

V1.2



SHADOWS

OF LATIN AMERICA



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Shadows of Latin America

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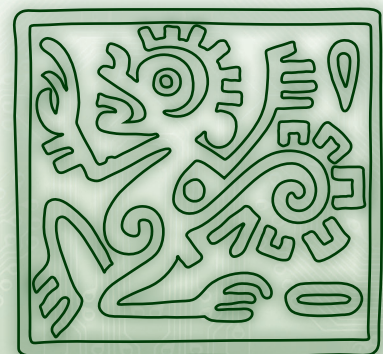
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INTRODUCTION

Hola amigo
no time to tell you the whole story.
It took more than five years to decrypt
the stuff. Don't believe the jackpoint
until you've read this. THIS is novahot!
Take the chip and spread the stuff.
But watch your back! We'll see us over
there in Puerto Principe. If not,
remember my name!

el Loco Motora



Latin America 2064







THE HIDDEN QUARTER

• Nobody likes to feel left out. That means I wasn't really surprised, once Shadowland started updating its resources on North America and Europe, that everyone would start clamoring for more paydata on what was going on in their backyard, or in whatever gods-forsaken hellhole they were going to visit next. One particular area a lot of users wanted to know more about was Latin America—everything from Aztlan on south to the tip of Argentina.

I'm only one guy (despite rumors to the contrary), so I decided to press the more vocal users calling for intel on places south of the border to put up or shut up. As you'll see, they delivered in spades, providing you with the most complete and up-to-date files Shadowland has ever assembled on the Latin American shadows.

We naturally kick things off with an overall look at some of the things you can expect in Latin America, particularly a who's who in the corporate world and the crime syndicates. That's especially important since the two are often one in the same in Latin America—remember that Aztechnology got its start from an alliance of drug cartels, and the modern descendants of those selfsame *narcotraficantes* are still battling it out in the streets and jungles.

Did I mention the jungles? Chummers, I don't care who you are or how good you may be at surviving in the wilds of the Pacific Northwest, the bayous of the Gulf, or even the worst toxic zones of Europe. You haven't seen anything until you've found yourself in what the locals call *Infierno Verde*, the Green Hell. People have told horror stories of survival in the Amazon Basin and other rain forests of South America for years, and those were before the Awakening filled the jungle with even *more* things that could kill you (or just make you wish you were dead). With the rampant growth runs down south can easily take to you from jungle to street and back again, so pay close attention and know what you're getting yourself into.

When I was putting the final touches on these files, I noticed the individual snapshots of different parts of Central and South America began to form a picture and, I can tell you, it's not a pretty one. I was particularly struck by how Latin America has become part of what some call "the hidden quarter" of the world. Bounded by Aztlan and Amazonia, both paranoid dictatorial land-grabbers in their own way, it's been easy for a lot of people to not give Latin America a second thought. After all, there's enough going on in our own backyards to worry about, neh?

But in today's integrated global village, everybody's backyard is a lot closer to everyone else's than we think. In the shadows, you never know where business is going to take you, and smart shadowrunners are always on the lookout for opportunities to make the next score. The runners who do best—and live the longest—are often the ones who've gone global, finding plum jobs wherever they are available and knowing the best places in the world to hide when the heat is on.

This much is certain: Latin America has opportunities aplenty for those working outside the law. Like all opportunities in the shadows, these come with a warning attached: more than almost anywhere else in this fraggged-up world, Latin America is a place on the edge, a simmering hotbed of national rivalries and revolution that could erupt at any time. When it does, business opportunity or not, trust me, you're going to want to be somewhere else. For now, read up, update those Spanish and Portuguese linguachips, and take advantage of the opportunities you can find south of the border.

- Captain Chaos
Transmitted: XXXXX

ECONOMÍA LATINA AMERICANA

by Azziewatch

- Interestingly, it was the Azziewatch haven that contacted us when word got out we were compiling data about Aztechnology and the other Latin American bigwigs. Midnight Angel and her crew have raided their vaults to give us an economical overview of the southern continent.
- Captain Chaos

The first step to understanding Latin America is this simple fact: no continent has fought more against the approval of corporate extraterritoriality than South America. Although some have tied the continent's resistance to bad experiences with cartel-like institutions such as the Association of Coffee-producing Countries in the previous century, and others point to the fear of multinational infringement on national sovereignty, the true reason is simpler: the established powers-that-be in the respective countries, both corporate and otherwise, don't want to give up their supremacy. Both Amazonia and Ecuador (the latter because of the Ghost Cartel's influence) have resisted the Business Recognition Accords so far. Even Aztlan only granted other corporations the right to do business within its borders in the Veracruz Settlement after Operation: Reciprocity. But just because the corps don't dominate the continent like they do most every other place in the world doesn't mean they don't play a major role. I'll start with the big boy of the Latin American world.

AZTECHNOLOGY

A quick scan of corporate channels might make one think the Mesoamerican alpha dog lost its teeth. In recent years the corporation encountered several setbacks on its own turf, including the growing pressure from the Ghost Cartels and the Yucatan debacle. Of course, very little of this has leaked to the general public, thanks to the Azzie spin doctors. With their own big propaganda machine, Televisa, as well as deep connections to Sol Media and the DeMeKo, the Azzies only allow the rest of the world to know what they want known.

With Novatech on the ropes thanks to Art "Count de Monte Cristo" Dankwalther and the Japanese block being pressured both by the Pacific Prosperity Group and each other thanks to the changing winds in Japan, the cards have again fallen in favor of prodigal son of the megacorporate world. Even Ares has been distracted by the situation in California and involvement



in the Proteus shake-up and appears less vigilant than usual. With the takeover of Atlantic Security—one of the core assets of the shattered Gunderson Corporation—Aztechnology has once again shown it still has teeth and although the Jolly Roger still rukes the Caribbean, there's reason for growing concern for the future of the Free League.

- Especially if you don't know which faction (governors, hungans, pirates) is in league with them. People often trade their souls for some serious *mojo* that gives them an edge. And Aztech has a lot of the strange dope for those who ask for it.
- Bahama Mama

World Wide Operations

Aztech's greatest advantage (beside public relations) is its diversity and exceptional adaptability to local economical environments in a short time. Its six primary divisions (one on each continent) oversee a great number of subsidiaries and proxies only loosely connected with the Big A, most of which boast high profiles of their own.

- A good example is the European division in Barcelona. With several countries and diversified markets under its area of influence, it makes sense to have a variety of local corps selling products under different (and recognized) brand names.
- Espion

The only nut the Azzies were unable to crack for a long time was the Pan-Asian market, but since the ascension of the PPG following the Corp War, its Asian headquarters in Hanoi has begun to lobby the Group to be granted membership. Although the PPG has turned Aztechnology down so far, the partnership with Universal Omnitech put the Big A's foot firmly in the door. Additionally, both the Korean Eastern Tiger Corporation and the Viet Khouang Combine have begun pushing for Aztechnology's admission at the last PPG Council summit in July, hoping to strengthen the group for the major skirmishes with the Japanacorps on the horizon.

- If you wonder what the price of ETC's support was, look no farther than Hyundai. Both Eastern Tiger and Wuxing wanted it, and recent shadow ops in Hanoi made certain that Wuxing won't get it anytime soon.
- Mugunghwa

Aztech's smaller divisions have been also expanding in recent years. Rumors say the African division has been sending forces into the tribal lands to investigate shedim infestations within the Central African hinterland (at least that's the *official* story). What's really going on there is unknown, but my best guess is that it has something to do with the new arcane branch of the African headquarters in Sekondi, established on behalf on Dr. Alessandra Pizatti—an expert on African mythology and shamanism with the International Centre for Arcane Development in Athens, Pizetti's reportedly lobbied Aztech's Board for years before they finally approved branch.

- I heard some survey experts from Debeers-Omnitech were forced to team up for some field trips. With the number of horror stories floating around about activities in Central Africa since Halley's Comet passing, no one's volunteering to go inland.
- River Raider

And with Tanamyre distracted with in the New Guinean conflict, Aztech's Australian brands Austrafarm and Nature-Taste have snapped up its top spot Down Under.

South American Division

The Latin American division in Antofagasta is the cash cow of the corporate empire, since the entire SouthAm finance and service sector feeds through it. Having acquired most of the finance corps and banks when the Panamanian economy plummeted into oblivion decades ago, these assets were moved out of Panama City to Chile when the Panama Canal became a corporate-controlled zone in '48. After the takeover of the Banco Nacional de Chile and several online banks, Aztech persuaded the government to change tax and banking secrecy laws to match those of the recently expired nation of Panama. Today, Aztechnology controls many of the banks (even national ones), insurance, and financial services in Central and South America, and even several institutions in Amazonia.

- The cartels that founded Aztech's predecessor ORO were the Panamanian and Cayman Island banks' best customers. The corporation made sure their money was well protected in the aftermath of the Crash.
- The Chromed Accountant
- Oddly enough, today's Ghost Cartels are still customers of the same, now Azzie-controlled banks. Apparently, they want their money and deposits nearby rather than overseas in Switzerland. It helps that Latin American banks ask fewer questions about the money's often-dubious origins, thanks to strict secrecy laws and an interest in self-preservation...
- The Keynesian Kid

Beyond finance, the subdivision also runs a lot of the Latin American service industry, providing public and private transportation, media, logistics, public safety, communication and matrix infrastructure in Argentina, Bolivia, Chile, as well as parts of Paraguay and Amazonia.

- Most of the trideo and Matrix services are actually in the hands of the Sol Media Group, with Aztechnology as a major shareholder. They've been in bed together since the Fifties when CEO Nidos negotiated her way into Aztlan's media market.
- 0111011001

Top of the Pyramid

With the brutal elimination of troublemaker **Juan Atczapotalco** (I applaud the convenient bomb at the Yucatan peace summit), the Pyramid's board appears stronger than ever. In the absence of an official spokesperson to comment at the moment, we suspect the current Aztlan national president **Flavia de la Rosa** will be appointed the new CEO of the corporation. The board will once again have a puppet comfortable with its strings.

- De la Rosa is used to bowing to the orders of the board members, making her the first choice. She tried to oppose Aztechnology years ago, but the death of most of her family taught her a hard lesson about the Azzie's rules of the game.
- The Old Man

Domingo Chavez is one of the board's premiere predators. His time as a justice in the vicious forum of Zurich-Orbital fashioned him into a callous and arrogant son of a slitch—abilities that worked in his favor after his appointment to the board in the wake of the fall of the elusive Mr. Oscuro. His influence has only grown since, through the corporate hierarchy and like-minded proxies such as Anna Villalobos, the current corporation's current Justice. Sources also whisper that Chavez is a capable mage, spearheading the mago-nationalist faction within the country.

- The revelation that Villalobos is a psionic caused quite a stir on Z.O. Although the Court does not prohibit the admission of mages, the presence of a mentalist among their own ranks made other judges nervous. To pour even more fuel on the fire, it's suspected that Villalobos also leads a small group of experimental psionics for Aztechnology at the Spindle. The theory is they're better suited to orbital environments since their tradition is believed to be less dependent on the Earth's manosphere.
- Talon

Domingo "Ding" Ramos, heir of the former Ramos Cartel throne, has abandoned himself to all kind of vices. He spends money like water on women, narcotics, gambling and cares little about attending any of the board meetings unless he's explicitly summoned. Though he's more lavish than European magnate Johnny Spinrad (at least in terms of ex-wives, mistresses and illegitimate offspring), Ramos is believed by some to just be putting up a decadent front for the public and the media. There has also been growing concerns that he actually owns greater chunks of Aztechnology than originally assumed.

- If it's a front, it's a good one—a lot of society types have taken to referring to Ramos as a worthy successor to the Marquis de Sade. He hosts several individuals (most of them female) in some kind of private *serail* on his impressive estate near Concepción in Panama, where he tantalizes them by manipulating their feelings and minds. Rumor says he's addicted to this sick kind of fetishism to a degree that he (metaphorically speaking) feeds of his victims' negative emotions and humiliation—intensified by simsense feeds transmitted into his head.

- Jungle Creeper

Although it appears that Ramos is the board member with the least business savvy, he nevertheless managed to persuade **J.J. Harvin, Jr.** to trade Atlantic Security for Aztechnology shares, most likely those formerly owned by the feathered serpent Dzitbalchen. As the dracoform is scheduled for trial (and likely to become the first dragon to be lawfully executed in meta-human history), the slot was free. It remains to be seen whether Harvin Jr. hit the jackpot or rolled snake eyes with this gamble.

The entity known as **Motecuhzoma** remains a mystery. Whether he/it is a powerful shaman or, as some believe, a free spirit connected to the Aztec historical figure of the same name is still unknown. It has become apparent in recent years that Motecuhzoma has been a member on the board for decades, but only drew attention when he came forward, filling the power vacuum after some kind of falling out within Blood Mage Gestalt. It is known that he has been wrestling with Chavez over the spiritual control of arcane cults aligned with Aztechnology, especially the remnants of the Gestalt.

- Aztlan shadows carefully whisper about the *Nextlaualli*, which originally translates as “sacred debt payment to the gods” but refers today to a ritual act needed to ascend to the Aztechnology Corporation's uppermost ranks. Motecuhzoma seems to be somehow connected to this ritual.

- El Guerrero Aguila

Everyone's favorite blob, **Thomas Roxborough**, is one of the more prominent members of the board (at least among the shadows). Since his body degenerated into a cellular agglomerate thanks to experimental therapy originally applied by UniOmni genewizards to save him from croaking, he's been vegetating in a research tank in a private clinic somewhere in Central America. His mind somehow survived, providing the ultimate proof that God definitely blunders sometimes. Being able to access the Matrix via a prototype transducer-like data-jack, he carries on as before, channeling his corporate-raider abilities for the good of the corporate empire. Although he's displayed an obsessive desire for a new human body (another reason why he's invested heavily in Universal Omnitech and aligned it with Aztechnology), he recently cut off any work related to him. He also seems to have vanished from the aforementioned clinic, though he still appears at board meetings via trideo simulacra of his former self.

- Time is running out for Mr. Roxborough. As a result of the original treatment, his cells continuously multiply, meaning that the volume of his body is constantly increasing. Unfortunately for him, the scientists at UniOmni are not capable of halting the process. That's why he has been diverting a lot of the corp's resources towards bio-computing and transhumanism, the amalgamation of mind and—in his case—organic matter.

- KAM

- Roxborough not only left the clinic, he's left the Earth. He was recently relocated to the Spindle—possibly to see if microgravity affects his condition. There's also been a lot of data traffic between the space station and Proteus' Treffpunkt: Raumhafen. Seems as if he is in desperate need for someone experienced in space adaptation.

- Pyramid Watcher

His admission to the board of directors, through Dunkelzahn's bequest, has been a double-edged sword for **Oliver McClure**. Never truly accepted by the remaining board members because of his altruistic agenda and scrupulous business practices, he's survived several attempts to either assassinate him or buy him off. Since the board has (apparently) decided it can't easily get rid of him, they have instead forced McClure into a position of making more and more grey-area decisions, often involving Aztechnology's response to insurgents or environmental issues. Although McClure has tried to solve his tasks with the least losses, he's visibly worn appearing older and emaciated as if he carries a great burden.

- Old friends from Quebec say that he's changed since moving to Aztlan. He acts more reserved and has cut off old relationships, cloaking himself in solitude. Is he protecting them?

- Spotlight Sally

- It's a sign of a growing darkness within him. It creeps upon you when you start hating the world for the cruel decisions it forces on you. It remains to be seen if he has the strength to win his inner struggle or whether his dark side will consume him.

- Faust

Fellow board member **Tsurunaga Shinoyama** seems to be McClure's sole supporter. For reasons unknown, he has aligned himself with “Sir Oliver.” Whatever Shinoyama's reasons for backing McClure, it's costing him, slowing down his own rise through the corporate food chain

- Shinoyama is seeing something in McClure that no else has seen yet, something he deems damn useful for his own advancement. Maybe it's the same thing Dunkelzahn saw in him—I don't think Dunkelzahn threw McClure in this nest of vipers without a reason.

- Pyramid Watcher

- What? No rumors on **The Dragon**?

- Wyrmswatcher

- Nothing beyond the usual idle speculation. There's still no evidence about any draconic involvement in Aztechnology beyond the already known feathered serpents.

- Pyramid Watcher

- Ghostwalker is eager to find out, though. He has been sending talent into Aztlan to gather more information. Some of their heads have been delivered back to Denver as a message to let sleeping dragons lie.

- Delta Juliet

UNIVERSAL OMNITECH

Latin American Research Division: Tijuana, Aztlan

Director of Research: Dr. Terrance Clark (in place of Dr. Kristine Martin)

The biotech and genetics pioneer Universal Omnitech took itself to new heights in genetic engineering research and development when it allied with Aztechnology, expanding this Canadian firm into a leader in its field. Even though this unholy alliance granted UniOmni access to Aztech's unlimited resources, Aztech's recent entanglements (including pressing issues with the PPG) have affected UniOmni, slowing the pace of the growth it enjoyed at the beginning of the partnership. This has led to ongoing debates between the Aztech and UniOmni boards on whether the partnership should be continued, and if so on what terms. The buzz is that UniOmni CEO Hamilton Grimes demanded the immediate transfer of Aztech-asset Genetique to UniOmni as proof of goodwill if the two companies are to continue their association.



- Grimes' problem is he doesn't understand that only Roxborough prevented Aztechnology from swallowing UniOmni up whole. Instead of being thankful, Grimes tends to antagonize Roxborough, and his personal distaste for El Blobbo will probably make Roxborough think twice about doing UniOmni any more further favors.

- Phage

Another factor putting a strain on the relationship has been the extraction of Dr. Kristine Martin (aka KAM) from a UniOmni research installation in Aztlan. Dr. Martin has since ascended to the post of director of R&D at the Genesis Consortium, and she has been replaced by the talented Dr. Terrance Clark, who ar-

ranged his own switch from Genecraft Biodesigns to UniOmni a while back. However, Roxborough's taken the abduction of his precious pet egghead quite personally and wants to drag both corporations into a crusade against Genesis.

- All attempts to reacquire KAM have so far proven unsuccessful, counteracted by teams with no discernable link to Genesis. Looks like a third party's taking the Consortium's side against the bad boys.

- QuitoMole

- How's your new "ethical" employer working out, doctor? I hope the change revived your idealism for and in science.

- The Smiling Bandit

- Very. I am still wondering if it was you who tipped her off. I've also heard we're playing on the same team now.

- KAM

- Only sometimes. Anyway, everyone deserves a second chance. Make the most of yours.

- The Smiling Bandit

Clark personally heads UniOmni's research complex in the Tijuana/San Diego sprawl. He has taken over the cloning research project there, where no one gives a devil rat's ass

about the Copenhagen Accords. Unsubstantiated reports claim success in the creation of what scientists dubbed a "wimp"—a fully functional metahuman clone with a blank memory. While these clones come in quite handy for those who want to fake their deaths in an accident (not unusual among the hierarchy of the Cartels and other underworld outfits), I've also heard UniOmni is testing so-called "cognitive planters"—nanodrones that move growing synapses to copy an existing brain—on their wimps to see whether they can make a true dopplegan-ger.

- Clark mentioned his turn-ons in an interview a while back: red-head, five-ten, green eyes, athletic build, and legs up to here. His new girlfriend fits that description to a tee. Needless to say, her record reads like it was made up.

- Mutatis Mutandis

GULFSTAR

Headquarters: New Orleans, CAS

CEO: Jacob Keene

Known mostly for its high-performance fuels, Gulfstar is more than an ordinary petrochem company. Although it competes with Aztech's Pemex for the South American oil-fields, its oil tankers sailing through the Panama Canal Zone move more than just crude, with an assortment of goods hidden in sealed ceramic containers. Most of the goods are weapons or miltech smuggled to the Ghost Cartels or Peruvian rebel forces in exchange for drugs or arcane goods. Gossip from the Big Easy says Keene acquiesced to the new partnership that made this "expansion" possible.

GULFSTAR

- What partnership, you ask? This one: the major pirate outfits grant Gulfstar's fleet free passage through the League as long as the corp is willing to supply them with cheap fuel and weapons that guarantee them an edge during their raids.

- Carousel

- Mes not buying it. Seen these containers unloaded in a Peruvian dock. They wuz fraggin' fridges. Guess what kinds of things are shipped from Zombie City to a biopiracy haven that needs be kept fresh and icy?

- SangreFrio

KONDORCHID

Headquarters: Guayaquil, Ecuador

CEO: Anibal Casimiro Pereira

Subsidiaries: Marina Cargo, Tradex, Tidewater Shipbuilding and Offshore Construction

A transportation conglomerate in name only, KondOrchid handles the drug traffic all over the southern continent from Ecuador to Caracas and other South American sprawls. It's an open secret that the corp is just an implement of the Cartels; heck, the other corps have known it for years. However, with the exception of Aztlan and Amazonia, no SouthAm government dares risk the Cartels' wrath, and their vessels, zepps and trucks are generally ignored by patrols.



- The administration in Panama has it in for KondOrchid ships passing the Canal Zone, but despite continuous and extensive searches with drug-sniffing critters they have very rarely detected any narcotics.

- Santiago

KondOrchid also owns shares of Aerial Industries, a Latin subsidiary of the German Zeppelinwerke in Metrôpole, through numerous bogus corps out of former Bogota, using the company's huge network of zeppelin routes to distribute their goods (and dope) throughout Amazonian and even Aztlan cities.

- The Amazonians let the Cartels persist as long as they continue to frag around with the Big A. They still have enough presence in their old Colombian turf to deal with the Azzies on their terms. The last time Aztechnology tried to eradicate their presence here, the number of drug-related deaths of first-class citizens in Tenochtitlan skyrocketed, thanks to a dramatic increase in poisoned narcotics.

- Alvaro

ANDES MINING

Latin-American Headquarters: La Paz, Bolivia

CEO: Águeda Emiliana Lozano

Andes Mining is a wholly owned subsidiary of Tanamyre Exploitations and Mining. The Australian megacorp started investing in Bolivia before the revolution in the '50s, and they've been trying to stay on good terms with the neo-communist regime ever since to corner the mining rights for Bolivia's metal, salt and gemstone deposits. Andes Mining conducts a range of mining operations in the Andes and also in Peru, Chile and Argentina for copper, silver and, recently, orichalcum.



- "Good terms" means the Bolivian military has come to an amicable arrangement with Commonwealth Armament Solutions and Aerospace Systems to help keep Amazonia at bay.

- LoRent

Andes Mining's main processing and production facilities are located in Potosi. The city has been a mining hellhole for centuries. Hundreds of thousands, if not millions, have died in its mines extracting silver and other ores. The hollowed mountains—courtesy of Tanamyre Environmental Services—are now used to store all kinds of toxic slag.

GENESIS CONSORTIUM

Headquarters: Quito, Ecuador

CEO: Roberto Kama

Consortium Members: Memotek, Tecnologias Gaia, Inti T'ika Bioengineering, LATU-Systems, Viracocha Construction, Pan American Investments

Subsidiaries: Terramater, Fungitek, Effluent Microbiotics

The establishment of an eco-conscious trans-Latin corporate consortium is a South American success story. The vision behind the formation of the Consortium was to develop new technologies (so-called living or organic technology) based on existing natural models and the fusion of organic and synthetic manufacturing with the goal of achieving a true symbiosis between technology and nature.

- The media catchword for it is “biolution.” It contains aspects of transgenetics, nano- and ecological biotechnology, xenobiological breeding and engineering, transgenetics, reprognetics and pharmacogenomics. Some think of it as the imminent revolution for the next generation (after the preceding Industrial, Information and Cybernetic Revolutions).
- Kephalos



Without a doubt, the key player in the formation of the Consortium was **Angela Espinosa**. Although born in Quito, she earned a scholarship at the famous Institut Pasteur in France. After receiving her PhD in genetics and microbiology, she became an academic and teacher. She spent several years as a professor but then resigned her chair at Harvard University and worked for a while on UNESCO’s Bioethics program. She then went on to form her own company, Tecnologias Gaia, in Ecuador, and the company developed into a core member of the Genesis Consortium.

Today, the Consortium links companies that have very different business interests but share the same environmental goals. Most of them are national eco-biotech related companies like Inti T’ika Bioengineering, Tecnologias Gaia or Paraguayan Viracocha Construction, but there are other members who joined the consortium out of scientific interest, like the former Laboratorio Tecnológico del Uruguay (now LATU Systems) or Memotek, a computer/robotics company dealing with the special software and hardware needed for symbiotic research.

- Laboratorio Tecnológico del Uruguay merged with the national university to form LATU Systems when Amazonia took over the country. It functions as the Consortium think-tank and has very good connections to South America’s biggest universities.
- Ñandu Glasswalker
- Memotek’s activities go beyond supplying the Consortium with cutting edge bio-informatics and prototype toys that make other biotech companies green with envy. They benefit from other corps understanding the cycles and systems of nature and have been developing new designs for the Matrix, like IC based on predator-prey relationships or algorithms to synergize nanobots based on the flock behavior of fish, bird and insect swarms.
- Decker del Sur

The Consortium’s main branches deal in environmental technologies like bio-remediation (using organisms like engineered bacteria or algae to remove contamination and

pollutants out of soil, air and water), pharmaceutical breeding (using plants and animals as natural pharmaceutical factories) and medical technologies. Genesis recently presented one of their creations to the interested public—a leech that performs miracles in the healing of inflamed wounds by secreting certain substances when it bites. Although they have revealed a lot of their technology in recent years (as part of their open technology policy), most pundits believe that what we’ve seen is just the tip of the iceberg.

- Another one of their recent breakthroughs is in research to synthetically produce gas and oil and cheaply with the aid of biotechnology. If they succeed, the remaining big oil producers could disappear almost overnight. That’s why companies like United Oil, Fatima Petrochemicals and Pemex used their clout to stop Genesis’ expansion beyond South America.
- Caleb

- Here are a few things biotech been working on in recent times: a spider silk protection vest that far exceeds the capabilities of Kevlar, synthetic flesh for ghouls, bio-reactors that produce clean energy, or bio-symbiotic implants that have no detrimental effects on the host’s immune and neurological system.
- Outbreak Monkey

- Keep dreaming! Most of that’s still wishful thinking, although I have to admit Genesis is running several projects dealing with symbiotic stuff, especially the marketable type. Imagine, for instance, some kind of non-hostile tapeworm that lives off the excess of what the host eats, thereby keeping his body slim, or organisms that process fatty acids, thereby increasing fat-burning leading to the same effect. If they develop it, you better believe people will be buying.
- Phage

Current CEO Roberto Kama got the job when Espinosa stepped down because of her age. Kama is a self-made man who rose through the ranks of Futisama, a mid-level Japanacorp later acquired by Fuchi. After immigration to Amazonia and founding of his new company, Pan American Investment, he first became a financial advisor and recently a member of the Consortium.

- I wonder if there’s a connection to Amazonia beyond Kama? In both Amazonia and Paraguay, Genesis seems to be the government’s preferred business partner. From what I’ve heard, they’re also the only ones (legally) allowed to draw samples from the Amazonian rainforest. LATU Systems’ tree and mobile laboratories are quite famous among parazoologists and parobotanists.
- Alvaro
- No connection that we’ve heard, at least if you’re implying the proprietary kind. We *have* heard that Genesis is involved in a major project with one of the Awakened players, and that it might have something to do with the Amazonian Anacondas.
- Midnight Angel
- Maybe another reptilian breeding problem? <math display="block">\text{grin}>
- The Laughing Man

SURVIVING AMONG GIANTS

by Don Dinero

- Someone once told me that most Latin American governments qualified as criminal organizations. The gag might be only partially true, but there's still plenty of real underworld activity down there. I've asked Don Dinero at Iquitos' Green Eden datahaven to give us an overview of the main players, from nationalist drug dealers to smugglers running the Andes.

- Captain Chaos
Transmitted:

Crime is Latin America's most profitable business field, no doubt about it. Some druglords are wealthier than corporate CEOs and command immense power and respect within their domains.

So, why is it that foreigners almost never hear about them? Barring a few, well-publicized detentions, these people have remained in relative anonymity. Is it because of modesty? Not really. Fame simply is not their friend. Here in Latin America, discretion isn't a commodity, it's a necessity.

When ORO became the global corporate empire we love to hate as Aztechnology, it didn't forget its original source of power. The Azzies were determined to monopolize drug production in Latin America, whatever the cost. Those *narcos* who didn't bow to Tenochtitlán learned that the price of independence was their lives.

- The Azzies didn't just rely on some high-profile network to take out the competition. Aerial strikes, commando raids and heavy-duty magic—they used the full repertoire. That's what I call a war on drugs!

- Ryan

- The Cartels aren't exactly slouches in the violence department either. They deal with snitches and traitors in the goriest possible way. A favorite tactic is to slit their throats and pull out their tongues through the cut. They call it "the Medellín tie."

- FlyT

With Aztechnology going for the throat and the nascent simsense technology eating their profit margins, the Cartels were forced to rethink their strategy. Huge amounts of money were invested in legitimate businesses in Ecuador, Colombia and Brazil, giving them much-needed wealth and, above all, political clout. When Hualpa and his scaly cronies took over Brazil, the Cartels were ready for them. The two sides hammered out a deal, born of convenience and mutual hatred of Aztlan. Amazonia would let them carry on with their biz more or less as usual, and in return the Cartels helped stabilize the fledgling country and became a hidden line of defense against Aztlaner expansionism. The Cartels were dead, long live the Ghost Cartels.

- Both sides have been trying to get an edge over the other since then. I suspect what's going on in Ecuador is related to this bigger struggle.

- Machiavelli

For the past few decades, the Cartels have struggled to secure a niche between the two enemy countries and deal with challengers like the yaks in Peru's and Triads in Chile, but this could change pretty fragging soon. The drug lords are setting their eyes on the horizon, looking forward to a not-so-distant future where they once again have the upper hand and they've got a card or two up their sleeves.

Awakened Gold

The Ghost Cartels finally scored big when they began dealing Bioengineered Awakened Drugs (BADs). How the narcos managed to modify Awakened plants is still a matter of intense speculation, but the results are undeniable. BADs have taken the global market by storm in the past couple of years, offering junkies a tainted glimpse of the Awakening. I say "tainted" because it seems that some of these puppies have, ah, interesting side effects besides a strong addiction. Whether this is intentional or not remains to be seen.

- Ok, can anyone enlighten those of us who don't do Awakened psychotropics?

