serbia) first conquered Macedonia and part of Thrace from the Ottoman Empire and then clashed with each other over the division of the conquered territory.

The unfulfilled promises and discontent were caused by the failure to complete the process of emancipation of the Balkan lands from what remained of the Ottoman Empire during the nineteenth century. Bulgaria (which had become an autonomous principality), during the Russo-Turkish war of 1877-78 had in fact conquered many territories including the province of eastern Rumelia which it had to renounce in 1885; while Greece had annexed Thessaly in 1881 (although then it had to return a small part to the Ottomans in 1897). These three states, together with Montenegro, harbored expansionist aims towards those territories still under Ottoman rule, known as "Rumelia" and which included eastern Rumelia, Macedonia and Thrace.

Moreover, already in the mid-nineteenth century, tensions between the Balkan states wishing to take territory in Macedonia and Thrace from the Ottoman Empire had pushed the great powers to ensure that the status quo was maintained and that the Ottoman authorities guaranteed the safety of the Christian populations subject to them, who were nevertheless already involved in a struggle for liberation from Ottoman rule. These issues, however, arose again when in July 1908 the Young Turks forced the Sultan to restore the Ottoman Constitution he had suspended. So it was that Austria-Hungary took advantage of the political instability of the Ottoman Empire to formally annex the province of Bosnia and Herzegovina (B&H) which it had already occupied in 1878. In turn, Bulgaria proclaimed itself a completely independent kingdom (October 1908), while the Greeks proceeded to annex the island of Crete (the Great Powers, however, blocked the latter operation).

Disappointed by the annexation to Austria-Hungary of Bosnia (where 825,000 Serbs of the Orthodox faith lived along with many other supporters of the Serbian cause) and forced to recognize the annexation of B&H in March 1909 thus putting a brake on the agitations of Serbian

nationalists, the Serbian government then turned its expansionist aims towards the south, to what was known as "Old Serbia" (the Sangiacato of Novi Pazar and the province of Kosovo). The Serbian ambitions were matched by those of the Bulgarians: after obtaining the support of Russia in April 1909, Bulgaria wanted to annex Ottoman territory in Thrace and Macedonia. Meanwhile, on August 28, 1909 in Greece, a group of military officers (Stratitikos Syndesmos) asked for constitutional reform, the removal of the royal family from the leadership of the armed forces and a more determined and nationalist foreign policy able to resolve the Cretan question and overturn the defeat of 1897. To these events was added the insurrection in March 1910 of the Albanian population in Kosovo followed the day in August 1910 when Montenegro in turn formally declared itself a fully independent kingdom. In 1911, the Italian occupation of Tripolitania, a region nominally belonging to the Ottoman Empire, weakened the Empire's international position by further encouraging the ambitions of the small Balkan states. The two Balkan wars represented an important precursor for the outbreak of the First World War: it was precisely following the Serbian expansion in the region that Austria-Hungary became alarmed. These fears were shared by Germany, which saw Serbia as a valuable ally to the threatening Russian Empire. This increased Serbian power (which was financed by Russia and France to check Austria) was one of the main reasons that pushed Austria to attack Serbia following the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand in June 1914.

A1.4 INTRIGUE CARDS

BIG STICK POLICY

"Speak softly and carry a big stick; you will go far"

This comment sums up the foreign policy pursued by US President Theodore Roosevelt during his presidency from 1901 to 1909, in the first decade of the twentieth century.

This policy in US history is often associated with the broader concept of gunboat diplomacy, and was characterized by peaceful negotiations accompanied by the threat of the "big stick", that is to say, US military intervention. Strongly pragmatic and based on the principles of the interests of the state, Rooseveltian politics, typically Machiavellian, was the mediated expression of American expansionist circles.

A1.5 NATIONAL CARDS

Russia: TRANSIBERIAN RAILWAY

The Trans-Siberian Railway crosses Russian Europe and Northern Asia to reach the Russian Pacific coast, connecting the industrial regions and the Russian capital Moscow, with the central regions of Siberia and those of the Russian Far East.

Announced for the first time with great pomp at the Paris Universal Exposition of 1900, The Trans-Siberian's 9 288 km length makes it the longest railway in the world, with 19.1% in Europe and 80.9% in Asia (however strictly speaking the term "Trans-Siberian" only describes the central-eastern part of the railway, from Chelyabinsk (south of the Urals) to Vladivostok, built between 1891 and 1916).

GLOSSARY

Alliance: when an absolute majority of the spaces in the territory of a minor nation is occupied by DM cubes of the same Power.

Armament Cubes: represent a power sending troops, training, strategic advice and military technologies to a Territory. They reduce the spaces that can be occupied by DM cubes and therefore also reduces the absolute majority needed to obtain Alliance or Control.

Army: military units used by the Powers to resolve Diplomatic Disputes. When used, they are turned over to their "exhausted" side next to the Territory they were sent to.

Arsenal: space on the Power Status Card where Powers place their Armies built but not yet used in a Diplomatic Dispute along with Fleets built but not yet sent.

Colony: one of the two types of territory that can be contested by the Powers. They are identified by a cyan bar.

Continent: macro-regions into which the game map is divided. There are three: Europe, Africa and Asia. Each is divided into Territories.

Control: when an absolute majority of the spaces in a colony territory is occupied by DM cubes of the same power.

Diplomatic Dispute: political and diplomatic friction that occurs during the game when a Power places a DM cube on top of that of another opposing Power in order to take its place in the Territory. They are resolved by mobilizing Armies and Fleets that represent the "gunboat diplomacy" whereby the Powers never faced each other directly in the Belle Époque.

Diplomatic Missions (DM): represent the diplomatic and political capacities of the Powers and Minor Nations. They are represented in the game with

wooden cubes in the color of the Powers or white ones for Minor Nations.

Event Cards: depict the major International Events that occurred during the Belle Époque.

Fleet: military unit used by the Powers to send Diplomatic Missions and Armies to Territories in Africa and Asia to resolve Diplomatic Disputes. They always occupy the Fleet Box of the Continent on the map.

Fleet Box: the space present in each Continent where the Fleets engaged in that Continent are placed.

General Reserve: area of the game table near the map with all the DM cubes of the Powers and Minor Nations not yet used or discarded from the map.

Great Works: symbols of the technological and scientific progress achieved by a Power. Each one represents a significant symbol of La Belle Époque.

Intrigue Card: card that represents the political and diplomatic maneuvers that the Powers can perform in the game.

Minor Nation: one of the nation states represented in the game. Each Minor Nation has a bonus that is earned by a Power when it gains its Alliance. They are identified by a red bar.

National Card: card that represents the political, diplomatic and scientific potential of each Power in the game.

Opponent: any Power other than your own, and any Minor Nation.

Power: one of the great world powers that challenge each other for supremacy. They are Great Britain, France, Russia and the Central Empires.

Reserves: space on the Power Card where Armies and Fleets still to be built are positioned.

Territory: one of the spaces into which a continent is divided. They can be minor nations or colonies.



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