- Blaaqasphalt



- A Novatech suit I knew was hooked on Trance. He developed Alzheimer-like memory problems after a year of intense use (gotta love weekend parties in Punta del Este). Last I heard they'd shipped the poor slot to an asylum.

- Johnny Hotel

- The Cartels' latest gem is called Overdrive. Originally believed a failed experiment, it turned out to be powerful mojo for Matrix users. Get it if you can, 'cause it's worth its weight in gold.

- Tweaker

- Junkies who fry their own brains deserve what they get.

- Bosco

- Maybe, but that'd explain what I heard at the Green Eden not so long ago. It seems that one Cartel cut a deal to have an Otaku gang run their Matrix ops. Wanna bet the kids get paid in OD?

- Decker del Sur

The Cartels have cornered the BAD market so far, but others are racing to close the gap. Many are investing heavily in R&D, but most go for the easy route and try their luck with a few extractions. Exactly what part of breaking into heavily guarded labs in the middle of the rainforest qualifies as "easy" is a mystery to me, but that doesn't stop Johnsons from hiring runners. Just remember: if the Cartels find out you're doing this, odds are you'll never work again in Latin America ... or live long enough to get out.

Forward to the Past

I first heard of the Great Colombia policlub in Cali five years ago. For those lacking a handy history knowsoft, the Great Colombia was a failed Independence-era country, which included the lands of Ecuador, Venezuela, Colombia and Panama. The group's nationalist, anti-Aztlaner platform smells like another Amazonian op, but I was surprised to learn that its main backers were none other than the Cartels.

From what I've learned, it seems that a few drug lords never forgot their Colombian roots and they're now playing a very dangerous game, attempting to reclaim what they believe was once theirs. Henry Uribe in particular has been very active, contacting enemies of Aztechnology in an attempt to gather support. His reputation as a former Colombian senator has allowed him to meet with the UN's General Secretary, politicians and corporate authorities.

- Uribe is at the top of Aztechnology's drek list. How the frag he's still alive is anyone's guess.

- SergioP

- Let me spell it for you: A-M-A-Z-O-N-I-A. With Aztlan on the rise and Yucatan the bloody mess it is, anything that keeps the Azzies off-balance looks good in Hualpa's book (especially if he can later manipulate this new buffer state).

- Serious Paul

- Chummer, anything that upsets Aztechnology looks good on anyone's book. It might as well be Lofwyr or Damien Knight who's protecting Uribe.

- Lone Gunman

Needless to say, the policlub has been declared a terrorist organization by Tenochtitlán. Folks belonging to it are sent to Gorgon Island, a maximum-security prison off the Pacific coast of former Colombia. *La Gorgona*, as locals know it, is an Azzie version of Alcatraz: no one gets out. Ever.

- Don Dinero is starting to believe the Azzie's propaganda. I've met people who escaped and lived to tell the tale, though admittedly it wasn't a pretty one.

- KAM

- Great Colombia is a useful, all-around tool for the Cartels. Need an Aztechnology facility blown up? Just give the policlubbers some mil-spec weapons and claim it was in the name of life, freedom and the pursuit of novacoke.

- Che

- Funny you mention that. Didn't the Azzies lose a whole shipment of weapons to air pirates last year?

- Lynch

THE USUAL SUSPECTS

Of all the underworld players you're used to, only the East Asian syndicates have a truly significant Latin American presence. The Yakuza are very active within Peru and Amazonia, with sizable power bases in both countries' Japanese communities. Most oyabuns in Japan tend to ignore their existence, though, as their Latin American brethren are too meta-friendly for their tastes.

- The Shizuia-gumi's decadence has brought shame to our respected brotherhood with their actions.

- Niifaka

- Oh my, a samba-dancing tusked oyabun. The horror, my friends, the horror! <display_sarcasm>

- Bung

- Some Japanese gumis have discreetly begun supporting the Nagai-gumi in an effort to "correct" the situation in Amazonia. Dinner in Tokyo, wetwork in Metrôpole and breakfast at Chiba's Silver Palace, anyone?

- Neon Flower

- While the Yaks tear the holy Nipponese drek out of each other, Codigo Verde and those freaky Quiumbandistas are moving on the Japs' turf. Give it a while and there won't be any Yaks left in Amazonia.

- Bira

The Triads have quietly built a stronghold for themselves in Chile. Both the 88 Cranes and the Silver Carps have managed to coexist with the Ghost Cartels, based on the principle that there's enough profit for all. Yes, there occasionally is honor among thieves.

- It's not going to last. The Mapuches have staged several attacks against all three groups. Sooner or later one will be tempted to disguise its own strikes as just another terrorist incident, and it will be downhill from there.
- Valpo Vic

Like an ugly pest that won't go away no matter what you do, **Tamanous** cells are also active all over the continent. Its organlegging activities thrive in Latin America's misery, but the group is usually spread too thin to be an actual force anywhere. The only exception is Caracas, but given the city's corrupt nature and abundance of chopshops that's no surprise.

- <tips_hat>
- Carmaux

WHO'S WHO AMONG THE GHOST CARTELS

by Kika

- Kika worked for the Olaya Cartel most of her life, beginning as a drug mule and graduating to razor girl. Shortly after being caught by Montevideo's police, Kika's bosses tried to terminate her "just in case." I contacted her before the surgeons gave her a new face and got this as parting gift for the Cartels.
- Don Dinero

Twelve years. Twelve-goddamn-years of whoring myself for them and they screwed me in the end. I might as well print it on a t-shirt. Well, I got another slogan for the cabarones: hell hath no fury like a woman scorned, especially if you put a sniper's bullet in her brain.

Though people often think of them as a monolithic entity, the Ghost Cartels are in fact an alliance of smaller groups, each with their own turf, hierarchy and MO. Many come and go with each police raid or Azzie wetjob, but some have survived long enough to be considered the ratpack's alpha dogs. These have learned to cooperate, share resources and coordinate their actions, increasing their power far beyond what they could do alone.

- The Cartels' leaders hold a secret "Ghost Summit" every year where they discuss long-term goals and strategies.
- FlyT
- I've heard that rumor before, but I highly doubt the Cartels' would give Aztechnology the opportunity to wipe out their entire leadership with a single hit. Ares nuked Chicago for less than that, y' know.
- Picador

The Andes Cartel

This is what people usually imagine when they think about South American drug dealers. It's one of the three Guayaquil-based Cartels, though most of its operations take place in southern Aztlan and Argentina. The group's leader is Manuel Tamayo, a cattle rancher whose family was murdered by Aztechnology Corporate Security. He fled Colombia and took over the Andes Cartel, turning it into his private army and striking against any and all possible Azzie targets.

Tamayo is said to be the most outspoken supporter of the Great Colombia policlub. Many suspect the movement receives supplies through FARC guerrillas, which were absorbed by the Andes Cartel years ago. Word is that the dwarf also fancies himself a second Tirofijo, the legendary FARC commander, and that he has taken part in several field operations.

- Kika's right on the money. Tamayo has personally tracked down and executed five of the six men who killed his family. The sixth has proven to be a bit more difficult to catch, as it's none other than Diego Chávez, Aztechnology's Chief Operating Officer.
- Pyramid Watcher
- The other Cartels love Tamayo—he does the dirty work while they reap the profits. I wonder how long it will take for "Tirofijo" to recognize he's being used.
- Andean Soldier

The Olaya Cartel

Formerly the Cali Cartel, the group had to pull a hasty relocation to Guayaquil when Aztechnology declared open season on them. Rather than fighting their way back to Colombia, the leaders invested their remaining money in Ecuador and Peru ... and Spirits did it pay off. Olaya is the biggest faction within the Ghost Cartels, with so much political and economic clout across Latin America that "Olaya Corp" is a common joke.

You might recognize Olaya's top dog, as Jaime "the Boss" Salazar also happens to be KondOrchid's CEO. Salazar is a young maverick, barely in his thirties, but don't let his age fool you. His uncle and second-in-command happens to be Henry "the Diplomat" Uribe, who complements Salazar's ingenuity and audacity with his political experience and chessmaster mind. Any time the GCs need to cut a deal, they send the Diplomat.

- You can thank Uribe for supporting laws that restrict BTLs in several countries, thus favoring the Cartels' goodies.
- El Sprito
- Uribe is also tight with the Catholic Church, of all organizations—his brother Alfredo is a Bishop in the Roman Curia.
- Padre Pedro

The crisis in Peru is a potential gold mine for the Olaya Cartel right now and its pay-per-hit Shining Path terrorists, but Ecuador's situation is worrisome. President Monasterios' reform policies are striking Cartel interests, while the Genesis Consortium is quickly becoming the dominant economic force in the country. Time will tell if Salazar and Uribe can handle these threats.

- When he's not busy running the Cartel and KondOrchid, li'l Jaime is slowly becoming a Grand Tour regular under the friendly guidance of former supermodel Claudia Romanov.
- Mizz Manners

Smaller Cartels

There are several smaller outfits spread throughout the region, some of them run by a bigger group's proxy and some independent. The former includes the **Castañeda** group, which has survived everything the Argentinean government has thrown at them in the past few years. Among the latter is the **Morales Cartel**, which has a near-monopoly of Bolivia's drug exports. They have very good ties with Velazco's government, though it's hard to tell who manipulates whom.

- The Morales are El Comandante's hidden hand, especially in Peru and Paraguay.
- Don Dinero
- That might cause trouble with the Cachoeira Cartel in Ciudad del Este. After Amazonia and Argentina, these guys aren't in the mood to tolerate another meddler, even if it's one of their own.
- Kurupi

FREE TRADERS

by Privateer

- I first met Privateer while looking for a discreet way to enter Bogotá. He's been a smuggler long enough to build a solid rep, so I figured he'd be the right man to write about this.
- Don Dinero

John Hawkins had it right when he set sail from England to smuggle slaves to Spain's Silver Empire. An indy trader can make good profits in Latin America, taking advantage of largely unguarded borders and corrupt authorities. Just like the sixteenth century though, you're toast if the military catches you.

Many smugglers use the Andean Highway, taking goods brought to Chile from Asia all the way up to southern Aztlan. Others take the road the other way, bringing supplies from Amazonia to rebels in Argentina and other countries. Still others use the highway as a backdoor to Amazonia's rainforest—a t-bird loaded with teslas can set up a talislegger for life.

- More like cost him his life. The Amazonians don't take such thefts lightly.
- Lynch

- It takes some skill and a decent airship to hop across the Andes range, but sensor coverage is so patchy it's usually worth it.
- Lone Ranger

Air Piracy

As the rainforest overran land routes and insecurity became routine, people began looking to the skies for a solution. Nowadays most cargo is transported by lighter-than-air aircraft and t-birds, which allow corps and smugglers to bypass the aforementioned problems. Most of them, at least. Unfortunately, if someone wants something badly enough, he'll find a way to get it. It was a matter of time before criminals got their own airships and piracy reached new heights (pun intended). Air pirates are so common now that GloboTrid's latest show is *Pirate Queen of the Andes*. 'Nuff said.

- GloboTrid's even basing it on Maia Escobar, a real pirate. She was so effective that when the Amazonians finally caught her, they chose to give her a Letter of Marque against the Azzies.
- Bandeirante
- Maia's the exception to the rule. Most pirates are fed to piranhas.
- Paquifo

Unlike their flashy Carib colleagues, though, air pirates go for maximum discretion. They lay low and stay near the tree-tops or mountains, scouting the surrounding area with drones and land-based sensors they've previously hidden. This isn't a rigger-only biz: deckers who can find out zeppelin schedules and routes will always find a job here.

Once they find a suitable target, communications are jammed while choppers and armed drones take care of any escorts. These are usually just drones or armed merchants, but it varies depending on the cargo's value—so don't come and crying to me if you meet a full wing of F-B Eagles. A few gangs have those nifty Aguilar helicopters, though most of those are second-hand relics from Aztechnology's tenure in Bolivia and Yucatan (hey, you use what you can get).

Once the escorts are under control, a small group boards the freighter. This is a very risky operation that can easily kill rookies. Some crews simply choose to pump enough lead into the target until it agrees to land at a specific spot, where the pirates quickly loot any valuables before the cavalry arrives.



- Aerial Industries' latest model works as your standard LTA craft while you cruise the skies or stand by for targets, enhancing the blimp's low signature with stealth materials. The trick is that part of the ship's structure can detach itself and become a small fighter plane with enough firepower and maneuverability to take on those slow-moving zepps.
- Air Sailor
- Aztechnology Sec pirated the design and began camouflaging a few as innocent-looking cargo blimps. I'd call it poetic justice, except that one of those killed two friends of mine. Bloody things are even showing up near Denver.
- Josie Cruise
- What about water piracy?
- Salgari
- Gingerbread Man sent us another colorful update on the Caribbean League. You might want to check it out in this very same download.
- Captain Chaos
- That doesn't cover everything, Cap. There are plenty of Jolly Roger flags on the Amazon River, raiding small cargo boats and holding passengers for ransom. The Rio de la Plata is a completely different story. Military patrols make piracy pretty much a death wish down there, though short-haul smugglers have it slightly easier.
- Artemus

EL INFIERNO VERDE: THE GREEN HELL

by Machéte

- Running in Latin America means dealing with the Big Green, the endless kilometers of virgin jungle, so I thought it was worth a few lines. I didn't, however, reckon with the file I got a few weeks ago. Remember Dr. Patterson, who vanished somewhere in the Amazonian rain forest several years ago? Apparently a follow up expedition to track Patterson's trail failed miserably. Most of the expedition's members, including Dr. Nicholas Rove, a former student of Patterson's, died. Others came back but were hopelessly insane. Machéte is probably the only survivor who isn't crazy ... yet. He was the one who sent in this file and he told me to consider it a warning for anyone willing to head into the Green Hell. Read it and remember—there are more critters and plants living in the jungle than some of you can imagine, and a lot of them are deadlier than a bullet in the brainpan.
- Captain Chaos
Transmitted: XX at 18:24:53 (PST)

Every night I hear them scream. Roach, Obscurité, Tiburon, Toro—dead, all dead. Jigsaw is in St. Magnus' hospital. He's not likely to ever speak again. He just stares at nothing all the time. That's why I'm sending this in. Dr. Rove used to keep a diary during our travels, which he gave me before he closed his eyes forever.

[Begin file: diary01]

February 3rd, 2064

The team is complete. Pontius finally managed to find a few capable runners willing to accompany me. Roach, Obscurité, Tiburon, Toro, Jigsaw and Machéte—a scratch-built team composed of a few Aztlaners and Caribbean League residents. Pays to have some big bad guys with you in the jungle. Next week, I'll be getting information about the route Patterson took.

March 16th, 2064

Today we made landfall in Buenaventura, on the west coast of Aztlan. We had to disguise ourselves as natives getting into the Andes, but an Aztlaner patrol identified us. The crew fought hard and we finally managed to sneak away into the jungle.

- Nasty bunch, those patrols. Sometimes accompanied by bakru, horrible small creatures made of flesh and wood and possessed by evil spirits. There are always two of them together, never one alone. Born from suffering and pain, bakru only bring death and misery. If you ever see them, run.
- Guerrillo

March 27th, 2064

A week ago, we reached the foggy woods boundary. The occasional cold and the constant fog has given us lots of trouble. Last night we pitched camp on a rock plateau. In the middle of the night Roach screamed, waking us all up. At first I was confused, since suddenly we were surrounded by giant ferns, and I saw Roach being dragged into the ferns by some dark shape. The others went after him but couldn't find any trace.

The next morning we were again enveloped in dense fog, and when the sun broke through, the ferns had vanished as quickly as they came.

- Sounds like foggy ferns and a cloud bear. The ferns occasionally turn into fog and drift to other places. They're the natural hunting grounds for cloud bears, beasts that have rooted out whole settlements in the area.
- Prof

April 12th, 2064

Obviously I have caught an infection of stone mistletoe. My arm turned grey and feels stiff—I can hardly move it. Moreover, I can see a thin plexus of roots under my skin. We took a rest in a small village, and the local shaman seemed willing to help me in exchange for my team providing him with protection while gathering herbs. Another fern grove has appeared quite near, which makes me nervous.

In the evening, the shaman gave me a stinking ointment that's supposed to cure the infection. Obscurité told me the shaman was looking for some fungus that would, according to the shaman, make it possible for him to talk to his ancestors. Obscurité seems to believe him.

- The fiery mushroom is quite valuable contraband and certainly worth more than one trip down south. As for it helping the shamans to get along better with the spirits—well, that’s what they say.
- Lutador

- There are plenty of groups interested in these mushrooms, and they’re constantly raiding each other to get hold of the shiny red things. It’s just as difficult to carry them out of the Andes as it is to find them.
- Guerrillo

May 21st, 2064

The search has been in vain—Patterson didn’t find anything here. To make matters worse, the day before yesterday we entrusted ourselves to a guide who lead us straight to a coca plantation. Tiburon quickly took care of the guards, but we lost our guide. I didn’t trust that greasy dwarf, but we might have lost our best chance to get back to civilization. More than a little strange, that dwarf. Obscurité says he was an Awakened, she just took to long to notice.

Today we reached Neiva, where we’ll be meeting with some smugglers taking us to Içana by t-bird.

- So the locals aren’t quite friendly to travellers?
- Silver
- Travellers are mostly smugglers and smugglers aren’t friendly to the locals. So no, they’re not.
- Lutador
- About the dwarf—too bad Rove didn’t study Amazonian mythology before he went exploring. The *Anchanchu* are spirits that offer their services as guides and then lead unwitting travelers into disaster.
- Dr. M

May 27th, 2064

Today we set out on riverboats. I was relieved to leave behind Içana and its problems—the mistrustful smugglers and the fer-de-lances playing havoc with the southern quarters of town - there aren’t many people left in those parts of town.

Residents also warned us against vicious white back tapirs they say are widespread throughout the area and we caught a glimpse of one between some roots in shallow water. Weighing 500 kilograms, they’re quite impressive, but nevertheless it was attacked by something. The water suddenly began to foam, the tapir yelped and sank into the depths. Reminds me of piranha attacks, but usually they’re not that furious. It seems there’s a predator for every creature in the jungle.

June 1st, 2064

My arm still hurts, but I thought I’d have time to relax as we drifted down the Rio Negro, the Black River. I didn’t like the looks of the dark water from the beginning, but it got a lot worse when Toro spotted a female body floating on the water. She was bloated and deformed, twisting slowly in the current.

We argued over whether to leave her or haul her rotting carcass out, but then she just kind of bumped on the side of our craft and Toro bent down to haul her out.

She wasn’t dead. Or not dead enough. Her blue-black face twisted into a snarl, algae dripping through her teeth, and she snatched Toro’s outstretched arm. With a quick jerk, she pulled him under. Jigsaw screamed something about la *Siguanaba*, saying we couldn’t save Toro, we just needed to get away. I tried to reach into the water after him, but the others kept grabbing me, holding me back.

They kept talking to me as we floated away from Toro, telling me about la Siguanaba, saying she’s a water demon that appears as a girl with long black hair and a white dress. Whatever she is, she has Toro now.

- Ah, Siguanaba, another legend come to life! Better stay away from the rivers and lakes in the Amazon Basin, as she’s the guardian of the water, drowning every lost soul see finds unguarded by the riverside.
- Toreador
- What is this? A whole new type of spirit or something we know already?
- Mad Max
- Siguanaba is just a manifestation of nature spirits of river, similar to the man-of-the-woods, but a little nastier. Obviously the spirits have adjusted their appearance according to the legends and myths of the tribes living in this area.
- Prof

July 7th, 2064

Today we reached the outskirts of Manaus, where the Rio Negro flows into the Amazon. The end of the stinking black river. I stayed with the boat, hoping we could get out of the city quick. Obscurité and Jigsaw went in to buy some supplies, as we are slowly running out of water and food. I was trying to rest, convincing myself we’d left the Black River entirely behind, when I felt deep vibrations below me in the water. Something huge was diving under the craft, then it surged up and capsized it with one massive swipe. We swam for our lives, and from the corner of my eye I could see an enormous black worm with several tentacles rising from its head. Its tentacles darted back and forth, twitching, like they were sniffing for us. Somehow we scrambled out of the river before it caught us, and it didn’t follow us on to land.

Later that evening, the townsfolk of Manaus told me about the Minhocão, a monster hunting the depths of the Amazon River. But I already knew more about him than I wanted to.

July 8th, 2064

Boat’s sunk, so we’re making our way to Borba on foot. Another first today (I’d like to go one fragging day without this blasted jungle showing me something new)—we saw the twilight of the rainforest. There were monkeys screaming everywhere, humidity making sweat run down our faces in rivulets,

insects swarming in our ears, and all the time there's this weird green twilight. This is hell, all right. There are ants everywhere and a jaguar has stuck hard on our heels—thinks we're easy prey. I'm so tired he might be right.

- Creature might not be a plain jaguar. The Amazonian government allegedly has jaguar shapeshifters patrolling difficult terrain on behalf of both DMAIC and DISA looking for smugglers and other infiltrators.
- Insider
- And the jaguars aren't the only shifters about. The jungles crawling with different varieties. Some are even loosing their fear of humans and you sometimes see some younger shifters walking openly in Metropole.
- Zeca Carioca

July 10th, 2064

We lost Tiburon. He was on guard, then suddenly jumped up, calling for "Maria" or something and dashed into the thicket. We couldn't react quickly enough and heard the hiss of a great cat and a horrible, throaty gargle from the overgrowth. Obscurité hurled some spell at the night jaguar (I later found out that's what it was), making it run away.

We tried to bury Tiburon, some green moss was already sprouting from his torn remains.

July 12th, 2064

The rainforest gave me a new present. This morning I woke up with a swelling as big as a golf ball on my upper arm. Something's moving in there—I think it's a botfly's larva feeding upon my flesh. I wanted to cut it out right away, but Obscurité warned me to leave it alone. The open wound could be infected quickly, which would mean losing my whole arm. But the movement under my skin is driving me mad. Sleep is impossible even with the pills.

July 14th, 2064

The roof of leaves above us has become impenetrable, and dim light yielded to almost total darkness. Jigsaw climbed up to the treetops to get a general idea how long we'd have to cope with the darkness. He said the canopy of plants is so thick it could easily be taken for a second ground. Giant tropical flowers, parrots, monkeys, butterflies and orchids are everywhere. Obscurité claims to have seen a dual-natured colibri, looking even more gorgeous on the astral than in the physical world.

We continued using our GPS and inertial guidance. Jigsaw again climbed up to the treetops, but something we couldn't see swooped down on him. All we could see were his legs dangling, kicking just under the canopy. The animal dragged him off the tree, flung him through the air, and I heard bones breaking. Machéte fired a few shots into the thicket and hit something, but I don't know what. We healed Jigsaw but never found out what attacked him.

- Simple rule—Rainforest bad. Dark woods worse.
- Sabedoria

July 15th, 2064

I've lost sense of whether it's day or night. The squirring lump on my arm keeps me awake all the time anyway. We're still using the GPS since we don't have any other means of orientation. Today we passed an area overgrown with spiderwebs, but we couldn't see any spiders. We picked our way along slowly, keeping clear of the sticky strands, when it finally hit me—there was only one path through there. We were being funnelled.

Then the ground trembled, mud flew everywhere, and a hairy nightmare jumped out of the ground. The troll-sized spider lunged at Machéte, biting hard with its venomous mandibles before we could finish it off. Obscurité attempted to cast some healing spells on Machéte, but it wasn't working. I'm afraid the poison's too strong. Maybe we'll reach Borba in time.

July 16th, 2064

Finally, we've left behind that cursed darkness and are now in the ordinary rainforest again. Even better, last night the fly's larva on my arm finally said goodbye. It ripped through like a baby alligator tearing through an egg, leaving a huge, bloody welt on my arm, but at least the squirring sensation is gone.

This afternoon, I wanted to take a few observations on a swarm of butterflies. They looked like a bright blue waterfall hovering in mid-air. Unfortunately, in my sleep-deprived state I forgot I could be dealing with cascade butterflies. As I approached them, I became tangled in the roots of a choking fig, which instantly began to wind around me, grabbing my feet and choking my throat. Machéte and Obscurité freed me just in time.

- The cascade butterflies use magical compulsion to lure prey towards the choking figs, which strangle it to death. Afterwards, the fig grows into the corpse to digest it, while the butterflies lay their eggs into it. An example of perfect symbiosis.
- The Smiling Bandit
"Striking again! Ha! Ha! Ha!"
- That's just disgusting!
- LISA
- Sure ain't your regular "Animal Life!" drek. Guess they don't wanna frighten poor viewers.
- Cynic

July 20th, 2064

The forest has changed again. The trees surrounding us are gigantic, between 100 and 200 meters tall. The light is diffuse, a green-blue mixture. I gradually begin to realize I haven't read anything at the university about most species here.

Yesterday we encountered a dead giant tree overgrown with hundreds of orchids. Machéte's in bad shape, moaning and thrashing, breathing shallow, sometimes stopping entirely before restarting with a raspy whoosh. Obscurité got all hyped up about the orchids, saying this was a ritual site she wanted to investigate, that there might be enough mana there to heal Machéte. We left her to her stuff and she actually managed to cure him.

The next morning, Obscurité was motionless, unwakeable. Her skin was wrinkled, her hair gone all white. She was dead, but I have no idea what she died of. The orchids were all dead and withered as well.

- Allegedly, there are several such ritual sites in Amazonia holding major mojo.
- Toreador
- The government pays good cred for the Arco Iris frog used in a few traditional rituals. Best place to track it down is the foggy woods on the foothills of the Andes.
- Silver

August 12th, 2064

We reached Borba today. It's abandoned, nobody there—at least no humans. The streets were filled with ants that formed a giant column and came after us. We got away, but then realized we'd lost Jigsaw. Knowing we couldn't do much right then, we battled through to the docks and jumped on an abandoned riverboat. Then, just before we cast off, Jigsaw rejoined us. He was lucky to get away, but he was pale, bloodied, and wide-eyed—he didn't get out easy.

We're going to try to reach the Amazon by sailing down the Rio Madeira and finally leave Amazonia. We have run out of provisions, found nothing of Patterson, and all but the three of us are dead.

Just before I drifted off last night, some insect bit me, leaving a white-tipped swelling on my hand. I think I'm developing a fever, but our medkit's completely drained. I have to carry on.

- Poor Dr. Rove. The rainforest must have cooked him if he's running away from ants.
- Six-Eyes
- A quarter million inch long armored beasties tearing everyone and everything apart would make anyone run for his life.
- Lutador

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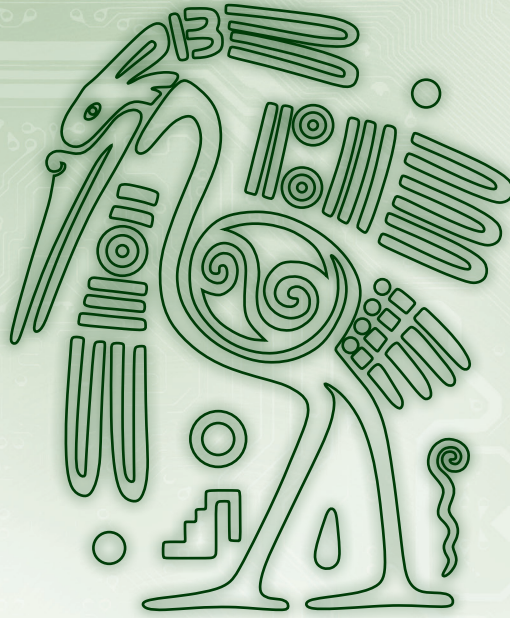
This was the last entry of Rove's diary. Two days later he died, jumping overboard and running towards a Sangre del Diablo. He yelled he'd found the dragon-blood tree. I was too weak to stop him. You may imagine what happened next. I had to sedate Jigsaw on the way back. He drivelled on the whole time about a queen and a gift—the strain of the past months taking its toll on his mind.

The journey down the Amazon turned out to be just as dangerous as the rainforest. A shock from a thunder eel burned out some of my cyberware and Jigsaw was almost dragged out of the craft by a water tiger one night. Fortunately, I had some friends in Santarém to help sneak us out of Amazonia.

- A tragic story. Rove, searching his former teacher, dies of the same cause as his teacher ... probably.
- Cynic
- I wonder if it wouldn't have been better to start from the east coast?
- Silver
- There's one problem on the east coast—it's overgrown with drifting mangroves. There are only a few free harbors available for big ships. Their screws (as well as those of smaller crafts) get caught in the mangrove roots. The roots contain hydrogen, keeping them floating near the surface, so if the screws tear them apart, the hydrogen can cause an explosion.
- Machéte
- I've been looking in on what happened to Jigsaw. Seems like he escaped St. Magnus hospital, tore down his cell door and killed two guards barehanded. He hasn't been found yet.
- Captain Chaos
"I am everywhere!"
- Does anyone else suddenly think of Chicago?
- Daedalus







AMAZONIA

By Machiavelli

- Excellent news, chummers—after years of waiting we’re finally able to post the inside dirt on Amazonia. We finally tracked down a reliable source. After coming upon some choice information, I was able horse-trade this file out of Machiavelli, who, as those of you with any experience in Amazonia know, is regarded as *the* man to see for valuable info down south. Over the years Shadowland has received a lot of requests for this stuff, so sit back and enjoy the gift—and please give it a rest, people! To be on the safe side, we double-checked as many facts as possible, and what I did checked out fine. Which only makes sense, since it comes from a guy making a living by finding information for others.
- Captain Chaos

BRAZIL: PARADISE LOST

People wonder how three great dragons and an army of Awakened beings were able to conquer Brazil *and* keep the population relatively docile. The thing is, it’s only an issue if you ignore the conditions the dragons found waiting for them. So for our first order of business let’s peak at the recent history of Brazil to see what made it ripe for a coup.

Back at the turn of the century, the Brazilian government tried to stem rampant poverty by initiating a deforestation program in the Amazon to open up new land form small farmers. At the same time, corporate lobbyists began winning major victories, shaping a less-regulated business climate that allowed the corps more freedom to do as they pleased. The corrupt mismanagement and bankruptcy of the New Land program led to further chaos when impoverished workers joined discontented landless to storm and squat rich farms. The government joined forces with the corps to brutally repress

these insurrections, and soon police death squads roamed freely, targeting not just the poor but anyone who dared speak against the ruling elite.

- A little clarification is in order: “Death squads” in this case meant corrupt policemen paid to “vanish” rabble-rousers. They were pretty popular during the late twentieth century all the way through to the revolution.
- Ancient History

As time passed, large portions of Brazil’s population became incensed at the government’s inability (or unwillingness) to help them and began to fend for themselves. In the Amazon basin, several tribes gathered in the National Foundation of Indians, or FUNAI, to stop the rampant deforestation. Even though the rainforest evidenced faster growth after 2011, this only encouraged more logging companies to set up shop.

- The government and the corps efforts were always half-hearted at best because they thought the Brazilian people were soft and easily controlled. When Hualpa and co. stepped in, they had a large, ticked-off populace ready to support them.
- Anaís

Meanwhile, VITAS I and II mowed down the poor and the landless that migrated towards the Amazon for farming land, while ravaging the poverty-stricken urban *favelas* (shantytowns). Though the authorities made a show of asking for international aid and support aid, the truth was that corrupt bureaucrats misdirected funds that were supposed to alleviate the situation and did precious little. Brazil was being eaten alive by a corrupt bureaucracy and greedy corporations looking for a quick real.

- By 2030 things were pretty grim. There were whispers of revolution, and people kept talking about some powerful figure that would support a popular rebellion. Some said this secret figure was a great dragon, while people in the south talked about the legendary serpent god M'Boi coming to their aid. The widespread dissemination of such rumors made it clear that someone wanted them spread and spread fast.
- Professor Sabugo

Revolution

We now know that ever since his Awakening, Hualpa had kept an eye, sometimes two, trained on Brazil. The despoiling of the land and the disrespect towards the natives and the Awakened infuriated him, but he knew better than to rush in. Beating the Brazilian army would be only half the job—in this modern world, he could take the country, but to keep it he needed to win the hearts of its people. To accomplish this, Hualpa laid a network of contacts and spies though out Brazil. He began with Awakened groups and religions, such as Umbanda and Candomble, as well as the native Indians and expanded from there into unions and anti-establishment parties.

- Hualpa got lucky in '24, when FUNAI went through a radical change in leadership and a new leader stepped up, Paje Arani, who was very vocal against the government. Some tribes in the Amazon went as far as opening hostilities against loggers and

other “trespassers.” The government ratcheted up its own hostility, and the pieces for Hualpa’s conquest started falling nicely into place.

- Guru da Amazonia

- Dragons don’t get lucky.
- Cayman

AMAZONIA AT A GLANCE

Government Type: Republic

Population: 245,209,193

Human: 43%

Elf: 9%

Dwarf: 7%

Ork: 18%

Troll: 5%

Other: 18%

Per Capita Income: 21,300¥

Estimated SINless: 11%

Below Poverty Level: 17%

Corporate Affiliation: 16%

Education:

Less Than Twelve Years: 14%

High School Equivalency: 30%

College Degrees: 45%

Advanced Degrees: 11%

Major Ethnic Groups:

Amazonian: 85%

Colombian/Venezuelan: 5%

Uruguayan: 2%

Other: 8%

Major Languages Spoken:

Portuguese: 90%

Spanish: 30%

English: 25%

Native dialects: 10%

Major Religions:

Roman Catholic: 45%

(less than 25% practicing)

Umbanda: 25%

Candomble: 10%

Awakened Rebirth: 5%

Unaffiliated/Other: 15%

Currency: Real (nuyen also accepted)

Exchange Rate: R\$5 = 1¥

Genesis National

Medical Coverage: 100%

Guaranteed Response Time: None

SEMM Medical Coverage:

Uruguay only

Guaranteed Response Time: 10 minutes

Crashcart Medical Coverage:

Metrôpole and the coast only

Guaranteed Response Time: 15 minutes

As conditions in Brazil spiraled, more of Hualpa’s agents became active, organizing the population to oppose the current government and selling them on how their lives could be better under a new Awakened order. Using messages of tolerance and playing on Brazilians’ natural openness, it wasn’t hard to bring the disenfranchised and oppressed round to fight alongside Awakened sentiments such as feathered serpents, nagas, shape-shifters, as well as spirits. People were tired of the status quo and this was their chance to make their land a better place for their children.

If you want deeper insight into the revolution I suggest looking into Shadowland’s *Dragons of the Sixth World* download. It’s ancient history these days. What I will mention are the often forgotten sightings in the south of a large snake-like creature, without either wings or arms, seen flying overhead as rebels took Curitiba in the southern state of Parana. The creature was also seen further south assisting the conquest of an important military base in Rio Grande do Sul.

Many believe the creature to be the legendary M’Boi, which might not be that outlandish an idea, though the number and timing of the sightings indicate there may have been more than one of the creatures assisting the rebels. M’Boi (or whatever the creature(s) was) has gone to ground since the revolution, but it’s possible it’s just changed forms and is simply posing as someone in present-day Amazonia (more on that later).

Clean-up

After conquering Brazil, Hualpa set about bringing it under control. He kept the existing democratic system with a few tweaks, like forming a consulting shadow cabinet of Awakened to watch over long-term policy and demanding new elections with freely-elected candidates. Needless to say, it was a landslide victory for the revolutionaries.



- It's remarkable how similar Amazonia and Aztlan are at certain levels. Just don't say loud it in front of an Azzie or an Amazonian.
- JongWK

The dragon also gave the corporations some time to conform to the new, stricter anti-pollution regulations, offering them tax exemptions as long as they complied with the new legislation. The only exception was Aztechnology, which was forbidden from operating in the country.

- The other megas were more than a little nervous when that went down, but the whole matter was forgotten as soon as the new government gave them part of the Azzies' old investments seized as compensation.
- Don Dinero

In the schools, the curriculum was revised to focus on the advantages of a cleaner environment and the societal integration of magic. Hualpa hoped to re-educate Brazilians so they would be more receptive to his style of government. Though mundanes were often discriminated against in favor of the Awakened, the latter's help in the reconstruction efforts was well received. Spirits, paracritters and feathered serpents all lent a hand, making the revolution more palatable to the general public.

EXPANSION

After a period of peace, tensions began to flare on the southern border as the population of Uruguay split between pro-awakened leftists and pro-corporate conservatives.

Besieged by a superior conservative force (receiving support from Argentina), the leftists publicly approached Amazonia for help. Hualpa did not hesitate to send Amazonian forces to help stabilize the region, and Amazonia was able to beat back the Uruguayan conservatives and marching into Argentina as a stern warning against further interference in sovereign affairs. After a categorical show of strength Amazonia pulled back from Resistencia. Had Amazonia truly committed, Argentina too would have fallen; however Amazonia's forces were too busy stabilizing Uruguay, leaving only a token force and none of its draconic commanders to lead the advance on Resistencia.

- Nice to see Amazonia's PR machine is as good as Argentina's.
- Centurion

The Uruguayans managed to remain relatively independent. However, with the ongoing threat from Argentina as well as the conservatives still in Uruguay's borders, Amazonia has granted it the status of autonomous province, similar to Puerto Rico and the United States in the last century.

A couple years later, Amazonia would once again be involved in a major conflict, this time against Colombia and Venezuela. This time the spark was intelligence that Aztlan was preparing to move expand south. Preemptively, Amazonia invaded Venezuela and Colombia allegedly to liberate the oppressed natives and the beleaguered environment, also

accusing both nations of allowing polluters and raiders to intrude on Amazonian lands. As it turned out, Aztlan indeed invaded Colombia, but most misread the move as a counter to Amazonian expansion. Regardless, the two Latin superpowers eventually divided Colombia, and Aztlan even snatched up a slice of Venezuela.

- He said, she said ... I swear Amazonia and Aztlan look like they're in a frikkin' divorce court.
- Rubik
- It's interesting to note that while Amazonia was moving everywhere else, they left French Guiana mostly alone. What did the French say that scared off Hualpa and company? Or was it an agreement between great dragons?
- Papillon

In subsequent years, the Amazonians have enjoyed relative peace. Though we had insect spirit outbreaks and Halley's passage saw a flurry of new paranatural activity in the rainforest, these and the Shedim incidents in several sectors of the Metrôpole were quickly contained. The orichalcum veins that emerged in the state of Minas Gerais were quickly seized by the government, but as soon as the Comet passed they dried up. SURGE was abnormally widespread, but there was none of the associated hysteria-we Amazonians have learned to live at peace with the astonishing and uncanny.

Peace, though, is misleading. From harboring deep green radicals and combating anti-metahuman bigots to staying one step ahead of Aztlan, there's always something going on in Amazonia. Who knows exactly what Hualpa and the Awakened are planning next?

THE POWERS THAT BE

There are powers in Amazonia besides Hualpa. Some are more apparent than others. Some believe that they are in control, when in reality they are merely puppets. Like anywhere else all work together to keep the general public in line while furthering the goals of a select few.

THE FACE OF POWER: PUPPET AND MASTERS

After the revolution, Hualpa cleaned house but kept the same overall government structure as existed before, though he postponed elections to replace the ousted government until the country stabilized. By the time the elections were held, most people's lives had returned to some state of normalcy and they were adapting to the new order. He needed the general populace safe and happy to conserve their support, and to date his strategies have paid off.

Today, elected officials from the President and Congress through to the Governor of the Metrôpole, run the everyday affairs of the country with Hualpa's blessing (and dance to his tune). These are the people you hear about. They make the news and never shy away from the spotlight. These elected officials are organized under a system similar to the old U.S.A.: with a bicameral congress, an elected executive branch and a judicial branch. It's not revolutionary, but it works.

However, legislation gets passed if the Awakened elite want it to, and elected bureaucrats do little to interfere. Those that step too far out of line are quickly framed by DISA for some heinous crime and disappear.

- It boils down to this: Hualpa maintains an illusion that keeps people happy. Content people are less willing to revolt, and more willing to do what you tell them. The real deal wouldn't accomplish those goals nearly as well.
- ZéMané

DISA: Omnipotent Presence

DISA stands for *Departamento de Inteligencia e Seguranca Amazonica*, which translates to the Department of Amazonian Intelligence and Security and it's eyes are everywhere in Amazonia. DISA serves as federal oversight department for all matters of security and policing, functioning also as border patrol and intelligence agency. It's the most powerful governmental agency in Amazonia bar none.

- No drek! Even the UGB is envious of DISA's powers. Not much happens in Amazonia that doesn't end up in their dossiers.
- Bira

DISA is led by Francisco de Assis, who's been at the helm for the past twenty years. Francisco's mild temper and calm demeanor often lulls people into a false sense of security, but don't be fooled—in reality, Francisco is incredibly ruthless and efficient in performing his duties. On his watch DISA runs like a well-oiled machine and has contributed to declines in both organized crime and rebel activities over the past two decades.

- Not all organized crime is declining! Some outfits get hammered, while others like some of the Ghost Cartels benefit from a laissez-faire treatment. Anyone who figures out the reasons for the different treatment would probably win a surprise visit from DISA agents.
- Artemus

DISA inherited border patrol responsibilities to streamline intelligence operations. With threats coming from all sides, it only made sense that the spies and the border guards have a healthy sharing of information. This centralization has led to another benefit for DISA—without other agencies acting to balance it, it's free to act unimpeded when it finds anything suspicious. What this means is that while illegal border crossings are possible, DISA is who'll you'll most likely run into, and if they find you they can crack down hard and fast without anyone second-guessing them.

- DISA agents can stop and question you for no good reason. What's worse, they're way less likely to take bribes than normal Amazonian cops.
- ZarOlho

DISA employs a lot of Awakened—one in four agents is allegedly magical in some manner. The agency's got all forms of Awakened on its rosters. Mages, shamans, adepts, aspected magicians, and even sentient critters like shifters and naga.

DISA agents would be scary enough with their magical backing, but it doesn't stop there. Their elite unit, the "Jungle Dragoons," is highly trained in the art of modern warfare, including extensive knowledge of jungle fighting and guerilla tactics (which makes them invaluable as border guards). Important politicians and officials look to the Dragoons when picking a bodyguard, and the Dragoons are also used extensively in covert operations against rebels and other targets inside the country.

- You're trying to sneak into Amazonia. You get past a routine road-block. Feeling good about yourself? Well, don't get too comfortable, chummer—the Dragoons have a hundred ways to track you down, and once you cross the border, you're on their turf. Don't relax—ever. Your only edge is this is a big country and assets are slim.
- El Condor

DMAIC: Internal Affairs

DMAIC, *Departamento do Meio Ambiente, Interior e Comercio*, is the Department for the Environment, Interior and Commerce. They are responsible for the well-being of the environment, relations between metahumans and paracritters, and regulations governing corps' treatment of the environment.

The agency regulates all Amazonian environmental legislation, including developing comprehensive catalogs of flora and fauna in Amazonia, which clearly list what should or should not be touched. Newly discovered plants and animals are often reported directly to Hualpa—such is his interest in the natural affairs of his nation. The DMAIC also monitors the growth rate of Amazonia's natural resources, with orders to report to Hualpa ASAP if the rate either gets out of control or stops altogether.

- Like Machiavelli says, *anything* of importance is reported to Hualpa immediately. Between DISA and DMAIC, there's not much that goes on in Amazonia that the dragon can't find out about pretty quick.
- Falcão
- He still don't see everything, though. You can get through the border *if* you have a good guide. The jungle is massive and constantly changing, and even DISA and DMAIC can't cover it all.
- El Condor

DMAIC also acts as an inter-species liaison. It has several offices that help non-metahumans such as nagas, centaurs and shapeshifters to become better adjusted with mainstream Amazonian society. Though many chose to set up their own communities, others live alongside the general populace with little problems.

- Amazonians have always been laid back, ever since the country was known as Brazil. As long as they can party and have a good time they don't care who or what they do it with.
- Zé Carioca

Perhaps DMAIC's most important function is pollution control. Regular as well as surprise inspections are conducted on each corporation doing businesses in Amazonia. Though it is almost impossible to find out when surprise inspections will happen, most corporations hire runners to dig into inspections on their rivals. If the runners get the info in time, the rival can expect the inspectors to find all manner of drek on site when they arrive.

- Such practices are pervasive in Amazonia. Shadowrunners are hired both to plant evidence and to safeguard corporations against such frames.
- Decker del Sur

The current director, Leonardo Capuzzo, took over in 2060 and proceeded to shape up the organization. Capuzzo is famous for his surprise inspections and catching corporations off guard at the right moment.

- Just like the corps, Leonardo is equally fond of runners to facilitate his work. He doesn't always like to wait for the slow wheels of justice to turn, and often has runners delivering their own brand of justice to corps that Leonardo has identified as environmental bad guys. There's also persistent rumors of connections to deep green outfits like GreenWar and Genepeace.
- Artemus

AMAZONIAN AWAKENED: FIRST AMONG EQUALS

The two big agencies may be large and skilled, but they don't do much without someone pulling their strings. Though there are over eleven confirmed dracoforms living in Amazonia, only one besides Hualpa makes his presence felt. Little is know about the others—even their names remain secret. All the information I've managed to gather is that several make their homes deep in the jungle near the Aztlan border.

- Feathered serpents are a reclusive bunch. It bothers me that so many live in Amazonia but we don't know anything about their whereabouts and intentions.
- Saci
- Even if you knew where they were, I doubt you'd be able to ask them what they were doing.
- The Laughing Man

Hualpa

Hualpa controls Amazonia, period. By carefully planning every step of the revolution and the transition towards an Awakened nation, Hualpa has made himself the undisputed master of the land, acting as the diplomatic face to the world while pulling the strings of the elected government and setting the agenda for the country. His power is undisputed. But that

AMAZONIA TIMELINE

- 2010:** VITAS causes panic in São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro. Medicine for the poor is almost nonexistent. Death toll monstrous.
- 2011:** Rainforest regrowth accelerates; Catholic Priests calm the population while African-inspired religions such as Candomblé and Umbanda gain ground.
- 2012:** Brazil's New Land program is launched; rainforests are clear-cut to make room for the landless poor.
- 2020:** The New Land program runs out of funding. Waves of protests hit the streets, and mobs invade rich *fazendas*. Meanwhile many die in the Amazon from deprivation and sickness as their farms fail.
- 2024:** FUNAI elects a new leader, Pajé Arani, who actively engages intruders in the Amazon rainforest. Rekindled magic makes them a force to be reckoned with.
- 2029:** The Crash of '29 sparks the collapse of several small corporations and upstarts. The economy hits a new bottom.
- 2030:** FUNAI declares that the Brazilian Indians will no longer tolerate the ravaging of their ancestral lands. Vicious attacks are launched against logging companies, who are surprised and incapable of immediate retaliation.
- 2031:** FUNAI beats back corporate forces with powerful magic. The corporations decide to cut their losses after significant setbacks.
- 2032:** The Landless popular movement conducts a massive invasion of large farms (*fazendas*). The violence spills into cities as the beleaguered government does its best to suppress the uprisings.
- 2034:** Revolution sweeps Brazil as three great dragons swoop down in Manaus and proceed to wipe the floor with the army. Mobs of the *descamisados* (poor) storm police headquarters, while the military is divided between those loyal to the government and those sympathetic to the revolutionaries. In São Paulo hundreds die when Aztechnology security defends its property from rioters. The corporation is banned from the country the same year.
- 2035:** The nation of Amazonia is founded and free elections set.
- 2039:** During the Night of Rage, several protests against the violence in other countries take place throughout Amazonia's cities. Guiana and Suriname are engulfed in internal violence and eventually revolution. The two countries petition to join Amazonia and are accepted.
- 2047:** Amazonian armies enter Uruguay and help the leftists win the ongoing civil war. Uruguay becomes an Amazonian autonomous province. Meanwhile Amazonia advances against Argentina meet corp-backed resistance and are forced back.
- 2049:** Amazonia invades and absorbs parts of Venezuela and Colombia.
- 2061:** Orichalcum is found in Minas Gerais and Pará. Mines are quickly set up in the two states. Amazonia launches a probe towards Halley's Comet, but it vanishes without a trace.

being said he doesn't bother with the dirty work of everyday politics and policy implementation.

During the years following the revolution he made himself approachable to the people, and this helped to shape his image. Though many were skeptical of the new direction of the country, they tolerated him, in no small part because of his clear vision of an enlightened, Awakened nation working toward a better future.

Hualpa doesn't work alone; his translator, Maria Locasin, is also his right hand. Locasin is Hualpa's mouthpiece and in many ways she carries the same authority as he does. Because of her heritage, she willingly keeps away from the spotlight, and most of her power is exercised from the shadows. Locasin is rumored to direct an elite cabal of shamans for Hualpa deep in the Amazon Jungle. Some believe that this cabal is directly responsible for the re-growth of the rain forest.

- You hear all kinds of stories about the re-growth, mostly failed attempts to dig up real evidence about the link between Locasin and the cabal. There's people who would pay a lot for solid info, but let me tell you, chummers, I wouldn't mess with Locasin. She might look pretty and innocent, but she hasn't survived this long because on looks alone.
- Saci

Hualpa actively supports Yucatan independence, and, along with Maria Locasin, would like to eventually see all of Mexico free of Aztlaner influence. Lately, the dragon has also extended his claws into the United Nations and what's left of Colombia and Venezuela—increasing the territory around Caracas to alleviate overcrowding and pollution.

Francisco de Assis

Perhaps the single most powerful individual in Amazonia besides Hualpa is Francisco de Assis of DISA. His agency has the capacity to reach into just about every area of Amazonian life. Since he's been at the top of the agency for over twenty years, he knows every trick in the book—and he's been known to add new chapters, too.

- Before de Assis there was Vinicius Paiva. If you compare the both management styles, you'll see similarities. Also take a look at assassination attempts—each more spectacular than the last, and every time both Paiva and de Assis came out without a scratch.
- Bananinha

De Assis receives constant feedback from agents in the field, and his leadership is very hands-on. None of DISA's branches makes a move without him knowing. It also helps that most coordination between government agencies goes through him, a centralized structure that Hualpa prefers and works just fine for de Assis.

The most interesting stories about de Assis tie him to the legend of the snake god M'Boi, asserting that he is the human form of the god. I can't confirm or disprove this rumor, nor do I know how it got started. But if I was a betting man, I wouldn't wager against it—de Assis' luck and power both seem too good for a mere human.

- Francisco has been through some spectacular assassination attempts, including a carbomb in downtown São Paulo. All the entourage was killed, except him. One eyewitness initially claimed she saw a large snake through the smoke and debris, but no one has seen her since.
- Pipa Diabo

There's plenty of interested parties (myself included) who would to pay for conclusive evidence proving or disproving this myth. And should it be proven, there's also some large bounties on great anacondas, for those of you with adventurous, and suicidal, inclinations.

- Let's not forget that often-debated leaked Azzie surveillance footage of Francisco's mansion that shows a large snake by the pool. Doesn't matter if he's M'Boi or not—Assis is undoubtedly powerful. You don't want his attention unless you're working for him, and even then it isn't always a good thing.
- Mulecão

Pedrinho da Metrôpole

Pedrinho is a feathered serpent, perhaps the most (in) famous one in Amazonia besides Hualpa. Pedrinho's fame doesn't come from power or political clout, but rather from being accessible—he makes his home in Rio de Janeiro, and spends most of his time in human form.

Pedrinho is a fan of the metahuman lifestyle and has been quite vocal about the importance, for himself and other dragons, of learning about metahumanity. His outspokenness has not always endeared him to other dracoforms, but the people of Amazonia and Metrôpole in particular idolize him. He is friendly, always ready to give a hand, and he devotes a lot of his time helping the poor down in the *favelas*.

- Pedrinho's pretty much a goodwill ambassador for all serpentkind. His calm, gentle demeanor has done a lot to make feathered serpents and other awakened critters be looked upon favorably, and some of this positive regard even extends to the dragon at the top of the Amazonian heap. Score another point for Hualpa's propaganda machine.
- Xeon
- Nah, no credit to Hualpa here. That's just the way Pedrinho is. He chose to live alongside metahumans in the Metrôpole without any convincing from Hualpa or anyone else.
- Rio Diva
- Dragons are dragons; they are always looking to get a leg up on the rest of us.
- Dragonslayer

Sirurgurg

More than a few people come to me asking for intel on Sirurgurg's presence in Amazonia, and if he is then what's he up to. Yes, he's here. Yes, he's active but frankly, this is one subject I'm at a loss on. What's certain is that the great dragon doesn't like metahumanity one bit and steers away from meta society making it all the harder to get a decent reading on his activities.

Since there hasn't been a sighting in the last year or so, I suspect he's squirreled away working on some project or another. Most of my government sources say that wherever he's currently hiding, and he might not even be in Amazonia.

Despite his role in the revolution he's not too fond of Amazonia today or Hualpa's ruling style. Hualpa came to power with plenty of military strength, but ever since his efforts against Aztlan stalled, he's been going through diplomatic and covert channels to get what he wants. Not Sirurg's style at all—from what we know, he's always been more hands-on, happier to mix it up himself than spend hours in debate and discussion. Hualpa hasn't had much to say about the absence of his ally, but recent increases in troop movements and maneuvers along the Aztlan border following the Yucatán armistice show that he suspects something besides amicable talks will be happening in the near future, people are wondering if Sirurg might be behind it. If he's planning a new campaign, there are growing rumors of his involvement with toxics and radical green movements.

- It's possible that old Sirurg has tired of Hualpa's scheming and yearns for some good, old-fashioned destruction. Take a long, hard look the state of South America, then ask yourself—could you blame him?
- Anonymous

The Third Dragon

The mystery third great feathered serpent has been so secretive that a lot of Amazonians don't believe she actually exists. The natives have dubbed her "Boiuna," after a creature in their legends, but no one knows her real name. All we know is that she is smaller than Hualpa, and she disappeared after the revolution, most likely to a lair deep in the Amazon jungle.

- No one knows who the frag is she yet? Come on—it's been over thirty years!
- Viletemper

Those who insist that Boiuna is, in fact, real, claim that she is covertly active among the natives, helping them cope with the jungle re-growth. Some claim she has an interest in expanding the magical knowledge of poorer, rural Amazonians, though why she would want to do that is unclear.

- One interesting theory making the rounds is that Boiuna is Hualpa's mate, and I did a little digging that shows this may not be far-fetched. Boiuna's lair is deep in the Amazon Basin, and so is Hualpa's. Given draconic territoriality could they be mates? Could she be tending to their young? If she is, it would be highly unusual since they are both greats.
- Mulecão
- That's your evidence? They both have lairs in the Amazon Basin? Look cara, two serpents could have lairs in a place as big as the Basin and still go their entire natural lives without running into each other. Even if they were dragons! I've got one word saying who this dragon is, and it rhymes with "Arshmeesh."
- Skeptik

OTHER FISH IN THE DEEP GREEN SEA

They're not the biggest fish in the Amazonian sea, but these guys still affect the daily life of most locals and they can mess you up almost as much as the people at the top.

FUNAI

FUNAI is the National Foundation of Amazonian Indians, an organization that, these days, works hand-in-hand with the government. It's fought for natives' rights throughout Brazil and now in Amazonia since its creation. These days it regulates native activities and acts as the political mouthpiece for all Amazonian natives.

- They're a once-vibrant organization that's been co-opted. The revolution couldn't have happened without the shamans at the head of FUNAI mobilizing the natives against the existing government, but once it was over FUNAI found itself just relaying the needs of the natives to the higher-ups in Amazonia. These days the organization is little more than a figurehead.
- Juruna

FUNAI is responsible for settling all disputes between native tribes. The body of FUNAI is comprised of appointed representatives from each tribe who vote on issues brought to them by a tribe or the government. Once a decision has been made, tribes are required to carry out the wishes of FUNAI.

The true independence of FUNAI is a hotly debated topic. Some see it as operating on its own, dealing with native and interior issues as appropriate and only occasionally reporting to Hualpa and DISA, with DMAIC often deferring to FUNAI. Others say that the only reason DMAIC would let FUNAI have its way is because FUNAI invariably does Hualpa's bidding, and DMAIC doesn't meddle in the boss' affairs.

The Rebels

Though rebel activity in Amazonia has decreased considerably in recent years, several groups still harass the government. These are usually just isolated pockets of resistance, though on occasion they've gotten organized enough to conduct a successful hit on a minor politician.

The most successful rebel group in Amazonia goes by the name of "The Voice". The Voice's stated goals are to "reveal Hualpa's true nature and intentions for Amazonia," and they demand that the dragon "give the country back to its people." Though they try to put it in palatable terms, The Voice is not fond of metahumans and Awakened, and they view Hualpa's favorable treatment of them as his primary crime against the nation.

The Voice operates mainly around the Metrôpole and generally uses propaganda as its means of attacking the government. They do a lot of outside contracting to get their information, and as such are usually a good source of jobs if you don't mind the risk involved—you can bet some of their funding come from the likes of Human Nation.

- Except they don't pay well, especially when you consider how far they want you to stick out your neck. I was once tapped to infiltrate a DISA regional headquarters for some information on Francisco de Assis. I didn't take it—it was a suicide job, and I don't do those. Not on the cheap, at least.

- Pipa Diabo

- It wasn't a suicide job. It just needed the right personnel. And the information was gold—sold it for a very high price.

- Machiavelli

Aside from the Voice there are organized rebel/terror groups in Uruguay (aided by Argentina's SIDE) and Venezuela (supported by Aztech) and smaller outfits with anti-government agendas operating in many of the coastal areas including a True Brazilian faction in the military.

GETTING BY IN AMAZONIA

Amazonia is a complex place and culture shock is inevitable. In Amazonia's laid back cultural atmosphere there are many deep currents unique to our not-so-little corner of the world: non-metahuman societies, religious beliefs, and a variety of native cultures. And let's not forget soccer, the national pastime and obsession.

Meta-Tropicalismo: Awakened Fusion

Among the more exotic influences in Amazonia are those brought by the native revival and its non-metahuman citizens—*Meta-Tropicalismo* is the name for the hybrid urban culture on the rise. Meta-Tropicalism finds expression in many different outlets from urban music and fashion to the themes of trid-novelas. It combines Brazil's cultural *mélange* with the aesthetics and ideals of post-revolution Amazonia to form a vibrant and pervasive ambiance to our sprawls. Like old school Tropicalismo mixed Bossa Nova, Jazz and Latin folklore to create a new type of music, Meta-Tropicalism builds off all the richness of Brazilian life, an eco-friendly and pro-Awakened message and adds in non-metahuman influences and cultures and manifests in a variety of cultural outlets: the thriving music scene, the massive trid production and even street fashions.

- And its becoming one of Amazonia's hottest exports.

- Aldous

Non-metahuman culture

Growing communities of shapeshifters, nagas and centaurs, not to mention more exotic sentients, make their homes in Metrôpole, Manaus and Bahia. The largest non-metahuman population is made up of the various species of shapeshifters. And they're not just locals either, shapeshifters from all over the globe have come to Amazonia seeking acceptance and freedom. This means you're just as likely to see tiger shifters as anaconda shifters.

Uncharacteristically, a fair number of shifters try integration into metahuman society, though many still prefer a solitary life in the interior. Generally loners, some urban shifter communities

have formed nonetheless, these often begin when foreign shifters still unfamiliar with the language and customs band together. These small neighborhoods are more dangerous than most, as the shifter youths are rather prone to violence and have formed a number of gangs.

- It's important to know which neighborhoods are exclusively populated by shifters. These are usually no-go zones for most metahumans.

- Alvaro

- Relations between species can be tense, but DMAIC's efforts as well as an open-minded culture keeps things mostly calm.

- Xenogreeter

Nagas, the second major subculture, also live in open areas around the Metrôpole. These are the last tamed open areas before the Mata Atlantica and the wild interior of Amazonia. Though they can occasionally be seen sunbathing on beaches and several operate as paranormal consultants for corporations, nagas tend to keep to themselves.

- That's because nagas' behavior is a bit "alien": a rigid class system, confusing ritual behaviors and strong communal sense make nagas very peculiar in human eyes. On top of that, many nagas are immigrants from other countries, adding to the problems as their previous experiences with metas taint their views.

- Xenogreeter

Centaur form the most obvious non-metahuman communities and make their homes in the grasslands. Their long grass huts make for an interesting sight when the Metrôpole's usual concrete valleys open up to large grass areas. Centaur communities are usually friendly to visitors, and their communities often hold small markets where their goods are sold (ie. cloth with printed centaur hoof motifs are all the rage in Europe) and where other merchants can trade their own to the centaurs. Private creatures, centaurs are rarely seen outside their communities but a few find employment in the military and police services.

- Most of Amazonia's original centaur population came from the herds in the South and Argentina, but a lot of immigration took place after the Awakening. Today you have a fair chance to see just about anything walking the streets of Manaus and the Metrôpole.

- Peace

Native subculture

Before the turn of the century there were over 200 different native tribes in Brazil. Until the revolution the number dwindled to around 80, though it's hard to come up with an exact number. The natives have a powerful ally in Hualpa, and that means that those who want to keep to themselves in the interior are generally left alone, out of the reach of any census.

It's impossible to describe the breadth and depth of all the Indian cultures in this brief overview, but I'll try to review some of the more common characteristics between the tribes.

- That means that, no matter what generalizations Mac makes, all kinds of behaviors are possible. Take this with a grain of salt and be prepared for anything.
- Rei Momo

The natives are generally respectful, even reverent, of the environment, taking from it only what they need to survive. Wood is used to make canoes, bow and arrows, utensils and their huts (called *ocas*). Animal skins and feathers are used as clothing and ceremonial ornamentation. All the members of a tribe work for the good of the tribe, and only work items such as machetes, bow and arrows and the like are the property of an individual. The women generally take care of the young and the planting, while the men hunt, fish, clear the land and fight.

- Don't be fooled by the fact that natives respect nature and live in the wilderness. Plenty of them are quite capable with shotguns and other weapons. They know a good tool when they see one.
- Juruna

Amazonian natives believe in the spirits of the forest and their ancestors. Religious ceremonies are performed by the *pajé* or *xamã*, the local names for shamans. The *pajé* communicates with the spirits of the ancestors and of the forest. They are almost always Awakened and are selected for training by an older *pajé* whenever they show a hint of the Talent. While the *pajé* takes care of religious ceremonies, the *cacique* serves as the elder Indian and the leader of the tribe. The *cacique* directs and orients the rest of the tribe.

- Point of interest: FUNAI's leadership's made up of former *caciques* and *pajés* from every tribe in Amazonia.
- Juruna
- Another reason to be careful in the interior: a few tribes that practice cannibalism. The idea is to eat your enemies so you can absorb their powers—and yeah there are rumors...
- João Bobo

Fanaticism – Soccer in Amazonia

Before getting into the local religious scene, I've got to mention the one that draws even more fervor and fiery discussions. Nothing gets hearts racing and fists flying here more than *futebol* (soccer). Whether it's national team game or just four kids scrimmaging in the street, Amazonians often place their hearts firmly in their shooting foot. You can imagine what the World Cup '64 in Amazonia was like! For a month and a half the country stopped to watch their national team compete take on the best in the world. Every game was a sellout, no matter who was playing. One game in particular ratcheted tensions and tempers up to the breaking point: Amazonia vs Aztlan in the semifinals.

- I had never seen so many police officers in the Novo Maracanã as I saw that day. Even the military showed up.
- Pelezinho

In the end, the home team prevailed in overtime as star forward Maravilha came through for the team and scored the game's only goal. The Aztlaners nearly rioted in the stands, while soccer club owners began their silent battle over players contracts.

- If you think politics can be brutal, you should try recruiting soccer players. Intimidation, blackmail, kidnapping and good old leg-breaking are all part of the game.
- Corinthians

After the victory over Aztlan, Amazonians were confident of another World Cup victory. That was not to be, however, as Maravilha was not at top form and Amazonia lost to the Netherlands, a surprise dark horse in a race no one thought it could win.

- That means someone made a drekload of money on the bets... and Maravilha is a prime suspect. Rumor is that he was massively indebted to a certain cartel and that this was his payment.
- Santista Roxo
- No one's talking yet, but there's an investigation going on. Both the government and FIFA are interested in rumors that the Dutch received some outside, below-board help.
- Q
- Let's not forget the bronze went to the Poles, the other big surprise of the tournament. Their victory lap with the "Free Polska" banner was a stunning sight. I wonder what the odds were on the Dutch finishing first, Amazonia second, and the Poles third ...
- Pelezinho

A Pope's Enlightened Dream

Amazonia is one of the largest Catholic countries in the world, though the Catholic Church has been in decline since the Awakening as alternative religions have become more popular.

The Amazonian Catholic Church is the most liberal in the world, having embraced Amazonia's myriad cultures and diversity. All are welcome in the eyes of the Church, and this attitude has been their saving grace; in a diverse country that is a leader in metahuman culture, the Church had to adapt—it also helps that pope John XXV was born in Brazil.

Of recent interest is the Pope's upcoming visit to South America, which will start with a mass at the Novo Maracanã. Scheduled to attend are Maria Locasin, Francisco de Assis, Leonardo Cappuzzo, Henri Uribe, the Venezulean ambassador and Uruguay's governor. Also scheduled to be there are South America's most prominent cardinal, Gilberto Vilalobos of Amazonia and Archbishop Enrique Monetti from Uruguay. Monetti is about as middle of the road as you can get on Church views and policies, and there are whispers that, should a "sudden" vacancy occur, Monetti would be next in line as Cardinal.

- Monetti's been holding the Catholic Church in Uruguay together ever since Amazonia blundered in, smoothing the transition from independent country to Amazonian province. The man is pure charm, a most skilled politician who enjoys the Pope's favor.

- White Friar

- That's an awful lot of power attending a single mass. I'm sure plenty of security-type folks are having nightmares—but the business opportunities have me all hot and bothered.

- Bananinha

- Nail on the head. Security's going to be insane, and some VIPs are interested in private help. Let me know if you're interested. Usual drop.

- Machiavelli

African Roots, Awakened Beliefs

The next most popular religions in Amazonia are Candomble and Umbanda. Both are descendants of West African religions brought to Brazil by the slaves the Portuguese used for labor. As such, both religions share a lot in common with Voudoun, Santeria and other variations, though neither Amazonian religion is involved in necromancy. There are some other subtle differences in belief—Umbanda does not believe in Axês or Loas, but instead has long believed that their mediums channel spirit guides and ancestor spirits to help them heal and protect others. With the Awakening, Umbandistas found that not only could they be possessed by their guides, they could also summon forth ancestral spirits.

Candomble was predominantly found in the northeast before the revolution. Now, with people crammed together into the Metrôpole, the religion has spread through the megasprawl. Umbanda is also found in the Metrôpole, and both religions are vying to become the main alternative religion of Amazonia.

- Both religions preach peace and understanding, but, like practically any other system of beliefs, some people have twisted things around and found a darker side. The corrupted form of Umbanda is called Quiumbanda, and an especially vicious crime organization has developed around it.

- Tiago Moreno

- Some *terrenos*, as the worship places of Umbanda and Candomble are called, are openly hostile towards a *terreno* of a different faith. These *terrenos* are often lead by younger, less-experienced Umbandistas and Candomblistas, who are more easily influenced by lesser spirits.

- Preto Velho

Besides Candomble and Umbanda, there are several other religions in Amazonia that have taken root. Wicca has been gaining popularity since the twentieth century, new Awakened religions have plenty of traction, and numerous native influences have also taken hold.

The most popular of these alternative religions is called the *Despertar Iluminado* (Awakened Rebirth). Followers of the Rebirth believe that metahumans should embrace magic and nature. The *Despertar* preaches that metahumans have to try and be one with their surrounding. Believers are often found in back-to-nature settlements, mostly in the Cerrado, but sometimes they venture out into the jungle.

- These loons are their own worst enemy. The ones that go into the Amazon jungle usually don't return. Since a lot of the natives don't see them in the best of lights, clashes are inevitable.

- Campineiro

- There are those that believe the *Despertar* was started by Hualpa and his lackeys. If this is true, it fits with the dragon's philosophy of re-educating the population to fit his goals.

- Conspir-I-see

RUNNING IN THE BIG GREEN

Amazonia has a reputation as being inhospitable to shadowfolk, but it's mostly unfounded. Runners thrive in the Metrôpole and other coastal cities, picking from choice work in biotech procurement, teleslegging, wetwork, intel gathering and security detail. The pay isn't always great, the risk often outstrips the rewards—but honestly, where in the world is that *not* true?

Smuggler crews abound all over the county; they're some of the few souls brave enough to attempt crossing the Amazonian wilderness. The government would love to crack down on the smugglers, but the untamed interior is so vast that most can keep a low profile and remain unnoticed. Smugglers are always looking for competent help, since the harsh environments in which they operate generate high turnover.

- Zepps and light t-birds are the preferred method of transportation. Crews range from two to five, and *no one* makes a run alone, since there's always a nasty surprise or two waiting for smugglers as they cross the interior.

- El Condor

Though the wild Amazonian interior gets most of the press, most of the action for typical runners is found on the coast. This is where most of the remaining urban areas are, and some of them feel almost familiar. The Metrôpole provides a welcome break from the hazards of running in the wilderness, and the extensive barrens and slums hold dozens of hiding places. Political intrigue and corporate maneuvering in the cities make runs almost as common as in any other place in the world.

- Just make sure you have some magical backup. Amazonian security usually has a higher percentage of Awakened individuals or paranormals on payroll than most.

- Running Man

If you're a foreigner to Amazonia, be ready to adapt to the local customs. For one thing, Amazonian Johnsons are usually never on time. In the northeast, people are very laid back, and bribery is not just accepted but actively encouraged. The South is a bit more elitist with far fewer non-metahumans, and it's probably the last enclave of anti-meta racism in the nation.

- The south's also where you find more rebels. Lots of good sabotage work down there.
- Integralista

Amazonians usually don't get worked up about little things like cyberware or bioware, though *excessive* cyberware is considered ugly. If you look more cyborg than human, you might run into occasional hassles and have trouble finding a cab. Otherwise Amazonians won't bother you too much.

- That's the cities. Different story in the interior, where most natives see cyber and bioware as evil. They despise the use of it and are more aggressive towards intruders with obvious cyberware.
- Anais

THE NORTHEAST AND THE SERTÃO

The northeast was famous for its semi-arid environment, called Caatinga or Sertão, and friendly, relaxed populace even before the Awakening. The people are still pretty laid back and accepting, but the Awakening had a big effect on the environment that's still shaping the region today.

Since the Awakening, the area's begun to see increased rainfall and soil fertility. The improved climate for growth led to the northeast being chosen as the destination for large numbers of landless peasants. The sudden rapid growth of agriculture in the region put a strain on the Amazonian government as they tried to keep pace with the changes. The government's most significant move was the installation of state-of-the-art desalination plants to help irrigation.

A combination of the after-effects of the Awakening, good irrigation, increased rainfall and government education on farming techniques transformed the region from barren semi-arid lands into a farming wonderland. As time passed farmers started to form farming co-ops—a sort of informal corporation. The co-ops are run by an influential family, usually one with political ties that can get the best possible price for their produce and are the primary food source for much of the country.

- That's not entirely accurate. Not all co-ops were started just to sell their products at a higher price—some got started as a means to keep the farms from being consumed by encroaching plant growth. A concerted effort to keep the wilderness from gnawing at their farmlands allowed the *fazendas* to remain profitable and productive.
- Nordestino

As co-ops grew in size and importance, competition increased, and with that came the inevitable consolidation and winnowing out of the weak. Today there are just a handful of co-ops controlling all of the northeast's farm output, each led by a patriarch that oversees all operations. Competition is fierce, and none of the families like each other.

- Some drek up there is straight out of *Romeo and Juliet*. As silly as it sounds, some shadowruns I've done involved breaking apart lovers that should not have been together. Of course, other runs are more economically and politically focused.
- Bernardo

The northeast is also home to two important cities: Fortaleza and Salvador, both serving as outlets for the region's produce. While some urban dwellers have moved out to the fields, others have moved to find their fortune in the Metrôpole, leaving the two northeastern cities (like many others in Amazonia) much smaller than they were before the revolution. Two co-ops make their HQ in Fortaleza: the Andrade Co-op and the Silva Co-op. In Salvador, the Oliveira Co-op, the Santos Co-op and the Cardoso Co-op share the city's port.

- Old man Cardoso is about to bite the big one. He has three sons waiting in the wings, each one more ambitious than the next. Even if the will is pretty clear on who takes the reigns, fireworks are still sure to follow, and each son is currently doing his best to show the old man he's the best one for the job.
- Nordestino

METRÔPOLE AND THE SOUTHEAST

This area has been the heart of the country since it was called Brazil and is the major center for industry and, until the last few decades, agriculture. The Metrôpole, and consequently most of the country's relocated metahuman population, are found here.

The Metrôpole stretches from south of Sao Paulo to just north of Rio de Janeiro. For ease of management, the vast city has been divided into quarters. Each quarter is managed by an elected mayor, and the whole city is governed by a council. This system helps keep the government of the city from being overly centralized and overwhelmed by the scope of the city.

- Each quarter/sector also fights for funds, and these battles normally require some form of pressure being leveled on the city council.
- Tiago Moreno

Like the mayors, council members are elected by the people. There are twelve councilors, three from each of the four quarters. Anything approved by the council must pass by majority vote, meaning seven councilors have to agree, and that's no small trick. Deliberations can drag on over weeks and months before a vote is taken, and even then there's no guarantee that the council will actually approve anything.



A deep rivalry exists between the half of the sprawl located in the state of Sao Paulo and the half located in the state of Rio de Janeiro. Decisions are often unable to pass because of a split in the council between the two halves. There is mechanism to break a tie, but important decisions that affect the whole sprawl are often delayed until one side gives in to the other.

- The Metrôpole council desperately needs reform, and Hualpa seems to have taken an interest as the Metrôpole has finally hit its population limit. With the advent of new bio-domes that keep pollution out of the environment and environmentally friendly building practices, maybe we'll see more coastal urban development to ease the pressure on the Metrôpole.
- Nequinho da Favela

Of the two quarters in the Sao Paulo state, the Sao Paulo quarter is distinguished by its high amount of industries, the Santos port, and its own nature preserve inside the sector's limits. The Mata Atlantic bush makes its way across the hills just before the port and has been preserved in all its glory. Making your way from the urban areas to the port can be breathtaking as you pass pristine forests and waterfalls.

Sao Paulo is the most populous quarter of the Metrôpole, and every race and species in the country is represented somewhere in the sector. The Bairro Liberdade is home to the largest Japanese community in the country, and is also home to a large quantity of migrant Japanese metas.

The Campinas quarter in the state of Sao Paulo houses the main freight airport and is home to most of the city's centaur population. It is also highly industrialized, with few major residential areas. The centaurs make their home on the fringe of the sector where grasslands and open fields begin to merge with the more wild areas beyond.

- After years of whining about the encroaching trees, a lot of the centaurs have packed up and headed south towards Rio Grande do Sul.
- Xenogreeter

The Volta Redonda quarter in the state of Rio de Janeiro is known primarily for its corporate compounds and mega-corporate presence. The most famous building is the Novatech Arcology, formerly the Fuchi Arcology. Though small in comparison to newer constructions, the building is self-sufficient and produces a lot of the cheap electronics Novatech sells in Amazonia. The impoverished areas of this quarter are far less extensive and desperate than those in other sectors, and the tourism traffic to the numerous spas, resorts and bioclinics of Volta Redonda is heavy. There's also a healthy population of nagas making their home between Volta Redonda and Rio de Janeiro, and sometimes you can see them basking in the sun on the beaches of Rio.

The final quarter is Rio de Janeiro. Known for Carnival and its beautiful beaches, this sector of the Metrôpole becomes the biggest tourist attraction in all of Amazonia once a year. During the month of February, the whole quarter stops for the largest party in the world. The downside of Rio is that it has more

slums (called *favelas*) and no-go zones than any other quarter of the Metrôpole. The most famous *favela* in Amazonia is the Rocinha, which has already surpassed 100 straight years of desperate poverty.

- The Mayor of Rio is doing all he can to clean up the place, which of course does not make the crime lords too happy. There's a lot of vested interest in seeing the mayor fail and the *favelas* stay just as they are.
- Artemus

While Rio leads the pack, there are *favelas* and no-go zones all over the Metrôpole. Most of the residents of these areas are, of course, quite poor, but there's always a few wealthy criminals carving out a home among the people they exploit for a living.

- Ain't just the mobsters and gangers that can make good use of *favelas*. They're better for hiding out than the jungle, since the benefits of civilization are never far away. Just be sure to keep your local crime lord happy.
- Tiago Moreno

One of the most impressive buildings in Amazonia is the Rio's Novo Maracanã. An amazing feat of engineering, the Maracanã combines bio-materials with regular building materials, resulting in what is called "technorganic construction." It functions as a giant pollution scrubber that helps reduce the contamination produced by the rest of the city. More buildings using these materials are in the works by the Genesis Consortium.

The Southern states

The south is Amazonia's oddball. Heavily colonized by Europeans during the early part of the twentieth century, the south always had a more old world feel to it, which often brings an accompanying elitist attitude.

- It gets worse the farther south you go. People get more and more suspicious and disdainful of outsiders, and southern runners tend to think all their brothers and sisters in the trade are second-tier at best.
- Gaucho

There are two important cities in the south. **Porto Alegre** in Rio Grande do Sul houses a large military port and most of the industries in the south. The city also provides a haven for rebels, who are intent on liberating the state of Rio Grande do Sul from what they call "the oppressive state of Amazonia." They are little more than a nuisance most of the time, but since they tend to be short on personnel they often are looking for outside help.

- The rebels call themselves Neo-Integralistas or the ELES—Exercitos de Liberacao dos Estados do Sul (Armies for the Liberation of the Southern States). Crazy fraggers these guys, usually trying to sabotage military complexes and DISA offices.
- Q

- Though violence alone won't be enough, one cannot deny their goal is a worthy one.
- Tiradentes
- Give it up, old man. Brazil is dead.
- Jungle Jag

Florianopolis, the other important urban center in the south, serves primarily as a retirement city for the rich. It has been this way since the last century, thanks in part to the island city's strict immigration and environmental laws.

The city has the lowest crime rate in all of Amazonia, and most of Amazonia's important politicians and businessmen have vacation homes in Florianopolis. Many executives make their permanent home in Florianopolis using the Matrix to communicate with corporate offices in the Metrôpole. Few leave the city unless it's absolutely necessary.

Security is provided by the city, and it is very well funded and trained. Training and equipment is borderline military, making the city very tough on the criminal element. Running in Florianopolis is usually subtle, since avoiding the trigger happy police is a must for survival.

- Extraction runs are pretty common in Florianopolis nonetheless. International teams are always trying their luck, as the rewards for some top corporate executives are quite attractive.
- Prime Runner

AUTONOMOUS PROVINCE OF URUGUAY

Some years after taking over Brazil, growing unrest in Uruguay gave Hualpa the perfect opportunity to break the country and access the Rio de la Plata. Through subtle manipulations, fancy promises and outright threats (not to mention a war with Argentina), Uruguay was quickly incorporated as an autonomous province of Amazonia.

- Uruguay was also part of Brazil for a few years during the early 19th Century, so the current situation isn't completely new.
- HistorianX
- So another revolution wouldn't be surprising either?
- Legionnaire

Though most people feared an outright *Anschluss* by Amazonia's masters, Hualpa did no such thing. Most of the government system and laws remained the same, though environmental regulations were upgrade to match Amazonia's as closely as possible. Spanish remains the primary language, though official documents must have a Portuguese version. Heck, they even kept their own national soccer team.

- Tax breaks and incentives were a big reason local corps like Memotek and LATU Systems sided with Amazonia. Foreign companies weren't so lucky—in what seems to be Amazonia's second favorite sport—the Azzies were kicked out pronto.
- Don Dinero

Decades have passed, and Uruguay seems to have become one of Amazonia's success stories. Now home to over three million people, **Montevideo** remains the state's political, economic and social capital. The city is South America's second major Atlantic port and a major rival to Buenos Aires, while its financial sector houses most of the nations' major banks. Agricorps and hi-tech outfits like Genesis' Memotek and LATU round out the economy.

- It goes without saying that runs between the neighboring cities are quite common. If you want to work here and make contacts, stick to local traditions like drinking *mate*.
- JongWK
- Though Montevideo has gone through some extensive urban renewal (gotta love Amazonia-sponsored programs), there are plenty of slums or *cantegriles* on the outer edges of the city. Garbage scavengers, criminals and Uruguay's poorest live here, away from the new prosperity. The *cantegriles* are fertile ground for anti-Amazonian propaganda.
- Abrojo

Uruguay's eastern coast is dotted with tourist hotspots like the **Punta del Este-Maldonado** sprawl, whose beaches and country clubs see their fair share of international corpsters and socialites. The coastal belt is the most populated area of Uruguay—population density dramatically drops when you move inland, as many people packed up and moved to the coast during and after the war.

Once you move west into the Argentine border, things become a little tenser. Military outposts dot the border and patrols are a constant. The few remaining cities like **Paysandú** or **Fray Bentos** cater to military personnel and smugglers, while the huge **Colonia-Buenos Aires Bridge** handles limited civilian traffic between Uruguay and Argentina.

- Border crossing here isn't easy. Uruguay's terrain is a lot more open and inviting than the Amazon rainforest, so military personnel have to do the job the grasslands won't do for them. Of course, there are plenty of Awakened beings helping out—a fathered serpent named Guarini commands Amazonia's military in Uruguay. For all you language fans out there, his name means "warrior" in Tupim.
- Bagayero
- Argentinean trid pirates use Uruguay to stage their broadcasts. It's close to Argentina, and if there's any problem they can easily blend with the locals, who have more things in common with Argentina than with Amazonia.
- Radiopirata

Old wounds still fester in Uruguay, starting with the events that lead to its annexation. Prime Minister Wilson Vêscovi and Archbishop Monetti have been instrumental in keeping peace so far, but both Amazonia's extremists and Argentina's agents excel at keeping the population tense.

- Guarini is not too fond of Uruguayans. Hualpa keeps him on a short leash, but there has still been some unfriendly exchanges.
- Tutu Tango
- Uruguay is the only South American country without natives—the last ones were wiped out shortly after it became an independent country. Coincidence? I think not.
- Nisarg
- Several paramilitary insurrectionist make their home in Uruguay, and some have some pretty odd connections to old-school Masonic societies that have been involved in the country for centuries.
- Oriental 33

GUIANA AND SURINAME

During the '30s, both these small countries across what was then the northern border of Amazonia were going through a severe crisis. Native uprisings, coupled with economic woes, made for a potentially explosive situation. In 2039 it exploded. A combined popular revolution overthrew the existing governments and formally asked Amazonia to take control. Hualpa accepted and offered aid in the recovery of the countries. The coastal cities were made a safe haven and a free-trade zone.

- There's unsubstantiated stories of M'Boi spreading dissent in Suriname and Guiana. The whole thing is too similar to Brazil's own demise to be a coincidence.
- Bananinha
- Suriname and Guiana are teeming with pirates who are allied with Amazonia and tend to do a lot of DISA's dirty work. Ships headed for Aztlan are some of their favorite targets, but if other ships fall prey to them along the way, well, that's life.
- Q

Paramaribo is the main urban center for Suriname and it's where most activity is centered. The city has a significant corporate presence due to relaxed corporate rules. The city's port is always busy, and it's the easiest way to enter the city—the whole atmosphere is more relaxed than you will find in Manaus, or Bogota. Be ready to speak some Dutch as most of the population still speaks it.

Georgetown is Guiana's capital and remaining urban center. The city's situation is similar to Paramaribo—lots of freebooters and smugglers, a big port and a relaxed atmosphere. The big difference here is that Georgetown has a thriving heavy industry and shipyards, supplying many of Amazonia's needs in this area.

- Pollution can be a problem here, but DMAIC keeps a close eye on things. This is also a test bed for all sorts of new technologies designed to clean up pollution. Several parts of Georgetown are fully domed to prevent the escape of pollutants, and plans are in the works for these domes to be constructed elsewhere. All courtesy of the Genesis Consortium.
- Bira

THE SAVAGE WILD

Looking for a tour of Amazonia's wild interior? I'll give you as much information as one can hope to get on each major area of interest, but be warned—it's never enough. The jungle's very nature is to conceal predators from your view, and animals and humans both take advantage of this feature. Enter the jungles at your own peril.

One thing that's important to note is that the regrowth of the forests and jungles all over the Amazonian territory is not as rapid and wild as most believe. For example, the cities of Manaus, Bogota and Caracas do not see much forest encroachment inside their borders, though just outside these havens the jungles grow unimpeded.

AMAZON BASIN

Uncharted territory, plain and simple—no one knows exactly what lurks in these parts. From Awakened fauna to rapacious flora to nomadic exiles from the Metrôpole to rumored lost plateaus holding creatures believed to be extinct, there's always something new to discover. Ever since the forest started to rapidly re-grow, the resident life also started to evolve at an accelerated pace.

- Plants have diversified faster than scientists could catalog them. The potential for new drugs is enormous as well as the potential for new and exciting species.
- KAM

Several native tribes make their home in the Basin, and they do not look favorably on trespassers. Although to be honest, foreign intrusion should be the least of their worries, considering the other potential risks of the region. Unknown diseases are often carried by new species of mosquitoes and insects that most of us don't have a chance of resisting.

- The diseases may be unknown to most of us, but you can be sure the Amazonian government and the Genesis Consortium know about a lot of them and are following them closely. The potential for bioweapons is very real, and they also need to find cures before someone turns one of the diseases against them.
- Q

Wild shifters are also commonly found in the jungles, and sightings of great anacondas and feathered serpents happen from time to time. Most of the sightings aren't friendly—these particular jungle residents are violently territorial, and typically consider unknown trespassers enemies. Near the Aztlan border patrols and paracritters have a maim first and investigate the remains later policy.

The other major presence at play in the Amazon basin are nature spirits. Most are free spirits dedicated to protecting the jungle and its inhabitants, but some are downright nasty. Their crankiness is often directly tied to their proximity to the Aztlan border, though no one knows what's making these spirits testy and unpredictable. Native shamans avoid these areas since the more angry spirits don't discriminate between friend and foe.

The most recent addition to this frothy mix are the raving toxics that have formed camps and hit squads around the Amazon basin. Many were born around the time the Amazonian forests was being ravaged and they have maintained a strong presence even after the regeneration of the forest. These toxics know the jungle as well as any being possibly can, and they are very protective against poachers, tesma gatherers and smugglers. They also harbor training camps for some Deep Green radicals like GreenWar.

- There's very little smuggling being done through the jungle these days. Most smugglers take the aerial routes. This, however, brings the added danger of attacks from feathered serpents and the Amazonian military.
- Zé do Morro
- One other way to traverse the Amazon basin is by boat. During the wet season the jungle floods, and patrolling all those new waterways is next to impossible.
- El Condor
- Mac forgot to mention paracritter attacks and particularly the great anacondas. Sure, there's no hard evidence of their existence, but that's because there are usually no survivors.
- João Bobo

THE CERRADO, PANTANAL AND CHAPADA DOS GUIMARÃES

The **cerrado**, which can be translated as savannah, are vast expanses of sparsely populated wild lands and home to giant anteaters, deer and a few native tribes. The cerrado is under pressure from the expanding rain forests of the Amazon Basin, which have chipped away at cerrado territory with increased rainfall and rapid plant growth. Starting on the northeast coast of Amazonia and running through the middle of the country, the cerrado separates the Amazon rain forest from the coastal areas of the country.

The most famous natives of the cerrado are the Xavante indians, who are quite fierce around their territory. They have been outspoken against the wild growth of the rain forests and want to see their lands protected from the approaching forest.

- Anyone else notice that the Amazonian Awakened seem to control the growth in some areas but not in others? Maybe they don't really control anything but just get lucky sometimes.
- Alberto

The **Pantanal** reserve is arguably the largest swamp in the world. After being threatened by land fills and cattle ranching during the late twentieth century all the way through the revolution, the ranchers were asked to leave the region. As the regrowth accelerated, the Pantanal regained its former glory.

This region is famous for its legends of large anacondas, caymans, capybaras, a plethora of bird species and fish. The Pantanal extends into Bolivia and Paraguay, making it a route for smugglers, tesma gatherers and poachers. The ecosystem

is very diverse, standing at a crossroads between the cerrado to the east, the Amazon jungle to the north and grasslands to the south.

- This can be a good area to try to sneak into Amazonia, especially during the dry winter season. When the wetlands dry a bit it's possible to make your way in and out if you time it right. There are still patrols from DMAIC and DISA, along with toxics and natives, but it's safer than the jungle.
- Collector

The **Chapada dos Guimarães** is a very interesting and peculiar place located in the state of Mato Grosso. Known for its natural beauty, the Chapada is the subject of an interesting passage written by a visionary Italian priest in 1883 that says something like: "the Chapada dos Guimarães will house an 'enlightened civilization' in tune with nature. Parallel 15 is a special conduit for positive energy and a 'rift' that rises above the Chapada will allow a great amount of pure cosmic energies to fall upon it."

Someone got a hold of this, and around the 2040s the Awakened Rebirth sect set up a large community in this area. The community lives without the aid of modern conveniences, trying their best to coexist with Mother Nature.

- Crack pots. All of them.
- Juruna

- Or they may be on to something
- Gaia's Orphan

The local natives are not too fond of their neighbors, and FUNAI and the DMAIC have argued about what to do about the situation for the past decade and a half. FUNAI is getting very tired of this, and the Awakened Rebirth might see some unfriendly visitors in the near future.

- There's definitely some truth to the passage, as the site holds power. FUNAI is interested in getting the land back from the invaders to keep the site for themselves.
- Saci

- They're looking for ways to evict the Awakened Rebirth, including as arson and property destruction, without worrying too much if they take a life or twelve. Nope not everything is nice and peaceful as Hualpa would have it.
- Zé do Morro

ALCÂNTARA

Alcântara serves as the heart of Brazil's space program until the revolution, after which activity at the facility slowed down for a while. After a decade of almost complete inactivity, the site received major funding and returned as a prime area for research, not only into airspace and space-related technologies, but also into genotech, and environmental technologies. Many of Amazonia's amazing bio-materials have been developed in Alcântara research parks.

The main labs are located underground and the security around the place is close to impregnable. During 2061, the probe Gaucho was launched from here. While very little information about the probe's mission and capabilities has leaked, the launch itself was important as proof that Amazonia is able to launch satellites and deep space probes.

- ... which means they could also send up some tactical nukes if they wished.
- Conspir-I-see
- Get real. Hualpa is as likely to make nukes as he is to shake the hands of Aztechnology's board of directors.
- Bernardo

MANAUS

Manaus is the only city of any size located in the interior of Amazonia. The city became the capital of Amazonia in 2034, right after the end of the revolution. Before then, Manaus served as a free-trade zone, and many industries set themselves up around the city. After the revolution, most were asked to leave, and many relocated to the Metrôpole, though a few stayed behind with the consent of Hualpa.



- It was mostly information technology and research companies that stayed behind. Manufacturing had to go.
- Armando
- Manaus the only city in the interior? What about that huge tree city that more and more travelers keep mumbling about?
- Rei Momo
- I only dealt with cities that are actually, you know, *proven to exist*.
- Machicavelli

Manaus also boasts the most diversified population in all of Amazonia. Humans make up only about 35 percent of the population, with a whopping 26 percent falling into the "other" category. This diversification is the result of intense migration of paracritters and shapeshifters both from the surrounding jungle and from around the world. Amazonia has taken a liberal stance in regards to all things Awakened, so naturally anyone that felt threatened sought refuge here. Today Manaus municipality has been closed to immigration because it has grown too large.

Much of Manaus is covered in verdant vegetation. Roof gardens drape down the buildings and houses, trees litter the place, and it's not uncommon to see jungle critters foraging in the wild cityscape. Interestingly enough, the jungle growth does not seem to damage the city's structures, and some say that there are hidden wards of some kind protecting them.

Two of the more interesting sights in Manaus include a large public library that is the very first "technorganic" building, and the city's transportation network, which is an overhead rail system suspended from large trees. A ride around the system is a spectacular introduction to the city for newcomers.

The materials used for construction in Manaus are eco-friendly, including a lot of photosensitive materials that help with the city's energy needs. The public library, for example, employs these materials to generate all electricity inside the building.

- The system is very innovative and cutting edge, but the costs are still horrendous. Amazonia is researching better ways to create more eco-friendly buildings, and they've succeeded in some areas such as the bio-domes and pollution-scrubbing materials.
- Moneysense

There's two main ways to enter Manaus, with the airport being the main one. The second is a recently completed railroad connecting Manaus to the Metrôpole. The railroad goes through a bio-dome that acts as a vacuum tube. The dome makes sure that pollution does not escape into the surrounding environment and also acts as an energy boost for the train. Made of a plant-like material that grows around a carbon composite frame, the bio-material also transforms sun energy into usable power for the railroad.

- The railroad was quite expensive and hard to build. However, it was a necessary evil since Amazonia needed viable, affordable alter-native transportation between the Metrôpole and Manaus.
- Bira
- Zeppelins are also used between the cities, but they are not as secure as the railroad—they're quite slow and suffer in the frequent Amazonian rainstorms.
- Andre

Manaus has much tighter security than most other urban areas in Amazonia. All major government agencies, as well as many important politicians, make their home in Manaus, making the city a target for spy operations and political intrigue. There's always a politician looking to get an upper hand over their rival.

Manaus is also almost devoid of slums and barrens, and Hualpa keeps the city as clean and beautiful as possible. Poverty is kept to a minimum by deporting unwanted individuals to the coast.

- Mac's making it sound a little harsher than it is. The people moved out often get a job or at least a place to stay. Though many resent such treatment, in the end it's better for everyone.
- Sempre Olhando

CONTESTED AREAS

These areas on the border with Aztlan are the subject of ongoing disputes. The border stretches from Venezuela down just to the edge of Bogota and to the Pacific Ocean. The Venezuelan territory has almost completely reverted to wilderness area with very few urban settlements scattered near the coastal areas. Most of the urban population migrated to Caracas and the surrounding area.

- Venezuela's gone feral. It's overgrown with forests, and the few brave souls that tried to reclaim their homes fell to the jungle's residents. Shifters, paracritters and spirits, along with the encroaching forest, made re-settling the interior close to impossible.
- Pato Bravo

The main urban center of the contested area is Bogota, the former capital of Colombia—a city Aztlan claims as rightfully theirs. Of course, Amazonia thinks it's theirs, while the residents prefer to think of themselves as free Colombians.

Bogota is an interesting frontier town, old-fashioned, without much cutting edge technology or BTLs. Surprisingly, while the jungle grows rapidly around the city, it somehow respects the city's borders and does not intrude. The city itself is divided into two sections: the downtown wealthy core, where the main airport and port of entry is located; and the suburbs, where the poor population makes their homes.

Bogota is a tough place to live. The tension between Amazonia and Aztlan is sharply felt here, and the whole city lives on edge. There are constant gang fights all over the city, and gangs regularly target the heavily guarded downtown area. Security response is slow because police responsibilities are divided—the Amazonian military guard the outside, while the city's own police force takes care of matters in town, usually only responding to problems downtown.

- Disorganized security, political strife, high poverty and an independent-minded populace. Anyone else's mouth watering?
- Kiko

MONEY MOVERS

Like most nations, Amazonia has a healthy legal economy and a robust illegal one. The differences between the two often come down to fine points of the law, since in truth both of them function pretty much the same way.

THE CORPORATIONS AND AMAZONIA

Contrary to popular belief, Amazonia hosts a thriving corporate ecology. All the megas have a presence here, except of course for Aztechnology, which is understandable considering the corporation's record.

- Someone's bias coming though? Tough to get away from that in Amazonia. Aztechnology had reams of bad press down here for the Yucatan debacle, and Globo Trid is also constantly pumping out new exposés of Aztechnology's wrongdoings along the border and around the world and beaming them to a populace that's plenty receptive to stories about their favorite bad guys.
- Bira

After the revolution, the new government imposed several stringent pollution laws. Most megas at the time had already invested heavily in Brazil, and they decided conforming to the law would be cheaper than pulling out entirely. Since Hualpa and the awakened allowed them to stay and not lose their assets in return, Amazonia did not suffer stiff embargoes.

There are four main regions where corporations gather: the Metrôpole, the southern city of Porto Alegre, Montevideo and Georgetown and Paramaribo. Outside these cities, corporations have to acquire a special permit given only by Hualpa himself.

- As you can guess, this makes permits are a hot commodity, and corporations are always trying to make their rivals lose their permits through surprise inspections or scandals. The counterfeit permit business is a new frontier but a risky one—it's tough to fool a dragon into thinking someone has a permit that he doesn't remember giving out.
- Artemus
- Corps are looking more and more toward Uruguay these days. Argentine meddling and the rise of the Genesis Consortium have kept things exciting there, and plenty of biz is coming from all sides: Amazonian government, the Argentines, and anyone with a grudge against the Consortium.
- Mulecão

Amazonians have lately been cheering for their new home-grown tycoon, Roberto Kama. Kama's a self-made Amazonian who is now the CEO of the Genesis Consortium, the darling of South America. The Consortium has already gained prominent status in Amazonia and leapfrogged into the number one spot for construction projects in the country. Their most famous projects are the Novo Maracanã and the Manaus public library, and recently the Consortium has obtained the rights to do research in and around the Alcântara Complex.

- It's easy to be as prosperous as Genesis when you get one sweet-heart deal after another. Other corporations are both envious of the deals and angered by them, and many of them will try just about anything to bring the upstart down. Genesis' new facilities in Alcântara are a huge draw for spies—thanks in part to its unparalleled collection of wanted scientists.
- Zé da Lapa

Amazonia also remains a tourist magnet, as it was back in pre-revolution days. Companies such as Sol Media's Sol Vacaciones, Hilton Hotels, Ares's Royal Caribbean Cruises and Wuxing's Dream Journey Cruise line all make a ton of cash from cruises and vacation packages to Amazonia. During Carnival, Rio is infested with tourists while the relative seclusion of the beach resorts of the Nordeste attract many North American, Asian and European wealthy.

- Cruises are a good way to make it into the country. Some of them will hire anyone as long as they are cheap, and Royal Caribbean's background check is a joke. Dream Journey's not much better.
- Q

CROOKS IN THE SYSTEM

Amazonia, with its reputation for tolerance and its green-friendly agenda, might seem like a place where you wouldn't find the dregs of society. But there's plenty of wealth and power in this fair land, and where you have those two things,

you inevitably have organized crime. They may not dominate the landscape, but the major outfits in Amazonia still have plenty of action to keep them busy. It's worth noting that whatever deal the Ghost Cartels struck with the government means they keep mostly out of the big sprawls and use smaller local syndicates for distribution.

Yakuza

There are two gumis located in the Metrôpole, the Shizuia and the Nagai, and both are constantly at each other's throats, even though no one in either gumi can remember just what started the animosity. The reasons they give for the hostility vary from a family feud to the Shizuia gumis' decision to accept shifters.

When they're not fighting with each other, the Yakuza in Amazonia have generally adapted to the pro-awakened environment. There were quite a few Japanese metas that migrated to Amazonia to join the large Japanese community already living in the Metrôpole, and that migration led to the Shizuia being a little more tolerant of metas than their cousins back in the homeland. Takashi Shizuia is the current oyabun of the Shizuia gumi, and he is possibly the only Oni oyabun in the world. The Nagai are not as forward thinking and accepting as the Shizuia, and that contributes to the fighting between the two that's been going on since the revolution. Both try to keep their spat as quiet as possible to avoid DISA's wrath, but covert ops are constantly going on.

- These guys are Yakuza only in name. Even the more conservative Nagai will do anything to get a leg up on the Shizuia, so they've started accepting non-humans as well. They draw the line at shape-shifters, though.
- Perigo Amarelo

Codigo Verde

Codigo Verde is Amazonia's homegrown criminal organization, made up of the old drug and gambling barons from both Sao Paulo and Rio de Janeiro. They adopted the name "Code Green" because they only deal with "natural" drugs, and the name also honors the famous Codigo Vermelho (Red Code) criminal organization of the early part of the century. The Verdes are entrenched in the Metrôpole, especially in their favorite hangout of the Rocinha *favela* in Rio de Janeiro. They are also strong in the São Caetano *favela* of São Paulo. Currently, Codigo Verde is struggling to keep the Irmandade Quimbandista at bay, but there are rumors they might be getting some unexpected help. If I got the source of the help right, it won't come cheap. The Codigo Verde possesses its own magical group known as Codigo 515 (after the police code for the paramilitary death squads employed by the pre-Awakened Brazilian regime).

- I've heard about this. Hualpa wants some leverage with the underworld, and the Verdes have some connections with the Ghost Cartels up in Ecuador. Not sure what the old wurm is thinking associating with these guys—maybe he is trying to copy his Eastern cousins.
- Guru da Amazonia

Irmandade Quimbandista

These guys are bad news and bad mojo. They are led by twisted Umbandistas seeking to accumulate power and spread misery. They've got some serious magical chops, and they are notorious for using them in grisly ways whenever someone crosses them. Their main areas of operation are the northeast and the Metrôpole.

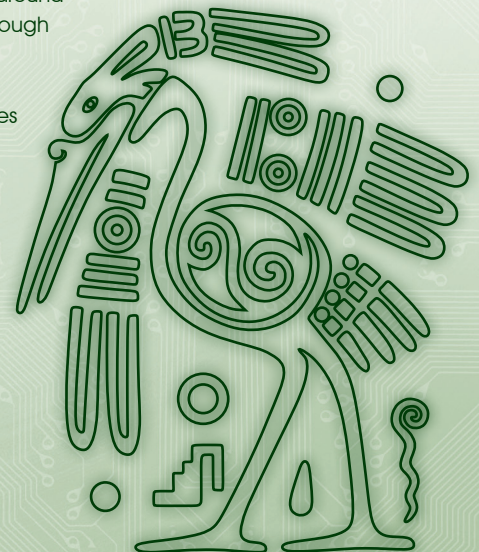
Their leader goes by the name of Pretão Sanguefrio, which loosely translates into "cold-blooded black man." Pretão is a violent man that learned of his talent at a young age, and he reputedly created the Irmandade all by himself. Plenty of people think Pretão couldn't have brought the Irmandade together so quickly on his own, and believe there's something more sinister behind Pretão's power, though no one's willing to say exactly who or what that is—.

The Irmandade is also well-known for their sacrifices and blood rituals. There is a bounty on the head of each and every member, and DISA is working overtime to eradicate them. So far the Irmandade has put up a ferocious fight, enough to lend support to the idea that they're getting outside help.

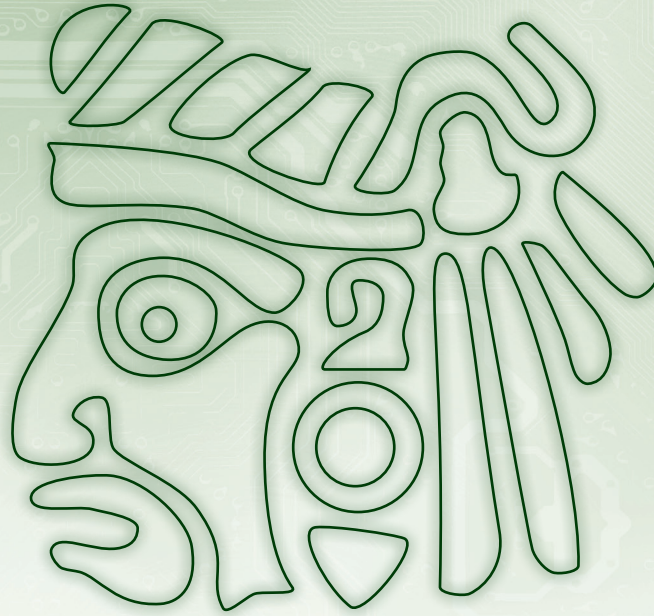
- Bets are currently going in favor of Aztechnology being the secret helper, and believe me, DISA would be *thrilled* if that turns out to be the case.
- Pipa Diabo
- Aztech might be the lesser evil in this case. I hear Pretão has been dealing with the dead.
- Cara-de-pau

One other crime organization worth mentioning is the Tumanes Cartel down in Uruguay. This extension of the Guayaquil Cartel is very strong in Montevideo, and their operations mirror their parent organization. In the coasts of Suriname and Guiana, pirate crews are a common sight. The most famous of these is Vinícius Caolho's crew out of Suriname.

- Plenty of pirates around the Caribbean, though Caolho's crew has carved out a nice niche for themselves around Suriname. In their more honest moments, they get work as escorts for some Amazonian transports.
- Falcão







ARGENTINA

By Quijote

- Compiling newsitems for last year's SOTA file, I noticed headlines on martial law invoked in Buenos Aires. I've got to admit I didn't pay much attention; like most people I was focused elsewhere. When I started digging for the current upload however, I noticed just how much attention is heaped on Amazonia and Aztlan, and how, outside merc circles, there's precious little chatter on Latin America's own third A—Argentina. After checking it out, I get the impression that is just the way the megas and the local regime want it. With all eyes up north, nobody's really been paying attention to the drek being pulled down south. For this little trip, I've arranged for Quijote, a veteran fixer of the local shadowscene, to be your guide. My sources say nothing goes down south of the Rio de La Plata that he doesn't know about.
- Captain Chaos

Where does Argentina stand in the churning chaos of South America? Well, the answer is “on the brink.” Of what exactly nobody really knows... the current national State of Emergency bodes ill, and I suspect times are going to get a lot worse soon enough.

FIGHTING WINDMILLS

You've probably heard the expression “climate of fear,” but if you've lived in Argentina for any amount of time, you know exactly what it means. Fear in one form or another is pervasive: terror of the Green Goliath Amazonia (perpetually poised on the border), dread of persistent poverty (unemployment hovers around 40 percent), fear of our own government

(no waves or else), and a horror of the foreseeable chaos and uncertainty that are the inevitable alternatives. You've probably heard how Argentines are a passionate people. Well, these days it seems we're reduced to being passionately terrified, frightened of imaginary foes within and without.

In many ways, our present resembles our past, but don't be fooled. The pleasant and ambitious nation in the brochures is actually nothing of the sort. To anyone stepping beyond the patrolled sectors of downtown Buenos Aires, a casual glance tells a different tale, one of the *avenidas* strewn with the debris of riots and the roadblocks where corpsec APCs support state troopers. Starting to get the picture? Good. Argentina is all about appearances.

Argentina is in fact a deeply troubled country, ruled by a self-perpetuating oligarchy under the guise of a populist, if authoritarian, democracy. True power here lies not in the hands of the neo-fascist *Partido Popular Reformista*—which governs pretty much unopposed—but in that of its corporate puppetmasters.

- Listen to the man, people. Arrojo & co. are fascists to the marrow, opportunists and sell-outs masquerading as patriots and nationalists.
- Antifa

- Say what you will, but Fernando Arrojo has kept the country going through good times and bad. How many of you can say that of your government? We've had to give up a few things. So what? Haven't you? We're independent to enjoy the things we are given. Without Arrojo, we'd be speaking Portuguese!
- Xeneize

Argentines abide a regime that has curtailed civil rights and increased the gulf between the haves and have-nots, because all our alternatives seem worse. The popular view (until recently) has been that, unlike his predecessors, Presidente Arrojo has at least kept (some of) us employed and out of Hualpa's claws. The Amazonian threat has worn thin though, despite the State's continuous cant of remaining vigilant and defending the homeland. How did we reach this sorry state of affairs? Well, there's a tale....

- Too true. After what happened to Venezuela, Uruguay, Paraguay, and the close call two decades ago, fear of Amazonian aggression is always on people's minds. Moreover, if it wasn't, the state-biased media and awareness campaigns make sure it is.
- Allende
- Easier to rule unopposed if the people are more afraid of Awakened bogeymen than the secret police.
- Nero
- You mean all those mercs are just pulling garrison duty?
- Hickman
- No, every so often you get a flare-up, triggered by smugglers running the Rio de la Plata, a botched recon op or infiltration. The border remains heavily militarized on both sides, but Quijote is right, the promised Amazonian offensive never quite comes.
- Picador

ARGENTINA AT A GLANCE

Government Type:

Authoritarian Presidential Democracy

Population: 39,144,735

Human: 72.5%

Elf: 7%

Dwarf: 4%

Ork: 14%

Troll: 2%

Other: 0.5%

Estimated SINless: 35%

Corporate Affiliation: 45%

Education:

Less Than Sixteen Years: 60 %

High School Equivalency: 27%

College Degrees: 9%

Advanced Degrees: 4%

Major Ethnic Groups:

Spanish and Italian Latin: 90%

Mestizo, Amerindian,

or other ethnic groups: 10%

Major Languages Spoken:

Spanish: 90%

English: 50%

Major Religions:

Roman Catholic: 92% (<30% practicing)

Protestant: 2%

Jewish 2%

Other: 4%

Currency: Argentine Peso (ARP)

Exchange rate: ARPS 4.25 = 1 nuyen

Armed Medical Coverage

FORGING A LEGEND

It hasn't really been the best of times or the worst of times. Well, not until recently. The jury is still out on where it will go from here. Argentina navigated the troubled first decades of the century better than most, worse than some. Like a tired old prizefighter too dumb to quit, Argentina kept climbing back on her feet. VITAS was a hard left hook and took a tragic toll, with the poor hit hardest. The Awakening sucker-punched us, with the pope's denouncement of magic and meta-humans and then the Church's about-face only causing confusion and instability. Goblinization and the Night of Rage fanned racist flames, spurred by conservative Catholics, and the Crash kicked our economy in the groin for the umpteenth time... and all that was before the body blows really started raining down.

- Move along. Nothing to see here. It is South America after all.
- Decker del Sur

Green Giant, Red Blood

The real trouble began in the mid-Forties. Gorged on con-quests in the North and the easy capitulation of Uruguay, Amazonia turned its expansionist claws south to discover that, unlike its previous opponents, Argentina was not daunted or unprepared (just arrogant and naive). Awakened forces backed by the Amazonian regulars swept into the northeastern provinces, to encounter entrenched Argentine lines. Over the following weeks fierce

fighting against relentless and outlandish foes exhausted the defenders and they yielded ground. A naval counterstrike against Metropole was hit by unseasonal stormy seas and forced home. Before the campaign became a total rout, the Argentine Command ordered troops to regroup in the town of Resistencia on the River Paraná.

- Despite boasting one of the foremost militaries in the region and the Amazonian great dragons being engaged elsewhere, the Argentines had their hoops handed to them. Just goes to show how conventional armies still had a hard time coping with battlefield magic in the Thirties.
- Colonel Cobra

On the brink of defeat, Colonel Fernando Arrojo, a well-liked, field-promoted tactician, rallied his men to acts of bravery and heroics, his battle cry "¡Resistencia! ¡Muerte y Gloria!" becoming famous. When the Amazonian offensive

ARGENTINA TIMELINE

2047: Amazonian forces invade and conquer sovereign Uruguay and advance on Argentina. Siege of Resistência.

2047-49: Corporate influence pervades government, wide-scale corruption and resource rush.

2050: Popular revolt followed by nationalist military coup unseats Leftist government.

2051: Gen. Fernando Arrojo cabinet is first elected to power with popular and covert corporate backing.

2051-63: Increasing unrest and founding of the Democracia Siempre movement. Legio secretly established.

2061: Jaime Prado disappears, insurgents gain an ally in the country's biggest media group.

2063: Massive general strikes and walk-outs run from October through December, brutally repressed by police forces.

2064: Martial law declared in Buenos Aires after Easter processions turn into violent anti-establishment marches.

came, the street-fighting was brutal, with blood exacted for every building lost. Arrojo employed scorched earth tactics, setting alight every quarter he had to concede. As Argentine numbers were whittled away, volunteers rushed to reinforce the ranks—at least until the city was cut off. The siege lasted 28 days; the defenders endured bombings, artillery barrages, tactical magic and hunger. As a final desperate sortie was planned, the Amazonians abandoned the field without explanation—according to the history books, out of grudging respect for Resistencia's valiant defenders—and a legend was born.

Sowing the Seeds...

So what really happened? The irony is that to preserve our freedom, our rulers sold us into bondage. You won't find the facts in the official histories, but here's what I've been able to piece together. With Resistencia about to fall and our conventional forces outmatched, our desperate government turned to the only power it thought capable of halting the Amazonian onslaught: the Corporate Court. Sure enough, Amazonia received a warning through diplomatic channels that if it didn't pull back, the Court (eager to test its clout) would put its full weight and resources behind Argentina.

- Ever wonder why Amazonia dislikes the Nipponese megas almost as much as it does the Azzies? Well, MCT, Renraku, Shiawase and Fuchi sided with Aztechnology on aiding Argentina, Yamatestsuo and Saeder-Krupp abstained, and Ares was overruled.
- Pyramid Watcher
- We had a leftist government back then, and the sell-out is one of the reasons today's Democracia Siempre has a hard time gathering the growing anti-establishment factions under one banner.
- Tránsito Soto

- That and the fact many believe it's been infiltrated by Hualpa's agents.
- Pitt

- Which brings up another point. Native Indians, metahumans, and many critters suffer insidious prejudice because of a perceived association with Amazonia which doesn't really bear out. The local conservative Catholic Church would like to add the Awakened to that list, but the corps are having none of it.
- Ambassador

The price Argentina would pay for the aid would soon become clear; the discreet concessions the government had to sign for deliverance allowed the megas to loosen legislative shackles and buy up local businesses wholesale with government collusion. A latter-day Resource Rush of corporate depredation swept across Argentina. Political opposition was steamrolled, corruption scandals suppressed, the government made appeasing speeches, and the megacorps helped build up the national army while plundering what they could, all the while the unrest and social divide continued to grow. Then, like now, the fear of Amazonian aggression kept things quiet—the unspoken dread of what might happen should the megas pull out.

Reaping the Whirlwind

The pressure cooker burst in '50 when now-General Arrojo and a cadre of high-ranking military officers (sponsored by old money families) deposed the corp-pandering leftist government and established a temporary junta to "return power to the people." Thankful for a glimmer of hope all sorts (both leftists and Peronistas) flocked to his cause and the promise of restored democracy. This lent the coup a legitimacy it didn't really possess. Publicly, Arrojo called for boycotts and strikes against all megacorps and subsidiaries, successfully urging workers to walk out and bring factories to a halt, helping restore the economy to its rightful owners—the Argentinean people.

Meanwhile, Arrojo approached the megas with a backroom deal. If they agreed to pull back into the shadows and appeared to hand power to "the people's government," he would protect their interests and ensure they continued to benefit from the previous arrangements. Arrojo was about to retire from military life and throw his hat into the political ring (fronting the fledgling nationalist Partido Popular Reformista)—all he asked for was the corps to hand a "symbolic" 5% of their local assets back to the State as a sign of good faith *and* sponsor his candidacy. A year later, "free" elections were held and the PPR rose to power on a platform of nationalism and economic and social stability. Of course, that much vaunted stability has come at the expense of the swollen numbers of poor and disenfranchised.

Arrojo has done his best to bolster the middle class, dependent on the megas and upper class for income and hence favorable to his policies as well as providing a convenient buffer between the ultra-rich and the ultra-poor. Meanwhile Arrojo's



pandering to conservative old money, the powerful military apparatus and almighty corporate interests became ever more blatant. You could almost hear the timebomb ticking down.

FACTS OF LIFE

Despite the current martial law, Argentina isn't a police state—yet. The clean and orderly streets, numerous public events and bullish economy hide the ugly truth that the *miserables* are kept down by the promises of a corrupt warhero, mind-numbing media, ubiquitous drugs and chips, and the weapons of roving security vehicles and drones. The appearance of civility and calm in Buenos Aires and other sprawls still survives under the growing pressure of the teeming millions living in the *villas miseria* (shantytowns) and in the corporations' factory towns and *ranchos*.

Before foreign runners get into trouble here, there are a few local peculiarities I should highlight. For instance, while Pedro Saraiman is allowed to pack a licensed automatic weapon as nod to the dangerous times we live in, Pedro Public better not be seen with anything bigger than a knife. Also gov-pol will always cede operations control and jurisdiction to corporate security (military units, on the other hand, dislike the practice). Also don't forget that a surprising number of people still buy into Arrojo's image and the PPR's agenda even in the face of the mounting evidence. The ranks of the *Jóvenes Patriotas* policlub are jam-packed, and most of the middle class won't think twice about turning you in to the cops if they think you're up to something subversive or anti-Argentine.

- Life would be more difficult for us shadow types if fewer of these people had dirty laundry. As it is, business is fine.
- Sepulveda

- Unless you run afoul of the secret police, the *Navaja Roja*. They really dislike free agents.
- Nero

The media are immensely influential in Argentine life, force-feeding apathy, resignation, and daydreams to keep people's minds off their daily misery. The regime even gets a daily one-hour primetime slot on all channels for patriotic posturing, infobulletins and recruitment drives. In return we get free broadcasting and Matrix access (it helps that the Censorship Directorate is understaffed), though I wouldn't buy a word from the nightly news at face value.

But as the saying goes, "You can only fool some of the people some of the time..." and the *miserables* have had enough of the wool over their eyes. The streets are no longer orderly; massive strikes, marches and clashes with security forces have become facts of life over the past few months. Smoldering wrecks of cars litter the side streets and the *Navaja* interventions are becoming more and more frequent. The pressure cooker is back on the boil and ready to blow.

- With a little push here and there from Amazonian agents, of course. Infiltration and sedition work better than bloodshed.
- Juan Solo

TANGO PARTNERS

If you believe the news, the situation on the Amazonian border has grown ever more tense. Truth be told though, the real trouble is on the homefront. The political climate in Buenos Aires has become one of turmoil and conspiracy. Nobody reads the markets like the megacorps and all the major actors are maneuvering their pawns to contain, take advantage, or simply escape the coming storm. It doesn't take much to see the Easter riots were only the first rolls of thunder from a squall that's been brewing on the horizon for a very long time.

- Things might be different if Arrojo and company were on top of their game, but the cabal is starting to show the strain of too many competing interests. A falling out is inevitable.
- Lariot

The most influential corporate players are represented on Arrojo's privy council—his *Consejeros Políticos*—the most powerful political force in the country, bar none. The council ensures that the economic climate remains favorable and supports Argentine independence. It counts all the Big 10 among its members, except Wuxing and Cross (who have no real local presence), and is chaired by Martim Ramalho, a Brazilian ex-pat who handles Aztechnology's interests and hates Amazonia with a vengeance. The *Consejeros* work together to ensure the regime stays in power, but they have the best interests of their corps at heart and under the current tensions the cracks in the fragile alliance are starting to show.

Of the big boys, Aztechnology has always been closest to Arrojo. A not-so-secret deal to outfit Argentinean forces through Spain (ensuring Azzie deniability) is the main reason our military remains formidable, but Aztech's Televisa also backs the establishment at every turn. The biggest financial player in town, BANCOMEX has proven invaluable to finance the *Legio's* conspiratorial agenda (I'll be getting to them soon enough)—Arrojo knows how much he owes the Big A.

Beyond that though, Arrojo and his cronies like to play favorites. Ares and Saeder-Krupp don't seem to be getting involved and are playing their respective hands close to their chests, while Novatech's starting to distance itself from the government. The Japanacorps, the Azzies' erstwhile allies on the council, are tired of Aztechnology getting preferential treatment and being forced to outbid one another for presidential favor. These problems go beyond boardroom and backroom politics are stirring all sorts of trouble in the shadows.

- I've been privy to a few covert meets and I can tell you the Japanacorps are planning to hang Arrojo out to dry. They're gonna shift their support to the more pliable Xavier Alameda, an up-and-coming "reformer" within the PPR—regardless of whether the Prez can bring things back under control or not.
- Tránsito Soto

- Like they say: it takes two to tango. Arrojo should know better.
- Trueba

MCT and Renraku control much of the tech and heavy industries and share most of the retail and commerce sector with Novatech and Aztech. They're helping Aztechnology subsidize the Ministry of Defense to subcontract mercs to patrol hotspots and silence the anti-government outbreaks from the *villas miserias*, since they have a vested interest in quelling the unrest.. With the mounting number of strikes and riots the past couple of months, the *Inspector General de Policia Delgado* and *Ministro de Defensa Ruiz* are starting to feel their assets stretched thin.

- The pay is good, but most mercs hate urban police actions more than any other type of op. Personally, I wouldn't touch one of these contracts with a ten-foot pole, but there are all types out there.

- Picador

- Yes there are, my dear.

- METalhead

- Why am I not surprised?

- Picador

Shiawase runs a lot of facilities in the hinterland, both energy production sites (dams, fission plants) and bio-agricultural facilities. However, shadowfolk know that, like Ares's and Yamatetsu's low-key presences, many of these facilities are actually weapons development and biogenetics labs. Shiawase Biotech and Yamatetsu are particularly infamous for tinkering with South American wildlife, both native to the pampas (prairies) and that smuggled out of Amazonia. Makes you wonder if Hualpa isn't right to support GreenWar and their ilk.

- Unexpectedly, Ares facilities also see a lot of traffic in paracritters. Wonder what's going on?

- Roaming Rake

- Probably developing war-forms like UniOmni's doing up Salish-Shidhe way. Or maybe it's something darker. What do we know about Ares' research on paracritters?

- Rubik

- Green Globe and Transys are other corps with a couple of research labs hidden away in the backwaters. Nobody knows what GG is doing behind its high fences but Transys is working closely with the local centaur population.

- Pampero

Novatech Argentina is the engine behind the mega's success in the region and has been since the Fuchi days. While the company's shrewd Managing Director Antonio Ortega has nurtured ties with several Ministers, he's also been cultivating new friendships and expanding operations across the Rio de la Plata. Having cornered a number of lucrative grid contracts early on, Novatech has been gearing to change allegiances before Arrojo comes down. The regime's possible involvement in the disappearance of Ortega's close friend and Edimpresa CEO, Jaime Prado, has provided him with a personal excuse to back away from the establishment and cozy up with the opposition.

- Arrojo's lost a large chunk of his media platform and provided the opposition with potential allies in one swoop. Not only have the subversives been getting more airtime, but they've also started hacking into legal broadcasts with conspicuous ease. Maybe Novatech's given them some backdoor codes by way of a deal sweetener?

- Adaga Andina

- Nothing like a pirate newflash of a brutal police crackdown crashing episode 500 of *Punto Caliente* to grab Pedro Public's attention.

- Radiopirata

ALL THE PRESIDENTE'S MEN

President General Arrojo's future rests on how well he handles the current crisis. Corporate power is out of control and unemployment has hit the 40 percent mark. Before long, even his conservative friends (nationalists, Peronistas and hard-line Catholics) are going to be looking for suitable replacements in the Army and the Party. Fernando Arrojo has proven a wily politician, though, and he still has a couple of aces up his sleeve.

THE RAZOR'S EDGE

The *Secretaría de Inteligencia del Estado (SIDE)*, or *La Navaja Roja* as it is known on the streets, is Arrojo's not-so-secret police and intelligence arm—and the primary reason why it's taken so long to mount any significant opposition to his rule. The streetname, which translates loosely to “bloody razor,” is a tribute to their dreaded interventions: silent and precise, seeding terror among the enemies of the regime and disappearing without a trace.

SIDE is even more subtle and sophisticated than any of its twentieth century counterparts. When it isn't orchestrating health problems, traffic accidents, or having people publicly commit suicide, *La Navaja* also indulges in counterintelligence activities, ingenious social engineering and turning unwitting citizens into sleeper agents. People aren't (just) vanished from their homes or dragged in for interrogation anymore, they're plagued by untraceable electronic and magical harassment until they turn themselves in! Fear doesn't come from knowing what the SIDE does, but rather from not knowing how it does it.

- The SIDE uses the gov-pol's *Cuerpo de Intervención* whenever heads need to be broken.

- Indigo Montoya

- Not that the *Cuerpo* are pushovers. They're decked out with the best the corps have to offer in cyber and gear, and are handpicked for their badassness. You do *not* want to be on the wrong end of one of their sorties.

- Covadonga

- Though nobody's going to fess up, besides informers in all the shantytowns, SIDE's got agents in the right-wing policlubs and organizations like the *Jóvenes Patriotas* and *Union Nacional Peronista*, which they use as shock troops to keep the leftists in line and harass any seditionists in the *villas miserias*.

- Eco

- SIDE also runs external intel and is tight with the *ELES* in southern Amazonia and particularly insurgents in Uruguay.
- Adaga Andina

All is not well behind the walls of the Palacio de las Necesidades HQ though. SIDE is in the midst of a major internal shakeup after President Arrojo tired of former director Luis García's inability to bring in insurgent leaders and demoted him. Adding insult to injury Arrojo promoted Col. Emilio Torres, the former director of the magical branch, to his place.

- That's half the story. García orchestrated successful raids on several opposition meets and rallies, dragging in a bunch of the original leaders, at least until the *miserables* really closed ranks and SIDE failed to make further inroads.
- Tango2
- Can you say inside job? They knew exactly when and where! The *Cuerpo* comes in guns blazing. The *Navaja* ran cleanup—they always let some folks get away to spread the bad news. The *Cuerpo* are not so forgiving.
- Rosa Alva

SIDE has long stood divided by an internal power struggle between the military intelligence faction (led by García) and the magical intelligence branch (behind Torres) with the military dominating. Now the change has shaken the department deeply, but rumor has it that while newly-promoted Torres was settling old scores and ordering purges, García and several of his closest allies pulled a vanishing act. Obviously Torres is thoroughly pissed and wants him brought back badly—and so the most hated and dangerous man in Argentina becomes the most hunted.

- That tusked bastard Garcia wasn't offed! I saw him two days ago down by the docklands skulking into La Cova with a crew. He's gone to ground and he's up to something.
- Indigo Montoya
- Like joining forces with his pal Ángel, or even Democracia Siempre?
- Nero
- Doesn't sound like his style and there's too much bad blood there anyway. He's more likely to persuade Córdoba into a palace coup. Nobody really knows the devious fragger's gameplan.
- Tango2



THE SECRET LEGION

Although this may come as a shock, I would like to emphasize that in his way Arrojo really is a patriot. He probably believes he's doing what's best for the country in the long run, and he's never been tied to a single case of abuse of office or active corruption. To back me up, there's a secret even some of his corporate allies would be surprised to know: Arrojo is a preeminent member of the *Legio*, a secretive and conspiratorial anti-Amazonian fraternity that boasts members in almost all the remaining Latin American militaries.

- Quijote's blabbing about the *Legio* like this makes it seem almost common knowledge, when it's actually a well-kept secret, one the shadow community generally keeps to itself around here. After all, you never know when you need a friend in a high place to pull your bacon out of the fire. Of the major corps only the Azzies and Ares seem aware of *Legio*.
- Adaga Andina
- Which explains why Aztech is so eager to pour support into the military. *Legio* sounds like a perfect ally against the snakes.
- Sepherim
- It's not as if they're all in national militaries anymore either; plenty of small merc companies have hidden *Legio* allegiances. You'd be surprised at some of the faces that show up at the Sparta Country Club, one of the *Legio*'s topdog hangouts.
- Picador


The *Legio* is strongest in Argentina and Peru, where high-ranking military officials belonging to the group run continuous low-level (and deniable) operations against Amazonia. It guarantees that the tense border situations aren't resolved and that Amazonian aggression isn't allowed to win out. The group's ethos ties together a bunch of strangely mismatched fascist ideals like pan-American patriotism, manifest destiny, and military honor with the base fear of being subsumed by the Green Goliath and possibly even suffering an indigenous and metahuman backlash.

Legio's other top man among the local military is Colonel Jaime Córdoba, an outspoken campaigner for Argentine independence (from *all* outside influences). His intolerance for corporate pandering keeps him from rising further while Arrojo is in office. The president would have the upstart discreetly dealt with—if the rank and file weren't far more loyal to Córdoba than they are to him. On the other hand, Córdoba remains quiet because *Legio* faces the unfortunate dilemma that it can't afford to change sides and back anti-establishment sedition. Even if it wished to, the political instability that would follow would leave Argentina open to further hostile/external influences—something it cannot allow.

- So even if the military have sympathies for the insurgents, they're between a rock and a hard place. Nice.
- Romeu

- No fraggin' way. Fascist conservatives the lot of them! People forget the German "immigration" after WWII. For all its Latin-posturing, that's part of *Legio's* heritage too.
- Timmerman
- If worse comes to worse and a revolution seems inevitable, Cordoba and his cohorts will probably pull a *coup d'état* if necessary – to provide the necessary stability for democratic transition, of course, just like Arrojo before them.
- Picador

THE FOURTH POWER



Arrojo doesn't have all the aces. His recent moves have alienated several media powerhouses, and in this country that's seriously bad news. In Argentina, the media's part of the apparatus to keep the people in line, bombarding the masses 24/7 with equal doses of nationalist grandstanding, anti-Amazonian propaganda, unending publicity and mindless daydreams. The omnipresent tridsets are complemented by colorful *mediapilares* (mediaposts) that brighten street corners with constantly updated (state-vetted) newsfaxes, corp ads and police bulletins, the megascreens lighting up the ragged skylines of the *villas miseria*.

For decades, Argentina's tv and later trid industry churned out endless hours of no-brainer soaps, chat and variety shows gobbled up by audiences throughout Latin America and beyond. Its production of low-brow entertainment lagging only behind Brazil's. In this respect, little has changed—only the names are new, to go with the new powerbrokers: AGE (Ares), Televisa (Aztechology), Sakura (MCT), Edimpresa (indy) and Canal Nova (Novatech). But today's intricate MPOV simsoaps, brain-numbing variety shows, inane gameshows, imported *news-café*s chains, and broadcast sports events serve a darker purpose. Most media is owned by Arrojo's corporate allies and cronies and produces brain-numbing, glitzy entertainment geared specifically towards keeping the people distracted while feeding them reactionary social indoctrination through beloved chat-show hosts and million nuyen gameshows.

- Some such productions have their transmissions laced with anti-Amazonian and anti-revolutionary subliminals, or ones that suggest the two are one and the same.
- Gato Vadio
- UN investigators looked into that a couple of years back and found no evidence.
- Ambassador
- Have we forgotten who pays UN wages?
- Rapaz Z

The regime's lockdown on media was pretty much complete until '61, when media mogul Jaime Prado had a falling out with the regime. Edimpresa dropped the reactionary line almost across the board and started giving airtime to the anti-establishment movements that were starting to

come together. Prado apparently died in early-'62 in a fire that consumed his La Rocca mansion. Nobody was ever recovered though.

- Most people believe it was a *Navaja Roja* hit but unsurprisingly nobody saw a thing.
- Juan Solo
- Actually, some people thought he might have had an extreme case of SURGE, some sort of spontaneous combustion.
- Doc Cuevas

Prado's unassuming trophy wife, Mariana, unexpectedly took over the reigns of the media group and took up her husband's agenda—both publicly and in the shadows. It's no secret she hates Arrojo with a vengeance, but it's less known she's found an ally in Novatech South Am's director António Ortega, a childhood friend of her husband. She's also showed sympathy towards the opposition movement, Democracia Siempre, giving them positive news-coverage when she can. Unwilling to order a crackdown which might reveal the cracks in his carefully built façade, Arrojo's been trying to appease Mariana Prado for the past couple of years with little success.

Just before Easter, a particularly scathing exposé on SIDE black ops in the *villas miseria* proved the final straw. The Ministro del Interior issued a warrant against Mariana for "suspected treason and unpatriotic behavior". Edimpresa cameras were on hand to broadcast her arrest, making things even more uncomfortable for the regime. In response they froze Prado's assets and suspended Edimpresa's license, pulling it off the air. Cue the Easter riots...

Pirate broadcasters like Buenos Aires' *La Voz del Pueblo* have taken up Edimpresa's torch, trying to break through to the middle class and show some of what's been going on behind the scenes. Pirates aligned with Democracia Siempre in particular are hacking into offline Edimpresa relays and other channel's broadcasts with suspicious ease.

- Help from Novatech? Hope they haven't sold out.
- Esteban T
- Unconfirmed, but it would be disappointing. You'll appreciate other news I've heard though: the antifascist NGO International Spotlight has started calling in favors and pulling serious strings to get Prado on this year's Peace Nobel shortlist. It's an uphill battle, but several countries and some corporate sponsors have been surprisingly supportive. Wonder how Prez Arrojo's going to handle that hot potato?
- Antifa

PODER AL PUEBLO

A chaotic cocktail of grassroots groups—policlubs, labor unions, civic and militant groups—that make up the challengers to the regime evolved haphazardly in the absence of long since stifled organized political opposition. The disorganized resentment and hopelessness that's been bubbling away among the *miserables* erupted into civil disturbances and revolt last Easter

following Mariana Prado's arrest and the gag order on Edimpresa. They're only just starting to shape up into something more. If anyone can tap into this melting pot of diverse factions, sharing little but their opposition to the corps and the regime, it's the Democracia Siempre (DS) coalition.

- Hard to make out the difference between activists and gangers in some places. In others, there's no difference at all.
- Tránsito Soto

The leftist Democracia Siempre is cobbled together with hope, bringing together the three biggest opposition factions: the remains of the left-wing political opposition and policlubs, the surviving labor unions, and the network of community groups that have developed in the *villas miseria*. Besides the three main groups you also get metahuman rights groups, youth communes, student groups, native rights movements and societies, and support from international policlubs and NGOs.

After SIDE's initial culling, the surviving members of the DS's ruling Comité, had a 50,000¥ prize placed on their heads—and yet in a country renowned for deprivation no one has turned them in. The current Comité triumvirate are José Hidalgo (representing the left-wingers and youth groups), Raimundo Núñez (the unions and rural workers) and Eva Alba (the *villas miseria* communities).

- There are rumors that the DS is getting covert help from certain megas and even elements within the Vatican, who aren't pleased with the Argentine hierarchy's toadying but the only money trails I dug up lead to anti-corp or antifa groups like Equity, Eidelweiss Pirates, and I-Spotlight.
- Severotaku

Eva Alba deserves particular attention. A former social worker turned activist, she's become known as "Santa Evita." Most people believe she's either a spirit of some sort, or that she Awakened or SURGED in '61. I've heard that her skin glows with a light (some say *saintly* light) of its own, changing according to her mood when she speaks.

- There's whispers that she's Evita Peron reincarnate, here to deliver us. Eva herself has never made the claim, though she hasn't denied it either.
- Rapaz Z

IT'S A CRIME

Organized crime plays a peculiar role in Argentina's turbulent landscape. While it is the one sector of the economy that remains untroubled and prosperous, it too has its idiosyncrasies. On one hand, its drug and chip trade conveniently keep the unwashed masses and the middle class sararimen blissfully oblivious and apathic. On the other, the high-handed government inspired by ultra-nationalist ideals frowns upon underworld syndicates as dangerous loose cannons. Fortunately for the government, the problem had an easy solution.

Three syndicates have ruled the roost for the better part of this century: a blue-collar outfit called Los Lobos (after the boss Carlos Lobo) dealing in blackmarketeering, loan-sharking, illegal gambling and lotteries; the local branch of the Andes Cartel run by an ork known as Cantañeda; and, most relevantly, a multi-faceted organization run by the Buenos Aires crimelord, *el Ángel*. For non-locals it might come as a bit of shock to learn that Ángel is Colonel Gabriel Fernández, a career Army officer and the man responsible for Buenos Aires Civil Defense Division. You won't find his soldiers dealing on the curb—he delegates that to gangs—but they move his product, run protection scams and provide object lessons.

- Not surprising. The military here have always been hip deep in racketeering, drug trade and smuggling anyway, Ángel's just expanded his sights.
- Covadonga
- The Andes Cartel wants a bigger slice, and there's a tidy bounty on Ángel's head.
- Juan Solo

The Arrojo cabinet and SIDE have turned a blind eye towards *el Ángel*'s activities over the years. His competitors have suffered an inordinate number of crackdowns and setbacks, while Ángel's amassed a huge amount of underworld power and official clout. Some (myself included) think there's a connection, which makes sense since Fernández was a contemporary of former-SIDE boss Luis García on the rolls of the Military Academy.

- We suspect Gabriel was a deep-cover sleeper for SIDE, whose goal is to keep the slums under control through vice.
- Rapaz Z
- Not doing a very good job, is he?
- Juan Solo
- Explains why Democracia had a couple of his chiphouses fire-bombed in La Boca and Quilmes though.
- Doc Cuevas

The twist is that Arrojo's government may have made a serious mistake building up Ángel's organization. When Arrojo pulled the carpet on García, they never expected that nasty piece of work to do what he did, so there were no plans in place when García and cohorts went to ground. Simultaneously, Ángel severed his ties with SIDE, filed for extended leave from the Army, and placed his underworld empire on red alert. Time will tell how fragged up this will get.

- Quijote assumes Ángel has sided with García, which sets the government and SIDE in line for a world of hurt, especially if the spookmaster throws in with Democracia Siempre. But, it's equally possible Ángel could simply be preemptively reacting to Torres' expected purge and protecting himself.
- Severo

- Whatever. Biz is about to get way more interesting.
- Tango2

SOUTHERN SOLACE

Enough with the drama, time for some scenery. Colonized by the Spanish and recipient of a bewildering variety of immigrants like many Latin American nations, Argentina is home to a variety of terrains and climates almost as diverse as its cultural and ethnic heritage.

From the verdant pampas and jungles of the interior and North to the Atlantic coast and the jagged peaks of the Andes, there's something for everyone somewhere in Argentina: backwater *pampero* towns nestled near megacorp facilities and agricorp ranches; rough merc prefab-towns besieged by encroaching Amazonian rainforests on the banks of the Paraná and Plata; disreputable leisure towns owned by syndicates; ghost villages deserted by those looking for better lots in the cities; and pristine Andine slopes in places like the Bariloche resort, home to best skiing in the southern hemisphere for most of the year and the perfect out-of-the-way spot for the elite to unwind. The jewels of the nation are our cities, however. All seem to have peculiarities and characters of their own, but two stand out.

BUENOS AIRES

The pride of Argentinean culture is also a living remnant of Europe in the Americas. Buenos Aires is a stronghold of corporate power and strives to be the economic and political counterweight to Metropole. Despite the corp cruisers perpetually anchored at port, no one needs reminding that the capital is within artillery range of Amazonian forces.

- The competition between the two countries goes on at all levels. Argentina may be pissed Novatech is spreading its wings across the border, but Amazonia is livid that Buenos Aires continues to get twice the traffic of any of its ports.
- JWK

Though towering glass skyscrapers and arcologies have taken over downtown, the city retains its Old World charm. You can still find vibrant memories of another age in its picturesque colonial mansions and tree-lined avenues. In fact, roadways have been elevated to avoid heavy traffic in old residential areas like Alto Palermo and La Recoleta, where many of Arrojo's cronies and corp execs live among well-patrolled alamedas and breezy coffee-shops.

- One thing you have to give them—Argentineans know how to unwind. There's always something going on in Buenos Aires. Even these days, there seems to be a truce in place wherever people gather to have a good time. The music and dancing helps people forget the troubles . . . and provides a nice cover to conduct all sorts of business.
- Rosa Alva

Equally colorful is the central corporate district with MCT's Corrientes arcology (the biggest south of Tenochtitlán) towering over the Renraku Quarter (formerly Plaza de Mayo) and Aztechnology's amazing Nuevo Azteca-style waterfront



Argentina 2064

complex. Also of note is Ares' impressive Retiro compound, which hosts the annual Buenos Aires Arms Fair (the biggest in South America).

Beyond the city core, in all directions, lies the legacy of poverty and oppression that's the regime's heritage. Buenos Aires is encircled by *villas miseria*, shantytowns of narrow streets and leaning buildings that are home to an inexhaustible supply of unskilled labor for corporate factories and mills and menial work. Each *villa miseria* has its own personality and lifestyle: some are governed by gangs, some by dedicated community groups; but in all of them the resentment towards the entrenched establishment is ready to explode violently. Though not as big as the Easter uprisings, protests involving thousands of people regularly march downtown to make their voice heard—only to meet police lines with corp security and drone backup.

Some of the megas run “mercy clinics” on the edges of the *villas miserias* for PR. Free basic medicare and some prescription drugs. Some of the docs even run chopshops in the back and will sew you up, no questions asked.

- Yeah, you can see the pamphlets, signs and bloodstains on the sidewalks for days after. Really puts Pedro Sarariman on edge, no matter how many times the news tells him the situation is under control. It's getting so you can cut the tension with a monowhip.
- Salazar
- Wanna bet those prescription drugs have “unforeseen” mood control side-effects and cause sterility?
- Doc Cuevas
- A colleague of mine vanished when he was investigating a tip that the mercy clinics might be linked to last year's outbreaks of cholera and typhoid in the La Boca slums.
- Newshack Anonymous
- With the government looking the other way, the clinics are also where the corps run human trials for new cyber, bio and geneteck on volunteers. A few hundred nuyen a month to test run unproven tech looks much more attractive when you don't have food in your belly.
- Marcos
- Which makes them appealing targets for tech poachers and they know it. Security is tight.
- Tango2

Be careful though, in these troubled times, Buenos Aires has restricted licenses on cyber and weapons for “self-defense” to only card-carrying corporate citizens or contract mercenaries (with ID).

RESISTENCIA

Backwater township turned national icon and rough merc haven, Resistencia still bears the scars of its history as the bloody battlefield of yesteryear—a memorial to Argentine resistance. It remains only partially restored as a living reminder of the Amazonian threat.

- Resistencia is also an unlikely tourist hotspot. The *Memorial Glorioso*, a cenotaph built over the mass grave used for Argentine dead during the siege gets a steady stream of visitors both local and foreign. Good site for a discreet meet, too.
- Don Segundo Sombra

Resistencia has become the primary staging point for the war/defense effort in northern Argentina. It serves as a command hub for border operations along the Rio de la Plata and the North. Besides the military bases and merc company encampments, the town boasts a commercial strip and a flourishing red-light district. Both a military airstrip and one of the few civilian airstrips sit a couple of miles south of the town, but military presence makes trying to slip in that way problematic.

Life isn't easy or pleasant on the border. Real action is usually short-lived, although things can get brutal. Sometimes it's an honest mistake, like the young feathered serpent that chased a deer out of the jungle and into the river last month; other times, trigger-happy partisans or military hotheads on either side will start trouble—the result of which is blown out of proportion for public consumption by the Ministry of Communication.

- Surprisingly, Resistencia is also a major smuggling hub. The military governor turns a blind eye to traffic in and out of Amazonia and down the Andes route in exchange for generous kickbacks. Los Lobos are particularly strong here.
- Speedy Gonzo
- The border is far more porous than either country likes to admit. Getting small groups through in small boats and hovercraft under darkness provides a steady income to small operators in the Tri-river area.
- Oriental 33







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>>>FILESEEDS LOCATED: 24 SEEDS<<<
>>>SCANNING SEEDS<<<
>>>WARNING: 4 SEEDS INSECURE...QUARANTINING<<<
>>>PROGRESS CONTINUED: DOWNLOADING FROM 20 SEEDS<<<
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> YES
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- Sorry, all appended comments will be uploaded and scanned for redistribution. Aztlan caught wind of our new expose, infiltrated our file sharing network, and tagged copies of this file with a psychotropic virus. If you're reading this now, our controlled seeding has worked. If you're one of the unlucky ones Aztechnology caught in their trap, you have my condolences for bearing the price we pay for the truth.
- Captain Chaos
Transmitted: XXXXX

AZTLAN: HEART OF DARKNESS

- In front of you is a file with a collection of perspectives on Aztlan. It's not the whole story—it's not even half the story—but it's what we could get right now and going into Aztlan blind *will* flatline you, so what you read here could be the difference between life and death. Read up.
- Captain Chaos

THE COUNT OF DAYS

- The following is a transcript of a speech given at a meeting of the Sons of the Alamo in Austin in February of 2064. The speaker is Pennybacker, a long-time veteran of the South Austin resistance against the occupying Aztlaner forces in that city.
- Captain Chaos

"Welcome and I'm glad you all could make it tonight. I will try to keep my words short as I know every second we spend together puts all of us at risk. As you all know, the meeting last month was hit by a satellite-guided bomb and we lost a lot of good people. Every effort has been made to make sure that doesn't happen again.

“We call ourselves the Sons of the Alamo and I see we’ve attracted many new fighters on that image, but it is crucial to understand that we are fighting a different enemy than was fought in 1836. Our enemy is Aztlan, not Mexico, and there is a difference. I’m going to help you understand that difference by telling you some-thing about the history of those we fight.

- It’s a subtle difference, but a powerful one. Aztlan is not Mexico. To call an Aztlaner a Mexican is an insult, and to call a Mexican an Aztlaner could get you killed.
- Spur

“Mexico, as the world once knew it, was brought down from within. Not by those who would later form the Aztlan government, but by the Catholic Church. The Partido Revolucionario Institucional, or Institutional Revolutionary Party to us gringos, had long controlled the Mexican government until a series of scandals rocked it in the early 21st century. Links surfaced that tied government officials to bribes from corporations and drug cartels, not to mention to the violent death of a popular labor activist. The PRI government collapsed and a new coalition government swept in, backed substantially by the Catholic Church.

“But a Church-backed Mexican government was not meant to be. VITAS and the Awakening swept into Mexico and proved too much for the new government to handle, especially when the Vatican alie-nated Mexico’s newly goblinized. A coalition of business interests, keen on helping their reputations after being linked to the PRI scandals, granted assistance to the suffering population and when the Mexican government collapsed among violent protests, they formed a caretaker government that would stay in place until 2015.

“Spearheading this effort was a local corporation named ORO, formed by a coalition of Central American druglords to launder and invest their illicit money. ORO grew beyond that, however, by taking advantage of two things: exclusive rights to a vast deposit of valuable molybdenum off the coast of Panama and the Central American nations’ delay in signing the Business Recognition Accords, which allowed ORO to turn Central America into a software piracy hub and undercut their competition. In 2015, ORO then decided to guide Mexico’s return to democratic elections by installing a new nationwide, computerized direct-voting system through the Matrix.

- It’s still widely suspected that ORO knew about the molybdenum deposit far in advance, since when it was “discovered”, ORO had already wrangled exclusive control of that offshore shelf and had managed to eliminate or buy out any possible competition.
- Strider

“I don’t think anyone here is surprised to learn that ORO abused their control of the voting system and used it to ensure the victory of its own puppet party, the Azatlán Party. The Azatlán Party was the brainchild of Francisco Pavón y Guetterrez and had formed in popular backlash to the failures of the Catholic

Church’s efforts. Pavón was one of Mexico’s first known shamans and rebelled against the Vatican’s proclamation against the Awakened, claiming that the foreign ways had failed Mexico and that the Awakening showed that the people should look to the old ways, when Central America was one of the most advanced empires in the world. ORO ensured that the already-popular idea became policy and a new re-imagining of the nation took root, starting with its official renaming to *Aztlan*, to celebrate the mythological origins of the old Aztec Empire it emulated.

- Despite ORO getting him into power, Pavón never really saw eye-to-eye with them. The increasing privatization and exploitation of Aztlan bothered him, resulting in a number of arguments behind closed doors. He died in 2033 (many believe he was poisoned), just as he was privately considering starting a new party to oppose the government.
- Corona



“Understand that when we fight Aztlan here in South Austin, we are battling this philosophy. As the United States fragmented, Aztlan prospered with the successes of local corporations such as ORO and Pemex. The nation grew wealthy and proud, backing the Native American insurgents in America and even invading the Texan land we now bleed to liberate. Proud nationalism fueled the Aztec mythological revival and vice versa; even ORO renamed itself Aztechnology in 2022 to both take advantage of the image and to further popularize it. Its Central American neighbors, struggling with the transformation into 21st century economies, petitioned Aztlan for inclusion in its success and by 2050, every single Central American nation had joined the Aztlan Republic and been worked into the government and the mythological philosophy, which came to embrace elements of many Central American historical empires.

“Aztlan saw the rising power of the megacorporations as a threat, however, and rose to combat it in 2048 by nationalizing all businesses operating in its borders. The corporate response was Operation Reciprocity and the outcome was the Veracruz Settlement, which allowed megacorporations to conditionally operate within Aztlan and ceded the Panama Canal to Corporate Court control. Aztlan shook off the sting of that compromise by moving south into Colombia and Venezuela, but they didn’t get far before being stopped by an equally-expansionist Amazonia, resulting in a Cold War border situation that still exists today.

“Some of you think we’ve nearly won, that South Austin is close to liberation. You are naïve and underestimate our opposition. You look around to your friends now, wondering how I can say this. But listen, because I’ve been fighting Aztlan for two decades and I know better than you greenhorns. Yeah, Aztlan was kicked out of Denver two years ago by Ghostwalker, and yeah, in those same two years Aztlan appears to have been losing its war in the Yucatan. But the Aztec nationalist spirit burns as brightly in their hearts as Texan pride does in yours! The difference is that the Azzies would not hesitate to offer your hearts to their gods. You will not break the Aztlaner military occupation here until you break the Aztlaner spirit here! That is both what we fight and the reason our fight is not yet over.”

PYRAMID SCHEME

- This memo was “leaked” to Shadowland by an anonymous source. I suspect the leak came from the author, Rodolfo Serraza, Cuba’s Admiral of the Navy and former Aztlan Jaguar Guard. I’ve since been able to independently verify the information, so I’m including it here. Note that the memo leaked is only a synopsis of a full document; Serraza apparently wanted us to have enough information on his former employers to hurt them, but not enough to compromise Cuban intelligence.
- Captain Chaos

FROM: Office of the Admiral of the Navy
TO: Office of National Strategic Assessment
SUBJECT: Synopsis of Memorandum on the Government of Aztlan for the Office of the President

The key point of this synopsis is to stress the inseparable connection between Aztlan and Aztechnology. In fact, it would not be incorrect to describe the Aztlan government as a secret division of Aztechnology. When we interact with the nation, we must act as if we are simultaneously interacting with the corporation.

GOVERNMENT CONTROL

The government of Aztlan is a federal republic on the surface, with a three branched power structure similar to the UCAS, consisting of an executive, legislative, and judicial branch. The executive branch includes the “elected” president and the appointed cabinet. The president serves a six year term and has no re-elected term limit. The legislative branch consists of a bicameral congress: an 80-member Senate elected from 40

AZTLAN AT A GLANCE

Government Type:

Corporate Democratic Republic

Population: 192,628,000

Human: 59%

Elf: 13%

Dwarf: 9%

Ork: 12%

Troll: 3%

Other: 4%

Per Capita Income:

15,000,000 pesos or 30,000¥

Estimated SINless: 28%

Below Poverty Level: 35%

Corporate Affiliation: 72%

Education:

Less Than Twelve Years: 27%

High School Equivalency: 30%

College Degrees: 28%

Advanced Degrees: 15%

Major Ethnic Groups:

Mestizo: 76%

Amerindian: 18%

Caucasian: 6%

Major Languages Spoken:

Aztlaner Spanish: 98%

English: 86%

Nahuatl: 18%

Major Religions:

Path of the Sun: 93%

Roman Catholic: 4%

Other or no Affiliation: 3%

Currency:

Pesos (nuyen also widely accepted)

Exchange rate: 500 pesos = 1 nuyen

Medicarro Coverage: 100%

Guaranteed Response Time: 15 minutes

legislative states (including states such as Colombia, Guatemala and the other incorporated Central American nations as well as the Federal District that contains Tenochtitlán) and a 500-member Chamber of Deputies elected by population distribution. Senators serve six year alternating terms and Deputies serve three year terms, and neither may serve two consecutive terms.

- They can, however, leave for a term and then run again. They usually spend the downtime kissing Aztechnology hoop as much as possible, so that they are sure to get back in.
- Capricorn
- The current president, by the way, is Flavia de la Rosa, who was elected for her second term by Aztechnology in 2059. The next election is in 2065 and rumor is that de la Rosa is taking a better-paying job in Aztechnology instead.
- Webster

All of this structure is formality, however, because the electoral system is fully in the control of Aztechnology. ORO designed the computer system that tabulates Aztlan’s votes and Aztechnology inherited it. The private consulting firm that verifies Aztlan’s elections is owned by Aztechnology through three shell companies. Aztlan does not allow United Nations inspectors to observe their voting process. Though the people vote, essentially Aztechnology chooses the outcome of every election by tweaking the numbers however they need to as the votes are tabulated in their system.

- The control is more complete than even that. Not only does an elected official owe their success to Aztechnology, but Aztechnology makes

sure they do their job the way they want. If an official acts out of line, suddenly he finds his funding vanishing, his computer network locked down, his mailbox filling up with incriminating video and his staff being threatened.

- IQ
- Usually it doesn’t even require direct intimidation. Most government officials make squat for pay; they hope to get jobs for the private sector (read: Aztech-nology) when they are done. They are more than happy to do what-ever the Big A wants because someday they want a corner office with a nice view.
- Hidalgo

The Azatlán Party always wins majority control. There hasn't been a non-Azatlán president since the party's formation. *The Partido de Acción Nacional* did have a powerful following in the 2059 elections, but they gained only a handful of Congressional seats—pundits claimed they suffered low voter turnout from their base.

- Scan this though: on election night in 2059, half a world away in Calcutta, twenty-one top computer criminals are found dead, plugged into the decks. Now, word on the street is that they were trying to hack the Aztlan election and change the outcome...but why?
- Squeaker
- Someone hired them, but the tracks were conveniently covered when the Heart of Darkness fried their brains to ash.
- Kid Code

ECONOMIC CONTROL

Aztechnology's control doesn't end with the government. Within Aztlan's borders, Aztechnology is the government, the economy, and the military. Though its experiment to nationalize all industry in Aztlan was short-lived, the Veracruz Settlement of 2048 does still ensure that in the case of all corporations operating in Aztlan (including subsidiaries owned by foreign corporations), the largest single shareholder is an Aztlaner citizen or majority-owned Aztlaner corporation. Though this major shareholder does not necessarily have a majority share of the corporation's stock, other foreign shareholders may find their corporation's operational charter invalidated if they are not at "arm's length" as far as ownership or voting is concerned.

- In most cases, this single largest shareholder is the Aztlan government, but sometimes it is Aztechnology, an Aztechnology subsidiary or an Aztechnology employee. Even in rare cases where it's none of these, it's still an Aztlaner citizen subject to Aztlan laws.
- Espion
- The "arm's length" clause comes into play when one of the shareholders is a shell company belonging to another shareholder. If Aztlan learns of this state and the combined share ownership makes the parent and shell companies the single largest owner, say adios to the charter. On rare occasions Aztlan has even enforced this on voting blocs which are not technically owned by the same entity, but vote the same way repeatedly. That's resulted in some vicious Corporate Court lawsuits and lots of jobs for us.
- The Chromed Accountant

Aztechnology also employs a number of techniques to control and oversee Aztlaner currency and trade. Their national currency, the *peso*, actually comes in two forms, the *peso norma* (standard pesos which exists as coins and paper bills as well as electronically) and the *peso libre* (free pesos which exists only in electronic form) Standard pesos can be used freely within Aztlan, but they can not be converted to foreign currency or corp scrip and can not be taken outside the country.

AZTLAN TIMELINE

- 2015:** President Pavon renames the nation of Mexico to Aztlan.
- 2018:** Aztlan joins the Sovereign Tribal Council of the Native American Nations.
- 2027:** The Catholic Church is denied tax-exempt status by the Aztlan government, which then launches a series of audits and fraud allegations against the Church.
- 2034:** Aztlan leaves the Sovereign Tribal Council, protesting its ineffectiveness.
- 2035:** Aztlan invades southern Texas.
- 2036:** Invasion expands to the California Free State; Aztlan occupies San Diego.
- 2041:** A presidential order declares the Catholic Church a "revolutionary and terrorist organization" in Aztlan.
- 2044:** Aztlan nationalizes all foreign industry in the nation.
- 2045–2047:** The nation is expanded to include the other nations of Mesoamerica, either through military annexation or voluntary application to the republic.
- 2048:** The megacorporations retaliate against Aztlan's nationalization of foreign industry with Operation Reciprocity, which leads to the Veracruz Settlement.
- 2049:** The CAS, California Free State, and Aztlan reach détente, and sign cease-fire agreements and lift trade sanctions.
- 2051:** Yucatan rebels start initiating the first organized raids on Aztlan assets, a rebellion that escalates over the following years.
- 2061:** The dragon Ghostwalker attacks and destroys Aztlan property in the jointly-occupied city of Denver.
- January 27, 2062:** Ghostwalker, after declaring himself ruler of Denver, removes Aztlan participation in the city's governance.
- February 5, 2062:** Aztlan launches Operation Rancho Obrero, a slash-and-burn offensive against the Yucatan rebellion. During the ongoing operation, natural disasters strike the peninsula and there are reports of strange spirit attacks.
- XX, 2064:** A peace summit begins to establish the Yucatan as a semi-sovereign state, but it is targeted by a bomb attack which kills Juan Atzca-potzalco and the shaman Quauhtlatoa on live trid. Aztlan implicates the feathered serpent Dzitbalchén in the attack.
- XX, 2064:** Dzitbalchén is turned over to Aztlan authorities by Pobre, the new feathered serpent governor of the Yucatan. Dzitbalchén is scheduled for trial and faces execution if found guilty.

If you wish to do either of those things, you have to convert the standard pesos to free pesos, which are put on a credstick issued only by Aztechnology (usually through a number of wholly-owned "national" banks). You may then use those as you desire—mostly. Another step is in place if you pay someone else in Aztlan with that credstick. The free pesos they just received from you will automatically convert to standard pesos the next time they sync with their bank and they are obligated by law to do so before spending them. It is a felony and easily traceable, since free pesos transactions have a very specific

audit trail. This ensures that Aztechnology knows exactly where any of its currency that could leave the country or be converted is going and how it is being transacted.

As an extension of that level of economic control, Aztlan's stock market is an entirely virtual exchange, but requires any broker trading on it to complete an extensive government-licensing program (this *includes* computerized expert system "brokers"). Because of the complexity involved in acquiring a license, most foreign investors choose to use local brokerage houses instead of completing the process for their own in-house personnel.

- Aztlan slipped all those esoteric economic laws in under the pretense of combating drug cartels, claiming it makes it impossible for them to move cash in and out of Aztlan or launder it through investment schemes. It'd be a plausible excuse if we didn't realize Aztechnology was founded by drug cartels.
- Moneymaker

MILITARY CONTROL

Aztlan's active armed forces stands at 60,000, which you are probably surprised to learn is smaller than our own Cuban military. It is largely a defensive military with very little force projection. The Navy includes no aircraft carriers and the Air Force has few long-ranged bombers. It has only a handful of intercontinental missiles and no nuclear warheads. However, as I am sure you know, this is not the whole story.

Aztechnology maintains an active "corporate security force" nearly three times that size. Some of this is used to guard Aztechnology extraterritorial property, but much is used to augment Aztlan military and law enforcement, providing it with the assets it lacks. Aztlan also outsources its intelligence gathering to Aztechnology, which conveniently allows one pool from which both may draw and also gives Aztechnology total infiltration into the nation's security.

- The Aztech soldiers tend to be a couple years ahead of the SOTA, while the national military is a few years behind. This creates more than a few morale problems, especially when you have situations like the Yucatan, where mostly national army troops were used on the front-lines of the toxic zone.
- Argent

Then there are the *guerreros*, or warrior orders, of which I'm sure you've only heard legends. I will try to add some truth. The *guerreros* are Aztechnology-backed and religiously-indoctrinated initiatory groups, but their members may be assigned to work with Aztlan national forces as deemed appropriate by Aztechnology. Membership requires magical talent and an impressive military and civic background. In many cases, purity of Aztlaner blood also factors into a warrior's advancement. Contrary to foreign belief, the *guerreros* are trained to be less lethal than regular soldiers; taking prisoners alive is not only preferred, it's religiously significant. From these prisoners, the *guerreros* obtain blood tokens that make them more potent in combat. There are four orders of equal influence but in different aspects.

- The truth is slim here, but the blood tokens seem to be foci that are made from the bodies of captured prisoners.
- Silicon Mage

- Made from their bodies as they are sacrificed, you mean.
- Eli

Ocelomeh (The Jaguars)

The Jaguars are the most commonly encountered *guerreros* by those who engage Aztlan or Aztechnology assets. The Jaguars are exemplary fire team combat veterans and are organized in exclusive units of Jaguar Guards, elite special forces that only operate within Aztlan national borders, often protecting the most sensitive corporate and national sites. Not all Jaguar Guards are *Ocelomeh*, but all magical troops in the Jaguar Guards are.

Jaguars are trained to act in a role on a team and their magical abilities usually reflect this. One *Ocelomeh* mage might be a team's medic, trained primarily in spells of healing. Another might be fire support and be trained in physical combat magic.

The Jaguars can often be seen at national religious ceremonies in full regalia, wearing light linen tunics bedecked with feathers and flowers. Outside of ceremonial garb, however, they wear standard military uniforms, distinguishable only by a unique shoulder-flash emblem.

- Or sometimes by their blood tokens. If you see a corpsec guard with a rope of human hair tied to his belt or a finger bone around his neck, chances are he's *Ocelomeh*.
- Picador

Cuacuahtin (The Eagles)

Cuban military forces may have encountered *Cuacuahtin* warriors and never realized it, simply passing down stories of valorous individuals within an opposing unit. The Eagles are recruited, like other *guerreros*, from various national and corporate military units, but unlike the Jaguars, the Eagles are returned to their original units after undergoing indoctrination. The Eagles are generally put in command of normal soldiers, bolstering their troops with their religious zeal and magical ability. Many are trained in techniques which allow them to enhance the ability of the soldiers around them or protect the soldiers from harm.

Unlike the Jaguars, the Eagles operate outside of Aztlan as their unit is ordered. Like the Jaguars, they are only distinguishable by a unique shoulder emblem.

- I heard a story from a merc friend of mine who was working down in Yucatan a few years back. He was telling me about how six Aztlaner soldiers held a valley against forty Yucatan rebels, with spirit support, for six hours. After the Aztlaner bodies were finally recovered, the rebels identified one of them as an Eagle warrior.
- ASDF

Otontin (The Brave Ones)

The *Otontin* are deep infiltration agents, and as such are the least likely ones you've encountered. They are primarily trained in techniques of stealth and deception and an *Otontin* warrior acts alone and usually behind enemy lines. It is their duty to get close to foreign targets that are the most protected, usually for extraction, but sometimes for assassination. Once recruited as an *Otontin*, connections to the warrior's past are erased: unit, family, and friends. They live only for their order and for their mission and assume an identity as needed.

- Not all the *Otontin* are behind enemy lines. A number of them are being used to infiltrate the underground Catholic movement.
- Jerusalem

Cuachicqueh (The Shorn Ones)

The *Cuachicqueh* are modern shock troops, or maybe you could call them corporate-military terrorists. They operate in complimentary pairs and like the *Otontin* are used often deep behind enemy lines. Unlike the *Otontin*, they are decidedly less subtle and are trained for sabotage, terror strikes, or brute-force kidnappings. They sometimes maintain contacts with insurgents or terrorist groups in the target area but sometimes act entirely independent of those forces. Unlike those groups, they do not take credit for their actions and if the blame falls on one of these other groups, that usually only works to their advantage.

Many devout *Cuachicqueh* can be identified by the historical shorn head and Mohawk or single braid look, but not all undertake this tradition.

- Aztechnology keeps fresh ritual samples of every warrior in case of their capture. In addition, each one carries a poison pill to ensure they will not reveal anything if taken alive.
- Sin Fronteras
- Poison pill? That's ancient history. The warriors carry a dose of nano-cutters now. If the need arises to use them, they consider it a holy sacrifice. That's hardcore, omae.
- Italy

FAITH UNDER THE FIFTH SUN

- Sometimes the best way to get the scoop on a religion is to let the religion sell itself. This section comes from an Aztlan tourist information packet. Of course, you know me better than to believe I'd just let the Azzies represent themselves; I've asked Deprogrammer to provide inserts separating truth from fiction. He takes Aztec religion very seriously and has followed it for years.
- Captain Chaos
- Don't think I'll forget about the money you owe me, Cap. ;)
- Deprogrammer



OLD WONDERS, NEW WORLD: THE PATH OF THE SUN

Everywhere you go during a visit to Aztlan, the many gods of the Path of the Sun will smile down upon you. We are a nation rich in history in faith, but to truly appreciate any visit, you should come with a basic introduction to our spiritual world.

TEOCALLIS, HOUSE OF THE GODS

You will see them towering above the Tenochtitlán skyline and standing humbly on the sides of desert roads. Small or large, every *teocalli* is a temple and a house of the gods, so all are divine. You can identify a *teocalli* right away by its traditional four-sided, stepped-pyramid design and flattened summit, which houses an image of the deity to which the *teocalli* is consecrated and an altar for offerings. They are not only places of worship but also of education and participation. Each *teocalli*, even the tiniest roadside ones, includes a subtle dataterminal which a visitor can access to learn about the local god, make donations to the priesthood, or even submit petitions to the deity, which are carried to it by the priests at the next sunrise.

- Aztechnology runs the computer network the *teocallis* use and you can bet your ass they will tag a visitor's SIN. From it, they can build a database that tracks not which *teocalli* you visited, but ties your name to donations and petitions. The Azzies use this information mostly on their own citizens, building a profile of their nation and finding out who gives and who doesn't. It's an invisible social pressure in Aztlan; the faithful find themselves rewarded while the unfaithful run into glass ceilings, piles of red tape, you name it. The larger *teocallis* are also internally hollow and house environmentally-controlled quarters for the priesthood as well as other civic duties, such as armories, emergency provisions, etc. Don't think for a second that they are easy targets; these temples are usually guarded by Jaguar Guards and they glow (sometimes flare) in the astral with background count, indicating some serious juju is going on.
- Deprogrammer:
 - I haven't been able to get close enough for serious study, but I suspect the background count is aspected. To the Path of the Sun, no doubt, which means it'd be a headache for you and me, but a boon to the Azzies. My advice: don't face them down on their home ground.
 - Magister

THE OLD GODS

One reason there are so many *teocallis* in Aztlan is because there are so many gods! The Path of the Sun worships dozens of deities of the old Aztec ways, as well other gods from Mesoamerican cultures that are honored in our republic. Some gods are universal (literally!), like Quetzalcóatl, the Feathered Serpent of Knowledge and Laws, while some lesser deities are significant in the lives of certain people, like Yacatecuhtli, the God of Traveling Merchants and patron of international business. Holidays and festivals honoring the gods are numerous and exciting and there is always one to attend. *Día de los Muertos*, or the Day of the Dead, runs from the evening of October 31st to November 2nd, and it is a time of simultaneously celebrating and mourning those who have passed.

To Aztlaners, death is not a somber affair, but one of joy; we believe that life springs from death. Another fascinating festival is *Nemontemi*, the five “nothing days” between the end of one Aztec year and the start of the next. These days, which fall at the beginning of February, are considered unlucky for business. Aztlaners spend them at religious ceremonies or gathering with family and exchanging gifts.

- I’ve included a handy list of the major gods, all of which have large *teocallis* in Tenochtitlán and are pretty widely worshipped. The Path of the Sun’s pantheon can be confusing, because in addition to the dozens of gods, many gods have multiple aspects with separate names. For instance, the god Tlaloc who is responsible for the rains and agriculture also goes by the name Epcóatl and is the patron deity of children. Some small cults worship him as Oztoteotl, the god of caves.

- Deprogrammer

- Images of the gods feature heavily in Aztlan iconography, even in neon-flashing digital crawls and carved into the architecture. If you’re familiar with their images they can help you identify sections of the sprawl quickly, especially in cases where the iconography is used in place of textual signs.

- Demonseed Elite

THOSE WHO SERVE

Serving in the priesthood is an important and honored following in Aztlan, which shows from the nearly 150,000 priests in our nation. The priests of the Path of the Sun are known as *teopixque* (singular: *teopixqui*) and are more than just religious stewards. They are civic stewards also in areas such as health care and education. The civic link is evident in the structure of the priesthood: its official head is the *Huey Tlatoani* (“Revered Speaker”), who in past times was the emperor but these days is the elected president. Below the *Huey Tlatoani*, three High Priests preside over the religious observance in the nation: the High Priests of Quetzalcóatl, Tlaloc, and Huitzilopochtli. If you visit Aztlan during a high festival period, you may even see one of them personally leading the ceremony!

- Though the President and the *Huey Tlatoani* is the same person, they are two distinct roles. There is separate protocol that is used depending on which one you are addressing. The three high priest positions under the *Huey Tlatoani* seem to have very fast turnover, though as far as I can tell, every one of them has been magically talented. It’s not mentioned here, but there is also an influential Vicar General position under the *Huey Tlatoani* that chooses new priests from the thousands of applicants and oversees administrative functions for the priesthood. The current Vicar General is a man named Cesar Botello, a shrewd politico without an ounce of magic. It is also important to note that the percentage of magically active *teopixque* sits at 24 percent and is rising; much higher than in other sectors or in other religious organizations.

- Deprogrammer

- It’s not just the priesthood. The percentage of magically-active population in Aztlan is higher than the world average and among the highest concentrations on the globe. Probably due to the Aztecs’ aggressive system for identifying magical potential in the population.

- Mad Libbie

THE IMPORTANCE OF SACRIFICE

You may have seen docudramas on the Ancient Wisdom Channel showing Aztecs sacrificing people to their gods under the dark of the moon. It is true that it once happened; while human sacrifice is no longer performed in Aztlan, sacrifice is still a central concept to our belief system. We believe that we live in the age of the Fifth Sun, with four previous cataclysms having destroyed prior suns and humanity. To return humanity to life and give us a new sun, the gods sacrificed themselves for us. To thank them for that sacrifice and to keep our sun rising each day, the Aztlan people make small sacrifices to the gods. These sacrifices are purely symbolic, such as a monetary donation to the priesthood or state charities or sometimes a drop of blood from a pricked finger onto a piece of ceremonial paper which is then burned in offering at a *teocalli*. Our sacrifices are not the scary scenes of the trid but a way to honor how fortunate and precious our lives all are.

- There have been documented cases of public human sacrifice in Aztlan, though these cases involved criminals sentenced to capital punishment. When pressed, the Aztlan government claims these acts are not “cruel and unusual punishment”, because the offender is magically anesthetized just before decapitation by an obsidian blade. Witnesses from the astral do confirm that an exchange of magical energy does take place between the victim and the presiding priest, but can’t say whether it is the casting of a spell or not. More significant is the link between the concept of sacrifice and Aztlan magical traditions, as can be seen in the use of blood magic. Though not officially sanctioned by the government of Aztlan, there are countless reports of Aztlaner shamans and hermetics who employ blood-letting of themselves and the sacrifice of others as a means of augmenting their magical ability.

- Deprogrammer

MAJOR AZTLAN DEITIES

Deity	Areas of Responsibility
Quetzalcóatl	Sky, wind, knowledge, laws
Huitzilopochtli	War, the sun
Tezcatlipoca	Fate, conflict, night, death
Tlaloc	Rain, agriculture
Xuihtecuhtli	Light, fire
Xipe-Totec	Cycles, seasons, diseases

BRIGHT SKY, LONG SHADOWS

- The first half of this section comes from a Mexican ganger and runner named Tren. The locals didn't want to give me the scoop on their lifestyle, but I pulled some leverage and got some perspective. The second half is courtesy of Argent, covering the import shadowrunner life and the forces in the nation working against Aztlan.
- Captain Chaos

LA ONDA MEXICANA

Look, I don't know who this Captain Nemo or Captain Chaos gringo is. I don't care. He arranged to have me busted out of an Aztech prison, so I'm paying back a debt. That's all there is to it. He wanted to know what life is really like in Aztlan, from the perspective of a Mexican. It ain't pretty, but we deal. We have our own way of doing things and our own style; we call it "la onda Mexicana." Don't bother to try to learn it, if you weren't born with it, you will never be one of us.

In Aztlan, we don't care if you have horns or pointy ears, what matters is your blood. You're either a peninsular with blood that traces back to Spain, a traditional with Mesoamerind local blood, or a *mestizo*, who is a mixed blood. The peninsulars are the *cabróns* who think they run the show here, living in their corporate *castillos*, wearing their suits and flashing their fake smiles. Most of the *mestizos* struggle to pull in a few pesos cleaning toilets or working in the agricultural zones, playing up their Spanish blood and doing everything it takes to try to climb the ladder to being a corporate-affiliated worker someday. They are *los muertos*, already dead inside. Then you have the Mesoamerinds, most of them stuffed off in a corner of the nation, living in absolute poverty. Aztlan has never done anything for them except rip off their heritage; they have no part in the nation. Their village, their language, their traditions, that's all that matters to them.

- It's amazing the contrast in Aztlan sometimes. You can leave a near-arcology *castillo* in Tenochtitlán full of corporators pulling in six-figure salaries and then drive a few hours away and find Mesoamerinds living on subsistence farming who hardly even know Aztlan exists.
- Gina E

Then there's Mexicans like me and the traditionals who are with us; *mestizos* and Mesoamerinds who came to the Sprawl to follow the Aztlan dream and build a better life. *Ni madres*. The system doesn't want us, our blood isn't Spanish enough. We choke down smog in between the shadows of the *teocallis* and *castillos*, but we've built our own world there. We have our own gangs, our own shops, our own languages and connections. We don't surf data havens or build bragsheets. Everything is word of mouth here and it's all family—you're either Mexican or you're not. If you're not, you either prove to us you have *huevos grandes* or we cut yours off.

- Tren's not exaggerating. The locals have no love for the imported shadow community. They have their own gritty system of personal honor, sort of like *machismo*, but the chicas play the game just as

well. It's gang rules down there, and the only way an outsider can get in good with them is to prove he's got more guts without insulting their honor. It's not an easy task and you don't get second chances.

- Cruz
- If you're in, though, you're golden. Without them, you're an import relying on Aztechnology to support you. And they will stab you in the back as soon as it suits them. The Mexicans will take care of you like you're family; sharing their doss, their jobs, whatever you need.
- Cutter

We make our living doing the illegal dirty work for the Aztlaners or selling brainbenders to their kids. If some corporator wants to pay me to off another corporator so he can get a promotion, that's fine with me. He gets me a gig as a janitor in the *castillo*, arranges for some doors to be left open, I put a few rounds in the target and walk away with some shiny trinkets from his apartment and maybe even his trophy wife. La onda Mexicana. Got it?

CRACKS IN THE PAYRAMID

If you're not from Aztlan but find yourself working here, you're called an import. Doesn't matter if you're sneaking in for one gig or staying as a frequent hire, you're an outsider and you just get used to that fact. In Aztlan, locals tend to be hired for local work, meaning anything internal (Azzie vs. Azzie posturing). Imports are usually hired for jobs working for or against foreign elements, such as the foreign shareholders and managers of corporate subsidiaries here. The work pays well (in *pesos norma*, unless you're a one-time hire) but you have to be comfortable with the fact that you're even more expendable than the Mexicans and traditionals. Life is pretty damn cheap south of the border.

- Frequent-hires are usually attached to one Johnson. He keeps you paid, sets you up with housing, gives you a place to lay low, and will of course leave your body in a ditch as soon as he doesn't need you anymore.
- Juan Solo
- The imports down here tend to gather in communities, much like expatriates. They have their own imported fixers who run import bars where they hang out and talk shop.
- Tequila Max

The import runner community works almost exactly the same in Aztlan as it does in Seattle, but there's one exception to keep in mind. In Aztlan, gun laws are very lax and guns are an everyday fashion accessory. You do not even need to own a license for a pistol or submachine gun. Pretty sweet, neh? Well, also keep in mind that the reason Aztlan doesn't make a big fuss about this is because their law enforcement and Aztech sec-goons are carrying bigger, badder, and more lethal weaponry and armor than you. For them, *everything* is legal and used. Oh, and if an Aztlan cop inflicts collateral damage while taking out a perp, guess who is legally at fault? That's

right, the perp. So, first rule: don't attract the *Policía* when doing biz. Second rule: if you do, make sure it doesn't end with you getting caught.

- Too many runners who got excited about packing heat in Aztlan are now packing cells in Aztechnology prisons. And that's if they are lucky; capital offenders end up as sacrifices.
- Cruz

Aztlan has recently begun a law enforcement crackdown against "terrorist groups" operating within their borders. If you thought they were hard-hooped before, they are doubly-so now. With the Yucatan rebellion resolved, they've moved more corporate security assets towards handling these internal affairs and it shows. Independent (read: not Aztechnology-sanctioned) organized crime was already an endangered species in Aztlan; the laws around the *peso* make it hard for them to operate. But now it's damn near hell. However, there are a few groups worth mentioning.

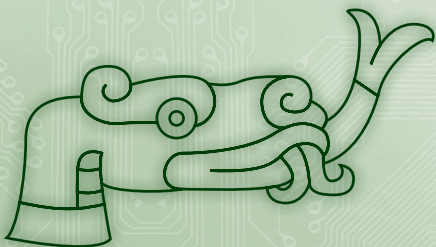
DAVID CARTEL

In 2007, three Central American drug cartels (Medellín, David, and Masaya) joined together to create ORO, the proto-corporation that became Aztechnology. Of those three, only the David Cartel, based out of the city of David in the state of Panama, still operates in its original form. In fact, after the recent crackdowns on the Mafia and the Yakuza in Aztlan, it can be considered the only traditional criminal syndicate operating in the nation.

- The cartel's boss, of course, is Domingo Ramos, son of the cartel's head in 2007, Julio Ramos. Not to mention the part about Domingo being on the Aztechnology board of directors.
- Pyramid Watcher

The David Cartel has its fingers in every imaginable criminal pie in Aztlan, but its specialty is organic and technological drugs (coke and BTLs). Primarily for sale abroad, they make every effort to undercut the prices and exceed the quality of their competitors in the Ghost Cartels and Jamaican Posses.

- Yeah, using Aztechnology labs to refine their product.
- Beaker
- This drug war was also a political war; by undercutting the Ghost Cartels, they were cutting off funding to the Yucatan rebels.
- SWO



NAHUALLI

Aztechnology's control over Aztlan's currency system makes it very difficult for international criminal elements, even freelancers like us, to operate in secrecy. That is where *Nahualli* comes in. Traditionally, the term *nahualli* refers to an Aztec belief in an animal that shares a soul with each individual when they are born, becoming sort of their totem and protector. It also referred to sorcerers whose power came from control of their animal twin, among other things. In Aztlan, the *Nahualli* are a mysterious cult of otaku who operate throughout the regional grid and will, for a price, tweak the numbers in money transactions to get around Aztechnology's oversight of the peso.

EL SOLO

This area of the world has a long history with rebels, usually leftist rebels. The Zapatistas, Sandinistas, even the Yucatan Rebellion. The lattermost group has recently scored what they consider a victory and many of the farmers-turned-warriors are returning home to try to figure out how to live off a land that has gone mad. There were some among them who weren't merely fighting for Yucatan independence and aren't happy with the outcome. They are anti-capitalist, anti-imperialist extremists who want nothing less than the destruction of Aztechnology. These days they find themselves cut off and alone, so alone that they've made their name *El Solo*.

- These slags are so committed to toppling Latin American imperialism that they would not take any support from Amazonia during the Yucatan rebellion. They feel that the Amazonians are just another imperialist power trying to use the rebellion as pawns, and of course, they are likely right. But being a rebel group out here without Aztlan or Amazonian support ensures one hard life.
- Sin Fronteras
- They used to be one of the groups that supported *Llama de la Libertad* (the Flame of Freedom), but they didn't buy into Pobre's peace settlement and are very suspect of his recent behavior. Since then, they've been on their own.
- Wreckoon

El Solo is led by a man named "Colonel X" of which very little is known. He issues manifestos on the Matrix and through pirate feeds hosted by the Round Square in the Caribbean, decrying both Aztlan and Amazonia as slavemasters. The group is a strange mix of high tech and low tech; they use private wireless networks to organize and form flash-riots that leave entire corporate complexes trashed, but pursuers on their trail have been known to fall into jungle booby traps like pit spike traps that have nothing modern about them.

- They just know how to get the absolute most out of anything they use, whether it's technology or the dirt beneath their feet. Trust me, *hombre*, it's the only reason they are still alive.
- Cruz



- They currently act mostly against Aztechnology assets in southern Aztlan, but have also hit pan-corporate targets in the Canal Zone and north Amazonian targets. I would think they must have some sort of operation in Caracas, but if they do, it's *real* quiet.
- Argent

PLACE OF THE HERON

Where does the name *Aztlan* come from, anyway? It's the name of the mythical land where the Aztec used to live, according to their own myths and translates roughly to the "Place of the Heron" or "Place of Whiteness." They were forced out of that land by some catastrophe, however, and migrated south and east, to the central plateau where Tenochtitlán now is. But that's all the history I'm going to give you, time to tell you how it really is, in the here and now.

THE MEXICAN PLATEAU

The northern and western half of modern-day Aztlan is dominated by the Mexican Plateau, a large expanse of high and dry tablelands surrounded on three sides by mountain ranges: the Sierra Madre Occidental on the west, the Sierra Madre Oriental on the east, and the Sierra Madre del Sur on the south. It is mostly inhospitable savannah, but if you hug the edges, it makes primo t-bird smuggling territory. This is also the region where you'll find Aztlan's two largest cities, both of which are great destinations for work.

TENOCHTITLÁN

The capital of Aztlan lies in the Mexico Basin, a mountainous depression filled with shallow lakes that has been a center for civilization in the region for millennia. Two words describe Tenochtitlán best: crowded and dirty. I know the Seattle runners are rolling their eyes, but Seattle is a lush paradise compared to here. It's a snake's nest of twisting elevated roadways and super-routes and the airspace is just as packed with short-hop VTOLs, copters, and even the occasional feathered serpent. And dirty...smog doesn't even begin to describe it. The air here is so bad that breathers are a required fashion accessory and they take it very seriously.

- No kidding. Your expensive Europa EdenAir breather will get you laughed at here. Breather decoration is all hand-made down in Tenochtitlán. Absolutely beautiful stuff, if you put out of your mind why they are worn.
- Rico
- Tenochtitlán is an elevated city, on average over 3,000 meters up in the mountains. And the build of the basin and the nature of the weather here just trap all the smog in. It's absolutely lethal if inhaled for even a short period of time during the warmer half of the year. The locals have a name for it, *Los Humo Grande*. The Big Smoke.
- Webster

The general rule of thumb is: the more central in the city you are and the higher altitude your doss is, the more pesos you are rakin' in. Ground level smog traps are the home of the SINless Mexicans. Sitting smack dab in the center is the Zócalo, the plaza that houses the Aztechnology Pyramid and the primary *teocallis* of the major gods.

- The Temple of Tezcalipoca is right across the street from the Great Temple of Quetzalcóatl and the difference is striking. The latter is flashy and opulent while the former is rather plain and subdued, despite being nearly as large. But take a gander in the astral sometime, the Temple of Tezcalipoca is radiating with power, perhaps even more than its bigger brother across the way.
- Eli

SAN DIEGO/TIJUANA SPRAWL

The San Diego/Tijuana Sprawl is Aztlan's second largest urban center, its high-tech industrial powerhouse, and the home to most of the foreign subsidiaries that operate in Aztlan. You know all those wiz military jets, boats, and drones Aztechnology makes? They are assembled in San Diego. If it has a military application, chances are it is built here. This is also where all the high-tech agricultural machinery is assembled for shipping north to the Pyramid Operations subsidiary in CalFree. The city also has a legacy of top-notch genetic engineering and chemical engineering research, a legacy that hasn't gone away since Aztlan moved in.

- And Tijuana's infamous reputation for black clinics hasn't gone away either, and has only flourished since San Diego and Tijuana conjoined. Tijuana is definitely the bad side of this Sprawl and is literally packed with shady docs and dirty clinics willing to patch up, graft on, or sculpt over anything biological or cybernetic. Just remember: no refunds!
- Cutter

Of course, all this valuable research and military intelligence (not to mention the relatively lower smog and less crowding compared to Tenochtitlán) also draws the local branches of every AAA megacorp and dozens of smaller corporations as well. This makes San Diego a hub of corporate intrigue in Aztlan and a popular locale for import runners.

THE MAYA REGION

The southern and eastern half of Aztlan is known as the Maya Region and is almost a polar opposite of the Mexican Plateau. This half is hot and wet tropical lowlands covered in a thick blanket of rainforest and subject to wildly rainy weather and patches of out of control jungle growth. Most of the cities down here are along the coast and the rich farmland has been taken over by Aztechnology agricornp interests. Because the coasts are well-patrolled, the jungles are thick and dangerous and the land is firmly under Azzie control, smuggling is less common down here and more of the shadowrun hiring is done through locals than imports.

- The major news item down here is the Nicaragua Canal, which Aztechnology has already broke ground on, despite protests from the Corporate Court. The canal would utilize the San Juan River in the Aztlan state of Nicaragua and would travel along the southern shore of the Lago de Nicaragua and then across the Isthmus of Rivas. The canal proposal would allow for ships four times the size of what the Panama Canal Zone currently allows and would be augmented by a parallel high-speed cargo rail line for cargo too important to wait to pass through the locks by ship.

- 0111011001

- The Corporate Court is having a fit because it would make the pan-corporate Panama Canal Zone obsolete and really tweaks the nose of the Veracruz Settlement. However, they've been unable to block the project because it falls on Aztlan soil and is being spearheaded by Aztechnology contractors.

- The Keynesian Kid
- Aztlan has been negotiating preferential rates for Wuxing on the Nicaragua Canal. What Aztlan is getting out of the bargain, besides Wuxing's silence on the Court, I'm unsure.
- Espion

PUERTO LIMON/ISLA VIVA AQUACOLOGY

Puerto Limon is a little slice of Aztlan paradise and is where all the rich and famous come to play, relax, and catch up on the latest in cosmetic enhancement. The Costa Rican port's spas and resorts double as recovery centers for the numerous cutting-edge leónization and body-sculpting clinics hosted here.



- As such, it's a popular hotspot for extraction gigs. The security here tends to be less than in the corporate enclaves up north because it would interfere with the recovery.

- Toro

- Aztech black ops and extended shadow assets also frequently end up here when they get "treated" to new identities.

- Number Eight

Off the coast of Puerto Limon is the shallow water aquacology called Isla Viva. A number of Aztechnology subsidiaries including Maritech Enterprises, Genetique, Productos Cultivos, and Trés Chic Cosmetics own space in this combination above- and below-water arcology. It not only houses their research staff in absolutely beautiful suites with a view to kill for, but their bio-research and aquaculture labs and farms are on-site also. The stepped-pyramid arcology rises out of the sea, and to top it all off, is covered from apex to sea level in flowering vines and lush terrace gardens.

- Which double as added security, I hear the vines are astrally sensitive and when an astral form passes through their aura, they release a pheromone into the air. Specially designed chemical sniffers built into the outer walls detect the pheromone and register a signal to on-site security riggers.

- Keymaster

THE FRINGE

Let me tell you something, now is not the time if you're thinking about getting into the Aztlan smuggler business. Used to be that much of the Aztlan military and Aztechnology security forces were occupied in places like the Yucatan and Denver. Not anymore. A big worm kicked their butts out of the Mile High City and the Yucatan situation is being "peacefully resolved." What that means is that there are a lot of soldiers being re-assigned, and guess where they are being moved to? That's right, the borders.

Amazonian Border

If you ask me, this contested land is in the hands of the plants. The jungle is so insane down here that the border shifts daily and neither Aztlan nor Amazonia can really tell where it is. It's mostly defined by exploratory strikes by Aztlan into Amazonia or vice versa and because of the uncontrollable land, is mostly occupied by mobile recon forces. Most of the assets being moved down here are covert paramilitary units being used to probe into Amazonia's borders and gather intelligence (some of which is obsolete within weeks when the landscape shifts).

CAS Border

It's not war, but it's damn near close. The Aztlan border that cuts through what used to be Texas has always been a touchy spot, but has gotten a lot worse lately. The "Eastern Fortification Zone" between Austin and Corpus Christi has had fresh soldiers rotated in from the Yucatan and the CAS has been

forced to respond with an increase in its own troop strength. The Sons of the Alamo and their sympathizers have been pressuring the CAS government to follow through on campaign promises to liberate San Antonio and press the conflict in Austin, but the administration has been hesitant in the face of fresh Aztlan combat veterans.

- Trigger fingers on both sides are extremely itchy and Aztechnology's acquisition of Atlantic Security in Miami nearly started the fireworks. Last minute negotiations prompted by the Caribbean League forestalled any military action...for now.

- Cruz

Pueblo Border

Before the past year, this border was largely a quiet expanse covered in sensors on both sides with a rare dogfight or t-bird clash between the PCC and Aztlan. Pueblo shoved its military west to Los Angeles and Aztlan, as much as it wanted to, couldn't field a real response with the rebellion flaring in their backyard. Times change, omae. Aztlan has shifted sizable military assets up to San Diego and El Paso. The PCC is starting to develop serious military strategies for responding to their nightmare scenario: an Aztlan two-pronged attack from the southeast and southwest, aiming for Los Angeles and Denver. The situation isn't quite as dire as with the CAS, but Pueblo is no longer willing to write off the possibility of war.

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>>>TRANSFER COMPLETE...OPENING<<<
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- I apologize for any panic my intrusion into this document may be causing. Do not blame your sysop, he was unaware of my tampering with his file transfer network. I have usurped this network to deliver a transcript which must be shared before it is silenced, and forces are in motion even now to make sure it never sees the light of day. You are about to glimpse a portion of the Truth. As frightening as it is, it must never be extinguished.

- Little Devil

- Whoever the hell that is, he cut through my security like it wasn't there. I haven't seen anything like it since the Arcology shutdown.

- Captain Chaos

THE SMOKING MIRROR

The air around me is dry and warm and somewhere distant, there are birds chirping. I imagine the sun is shining, but I can not see it. I have gouged out my own eyes and cut out my own tongue. I fear He could use them to find me. I do not even trust my own body; I type this from a chair to which I am restrained. My name is not important; my real identity was removed from my own memory thirteen years ago. What is

important is that I am a member of the *Otontin* order, one of its most senior. I hope that by sacrificing myself to bring this knowledge to light, I have pleased Quetzalcóatl and Xuihtecutli and may serve them in the eastern paradise of the sun.

In the ancient days before even the Aztec empire, Quetzalcóatl the Feathered Serpent was tricked by his twin, Tezcatlipoca, who showed the Feathered Serpent a smoking mirror which reflected images of atrocities he had committed while under the influence of a potion his dark twin had made. The peaceful god fled in shame, but it has always been believed that Quetzalcóatl would return from his exile and bring a new age of enlightenment. In 1519, the Aztec king, Montezuma II, falsely believed that Cortés was the returning god and welcomed him into the empire, foolishly inviting his own downfall and that of his people. We too, of modern Aztlan, have been fooled. Maybe it is not too late for us.

THE CULT OF TEZCATLIPOCA

During Quetzalcóatl's exile, his dark twin Tezcatlipoca ruled, demanding war and human sacrifices to keep the apocalypse at bay. He has gone by many names: Titlacahuan ("He Whose Slaves We Are"), Moquequelo ("The Mocking"), Nahuaque ("The Night Wind"), Yaotzin ("The Enemy"), but the result has always been darkness, slavery, and death. The celebrations held at the Great Teocalli in Tenochtitlán today are a ruse; Quetzalcóatl has not returned and Tezcatlipoca still rules through his servants. I know, because I am one of them.

The leaders of Aztlan serve the leaders of Aztechnology and the leaders of Aztechnology serve Tezcatlipoca. Whether they are devout or not, they are his priesthood. His High Priest assumes the mantle of Aztec kings and conducts secret rituals in the Temple of Tezcatlipoca to which they attend. I attended one of these, where I was initiated into the higher mysteries and learned the truth of who I serve. Burning braziers surrounded myself and a dozen other *guerreros* and from them issued a smoke that when inhaled allowed me to see the astral, even though I normally can not. Around us, a circle of priests chanted while their blood flowed between them in plastic tubing and machinery connected to their necks. I recognized some of these priests as the High Priests from the temples in Tenochtitlán, and around them swarmed attendants who checked the machines and others who led young men and women to the center of the circle, where an offering bowl awaited. Bloody sacrifices followed and I could see the astral space blaze with the combined aura of the priests as they worked their magic. Then He arrived. Tezcatlipoca.

His dark serpentine form writhed in the astral above us, his spiritual flesh swirling with emptiness like the smoking mirror that is his name. His twisted body stretched and wings made of a vast void unfurled, snuffing out the fiery cast of the priests' combined aura. At each of us, the elite *guerreros*, he stared with abyssal eyes and forged a connection to our souls. We were unmade and remade there, and when the ritual ended and Tezcatlipoca departed, we knew our abilities were no longer bound by the limits of men but we were also now bound to Him as slaves.

BLOODY FINGERPRINTS

One of Tezcatlipoca's epithets is The Enemy on Both Sides, and he is said to encourage conflict so that the strongest will be bred and prevail. He tolerates, some might say encourages, conflict between his servants, though in the end they all serve the same agenda. The board of Aztechnology is rife with factions that have their own goals and through a custom of patronage from members of the board, most senior Aztlan and Aztechnology officials and even the *guerreros* serve one of these factions. The separate pull of these individual factions and the combined push of Tezcatlipoca's agenda is what guides the fate of Aztlan.

My patron was a man named Oscuro, who led the faction that controlled the blood mages and the priesthood. He aspired to bring about the end of the Fifth Sun, so that the world would crumble and only Aztlan would have the power and foresight to survive and protect humanity. His effort failed and it ruined him; I saw him shortly after, afraid for his life and aged by decades. Not long after, he vanished. Control of the priesthood fell to another on the board, the High Priest of Tezcatlipoca. I could tell he did not trust me, I was Oscuro's man. He was right, but with the wrong reasons. Under Oscuro, I saw that what I was doing was not holy—now I only hope to die a noble death.

The board, and likewise the nation, is now dominated by a faction of arrogant mages who seek power unimaginable in scope. They claim to be descendents of scholars who once served Quetzalcóatl but did not follow him into exile and chose instead to stay and cultivate what they had learned. They hunger to control every aspect of the nation and channel its resources toward vast and complex magical projects, such as the magical linking of the *teocallis*. They speak of taking the "long view" and I gathered from their sneering comments that they considered Oscuro's work to be the premature graspings of a fool.

- If the background count at the *teocallis* is aspected, it would augment their magic similar to power sites. If those *teocallis* were linked...
- Jacinda

There are also those that the priests refer to as the "merchants and goldsmiths." They are the members of the board who do not care much for the religious trappings of the Cult but are led by selfishness, avarice and a desire to spread their influence (and that of Aztechnology's) across the globe. This group has cannily picked up presence on the board in the wake of others' failures, but they are content to follow their blind greed while the mages' lead the agenda. They may feign disinterest in Tezcatlipoca's plans, but it is their money and power that fuels and conceals the dark schemes.

Finally there are the feathered serpents, who seem focused on the past rather than the future and are guided by ancient rivalries among themselves. It is said that Tezcatlipoca favors them and sends them on missions to unearth secrets of the past, but with one of their own facing execution, I find myself

wondering. I know that since Quauhtlatoa's assassination, a feathered serpent has become the overseer of Teotihuacan. I have also heard that other serpents seek the *Chicomoztoc*, or "Seven Caves of Origin" in the north and that some travel covertly into Amazonia seeking something else of great power.

- The feathered serpent facing execution that he's talking about is Dzitbalchén. He's on trial for the assassination of Juan Atzacapotzalco and Quauhtlatoa at the Yucatan peace summit. Check out the Yucatan file for more information.

- Corona

- Hey, so these serpents are uncovering ancient artifacts for Aztechnology? What about the Apep Consortium? Apep, in Egyptian myth, was a giant serpent who tried to swallow the sun.

- Digger

- I don't know much about Apep, but I do know that the *Chicomoztoc* come from an ancient Aztec myth that says that the earliest Aztecs emerged from the earth from seven caves before migrating south towards Tenochtitlán. Oddly enough, the Hopi Amerinds share the same root language and have a similar myth, only without the migration part. They also believe in a succession of worlds that were destroyed by cataclysms before the current one, very similar to the Aztec five suns.

- Holly

- So if the Hopi have the same myth, minus the migration, and the Hopi run the Pueblo Corporate Council, one has to wonder if the caves would be somewhere there.

- Ancient History

- Certainly makes you think about all the feathered serpents with links to Aztechnology that were living in Denver until Ghostwalker showed up.

- Zaratosa

I can tell my time here is now short, He has sensed my betrayal. Even this far away from Tenochtitlán, it now takes effort to make my fingers move and type out these final words, as if I am not the only one commanding them. I hope that those I have entrusted to release this file succeed and that this information is enough to wake my people and others to the lies that have been perpetuated in Quetzalcóatl's name.

Outside, the birds are still chirping, and though I can't see it, I know the Fifth Sun is shining.

>>>END TRANSFER<<<







BOLIVIA

By Huxley

- Most leftists think Bolivia is a workers' paradise. Maybe the Bolivians learned a few PR tricks from their former Azzie masters, because reality is quite different according to Huxley. He's an ex-left-wing militant turned runner who spent a few years in Bolivia and lived to tell the tale.

- Captain Chaos
Transmitted: XXXXXX

It's remarkable how blind we can be about what we hold dear. Back when I was young and naïve, I had a soft spot for Bolivia. I thought I knew everything about the country's struggle against Imperialism, the 2050 Revolution and *El Comandante* Limberg Velazco. My coffee mug even bore Velazco's face in a triumphant look of defiance.

That was then, this is now.

While Bolivia seems to have undergone dramatic changes, the equation remains the same. An authoritarian government abuses its power. Another faction is unhappy with that so it wants to kick them out (to replace them with its own corrupt regime, probably). A third group is looking to make the biggest possible profit out of the crisis. Yep, it all adds up.

- Wow, you've described just about every other country on Earth!
- Groucho Marxist

A BRAVE NEW WORLD

The first years of this century were particularly difficult for Bolivia. Though the native coca-planters and left-wing

nationalists succeeded in fending off early corporate predators, Bolivia remained in perpetual civil unrest having had more than two hundred presidents in less than two centuries of independence. Then in 2007 farmers and native movements were crippled when a series of landslides destroyed most coca fields and their livelihoods.

- Many Bolivians still believe the USA was behind that disaster. The War on Drugs an utter failure, the White House took off its gloves. Who cared if a few thousand Bolivians died?
- Llama Mama

- Actually, I heard the Azzies spun that story later to keep Ares out of the country. When Velazco took over, he thought it was convenient to give the masses an enemy to hate. Keeps the sheep in line, neh?
- PoliSci

The corps didn't have time to exploit the fortuitous turn of events. VITAS I and the Awakening were a fatal blow to both the rich and the poor alike. The plague wiped out more

than 30 percent of La Paz's inhabitants, including a good many suits (serves 'em right). Neither the government nor the Catholic Church were able to offer any relief. The Church was frantic over the return of magic, which didn't bode well for its already diminishing power. Many Bolivians still worshipped their ancestral deities behind a thin veil of Catholicism. The Awakening only strengthened their resolve to return to the old ways. No longer seeing a need to maintain their façade, they resumed their traditional beliefs. Unlike Ecuador or Amazonia's, the Bolivian Church withered away, having no one to blame but itself.

- It didn't hurt that both Aztechnology's puppet regime and Velazco's commies were dead set against the Church from day one.
- Missionary

GOLDEN OPPORTUNITIES

With Bolivia reeling from multiple blows, the newly formed ORO Corporation landed a knock-down punch taking over the weakened local cartels. By 2012, the corp began building its power base in the country by publicizing its generous humanitarian aid sent to the most desperate regions. ORO's shrewd manipulations firmly shoved the government into its pocket. It also enabled the corp to peacefully take over the state-owned mining and natural gas extraction companies in the name of Pan-Latin friendship. ORO succeeded in controlling just enough to make a profit without having to worry about the rest of the deteriorating country. By 2022, ORO had renamed itself the Aztechnology Corporation and was too busy taking over Aztlan's government to pay attention to its pet project.

By the 2040s, Bolivia's situation was critical, and international NGOs tried to come to the rescue. The government didn't stop them since their presence made it even easier to skim even more of the budget. The most notable result of the NGO aid was so minor it went unnoticed: Limberg Velazco, a young and impoverished Aymaran miner, received a scholarship abroad.

BOLIVIA AT A GLANCE

Government Type: Communist Republic

Total Population: 10,527,000

Racial Percentages:

Human: 60%

Elf: 12%

Dwarf: 9%

Ork: 14%

Troll: 3%

Other: 2%

Per Capita Income: 9,600¥

Estimated SINless: 11%

Below Poverty Level: 60%

Corporate Affiliation: 8%

Education:

Less Than Twelve Years: 30%

High School Equivalency: 53%

College Degrees: 12%

Advanced Degrees: 5%

Major Languages Spoken:

Spanish: 68%

Aymara: 65%

Quechua: 43%

Portuguese: 10%

Major Ethnic Groups:

Aymara: 32%

Quechua: 30%

Mestizo: 24%

Euro-Caucasian: 9%

Brazilian: 3%

Major Religions:

Aymara: 45%

Quechua: 26%

Roman Catholic: 10%

Path of the Sun: 1%

Other/Atheist: 18%

Currency: Bolivian Peso

Exchange Rate: BOP\$10 = 1¥

National Medical Coverage (unarmed): 85%

Guaranteed Response Time: None

EL COMMANDANTE

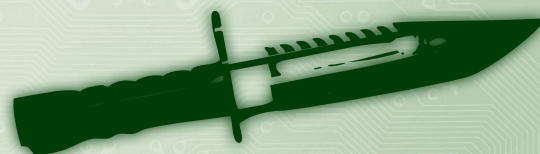
Velazco's years in the UCAS are documented elsewhere in the Matrix, I'm sure. Suffice it to say that our poor miner returned with new-found idealism. He traveled the country, delivering moving speeches about meta-human and civil rights, fostering communal organization and planting the seeds of his revolution to come. The masses, thirsty for change, drank in his words. Velazco rallied peasants, miners and other low class Aymaran workers to his *Movimiento Obrero Boliviano* (Bolivian Worker Movement). Under his firm leadership, the MOB (hah!) grew to a powerful force in Bolivian politics. Velazco's followers dubbed him *El Comandante*, the Commander. Velazco united his armies and dangled the people's optimistic dreams for a better life as their noble cause. His crusade easily recruited the country to his banner.

- Nice to see that leftists still have political fetishes. What's next? Che Guevara's clone?
- Tricky Dick

When the war in the Yucatan forced Aztechnology's attention elsewhere, El Comandante seized the perfect chance. Velazco partnered with the more than helpful Amazonians (the enemy of my enemy...), and the puppet Incan Quechua government was unable to stop the raging Aymaran revolutionaries from marching into the cities.

Aztechnology's control slowly slipped away; their Corporate Security stretched thin with tension on the Amazonian border and the Yucatan conflict. The end was inevitable. By 2051 Limberg Velazco became Bolivia's newest president.

- Not only was Aztechnology eventually banned from the country, but the other corps got to play with the Azzies' toys. Explains why the Corporate Court has never acted against Bolivia, no?
- Don Dinero



- I was an ACS “private contractor”, possibly the worst mistake I ever made. The MOB’s commanders were incredibly coordinated, and its shamans packed serious mojo. I heard that paracriflers butchered whole Azzie platoons in the mountains. I bailed out in the Aztlan embassy’s last chopper. Last thing I heard about anyone left behind was that they’d been executed or sent to reeducation camps.
- Lynch

MOB MENTALITY

Velazco established a regime that combined communist ideals and Aymaran traditions. But while Velazco nationalized Bolivia’s natural resources and the country held high a tightened fist against capitalism in public, we were soon to learn that the *Movimiento Obrero Boliviano* was as corrupt as the previous regime. Velazco allowed his pet corporations to carry on mining and gas extraction operations, and though the regime never affected the vestments of wealth and power, the only ones who didn’t profit were the little people.

Another ugly aspect of the MOB’s nature soon became evident. The Aymaras in power took the opportunity to “right” past injustices caused by the Incan Quechuas. On the surface, it might be a communist country, but the state has a definite Aymaran flavor to those controlling it. Bolivia’s shiny reputation as a leftist haven blinds potential critics and effectively brands those who speak up, like the Empowerment Coalition, as imperialist agents.

- Nothing new here. The Cubans mastered that propaganda technique decades ago.
- Tricky Dick

The repression of the Quechua. The halting economy slipping under the table to the MOB’s pet corps. Social unrest. Velazco’s MOB assures Bolivia that this government is what the people want. The people’s response? Find a new idealist. Much like Velazco once did with his fellow Aymarans, an unknown Quechua native, Sancho Collqui, easily rallies supporters all over the country, calling for a return to Incan traditions. Though the government squashes every group of supporters it can find, Collqui’s Neolncas seem well organized and equipped.

- Ok, I’ll bite. Equipped by whom? Aztechnology?
- Tutu Tango
- Aztecs and Incas together? Dream on, chummer.
- Aguari
- Some worry that Shining Path or Tupac Amaru could be expanding into Bolivia, but Amazonia is also a prime suspect. Amazonia’s support of the MOB was founded on a mutual need to oppose Aztechnology. Bolivia’s corporate ties, ecological mismanagement and ethnic oppression strain the precarious relationship between the two governments. I also heard a few other interesting rumors here and there, but those don’t come as cheap ...
- Machiavelli

BOLIVIA TIMELINE

- 2007:** Landslides ruin most coca fields in the tropical area near the Brazilian border.
- 2010:** VITAS I decimates Bolivia’s major cities, but spares isolated settlements.
- 2011-12:** The Awakening and subsequent social upheaval shatter the Catholic Church’s religious stranglehold. Most Bolivians return to their ancestral beliefs.
- 2012:** ORO Corporation starts offering humanitarian aid to Bolivia.
- 2034:** Amazonian takeover prompts thousands of refugees from Corumba and nearby areas to flee to Bolivia. This is encouraged by the lack of manpower in the deserted lands that VITAS left behind.
- 2040s:** Bolivia receives massive humanitarian aid from NGOs.
- 2043:** Aymaran miner Limberg Velazco receives a scholarship to California.
- 2046:** Velazco returns to Bolivia and forms the communist Bolivian Workers’ Movement (MOB).
- 2050-51:** Revolution! *The Movimiento Obrero Boliviano* (MOB) topples the Aztlan-backed Quechua government, installing a communist regime with Velazco as president.
- 2063:** The rumors of Sancho Collqui and his Neolnca movement start roaming the country.

VIVA LA REVOLUCION!

Behind the cheers for Velazco’s victory hides how the government actually ran this new workers’ paradise. The National Congress has 150 representatives, but the MOB is the only recognized political party. The other groups were absorbed or simply outlawed for a number of (drummed up) reasons. The more widespread factions, such as the previous regime’s Bolivian Socialist Phalanx, were converted. Its leader, Alberto Saucedo, was jailed until he saw the light (so to speak). Saucedo then became Minister of Public Works, and suddenly the Phalanx stopped all resistance against the MOB. On the other hand, the Christian Democratic Party’s leadership refused to play ball and simply vanished overnight.

Having won all elections so far (gotta love one party systems), El Comandante remains on top of the heap. Velazco built himself into an icon of resistance for Leftists worldwide, a later day Che. Did they fail to notice the country’s sorry state? Internationally, Bolivia has the dubious honor of being known for hosting the training camps of groups like Attack!, the Malaysian Communist Party and the UCAS’ International Progressives. They receive their indoctrination in Bolivia and return home to spread their ideology.

- You know what? The PR spin showing Velazco as a humble miner that could, reminds me of a certain farmer from Guadalajara...
- Pyramid Watcher
- Are you implying that Velazco is a Azzie-frontman zombie like Juan Atzacotalco was?
- TomTom

- You know that's not what I meant, you dreckhead.
- Pyramid Watcher

Velazco established the **People's Council** to take care of the day-to-day policy overview and corporate relations. Most members are MOB veterans, though some simply pop up out of nowhere every time El Comandante shuffles his cabinet. The interesting part is that all infiltration attempts to find out what goes on in the Council's closed-doors meetings have failed so far. Another unusual aspect of the council is that you don't need to be Bolivian to join. Elizabeth "Gringa" Spencer, one of Velazco's Californian friends, has been on the Council since the beginning. There is plenty of speculation about her relationship with El Comandante. Word is they're secretly married.

- That would explain what I heard last month. La Gringa was talking to a couple militants in Cochabamba after a rally, something about "earning her final reward". Think she's retiring to raise a few kids?
- Llama Mama
- Power struggles are frequent, usually ending when Velazco re-shuffles his cabinet to reflect the dominant factions. The most infamous was back when the Council was setting up shop in 2051, several members attempted to overthrow Velazco. El Comandante's response was brutal—whole villages were razed in a matter of days.
- Pariwana

One of the Council members secretly leads the **Revolutionary Guard**. The Guard takes care of internal security, ideological purity and general repression. It also runs the re-education camps where dissidents, especially Quechuas, are brainwashed into loyal MOB members. All in all, the Guard makes sure Bolivians remember the freedom they lost.

- Oh please, you're going to give us a speech about liberty? Liberty to be inefficient and miserable? Freedom to be a round peg in a square hole?
- Mustapha
- Commie red or corporate gray, a tyranny is a tyranny.
- PoliSci
- All I can advise is that if you work inside Bolivia, odds are you'll end up facing the Guard. They are downright scary in their zeal and efficiency, so good luck.
- Picador
- The Guard also seems to take care of undesirables. Professor Juan Navarro was a notorious opponent working at the Washington U, until someone put a bomb in his car. Lone Star suspects the Bolivians hired some of our local talent for the job.
- SPD

If you work outside in smaller cities or villages, you will deal with the local **collectives**. They masquerade for the visitors wearing a façade of industrious workers and diligent farmers side by side, taking care of their own life. Behind the

mask, the collectives are usually inefficient and corrupt. The corporations have "business relationships" with the local collectives so they will "overlook" certain regulations in exchange for any goods they can't get from the central government. The farther you are from the big cities, the more unpredictable it gets to deal with collectives.

- The government suspects that Inti T'ika's dealings with some collectives are far deeper than previously suspected. Who's up to some Q&A in Santa Cruz?
- Sundance Kid

ENEMIES OF THE STATE

Velazco's spin doctors would love to tell you that Bolivia is besieged by reactionary forces vying to destroy the Revolution and oppress the masses once again. All the security measures are to protect the Bolivian people from Imperialist agents. "We're from the government. We're here to help, blah blah blah ..." There is a grain of truth in their propaganda so it is still moderately effective. The people who are sick of the regime are too afraid of the Revolutionary Guard to do anything about it, so the "protection" lives on.

- No kidding. The Guards have eyes and ears everywhere, even your friends could be working for them. Better to keep quiet and hope things improve.
- Mamani
- I'm Limberg Velazco, and I approve this message.
- Bung

Any who actively oppose the communists have rallied behind the **Neolncas** and their leader Sancho Collqui. Reputedly from Peru, Collqui is a full-blooded Quechua. Careful not to exclude any potential followers of other ethnicities, he likes to point out that in Tahuantinsuyo, the ancient Incan Empire, all tribes lived in harmony.

- And were ruled by a Quechua, of course.
- Mamani

The Neolncas enjoy strong support in the Quechuan and mestizo community. The liberation message is spreading even to Aymarans and is fueled by poverty, oppression and "corruption" of their traditions and faith. The Neolncas welcome them all, but some fear the movement is being infiltrated by the government. Collqui himself was almost killed last month during a government ambush near Tarija. Only the bravery of Gonzalo Cardozo, his second-in-command, saved his hoop.

- I wonder how long it will take for Collqui to become a martyr, and for a saddened Cardozo to take his mantle.
- Skeptic



Though not as visible as the Neolncas, the **Old Regime** is still out there. Most of its surviving members live in exile in Buenos Aires, Antofagasta or Caracas where they plot against the communists in their spare time. Collqui's revolutionaries could be useful pawns, but these people don't like the idea of Incan wannabes in power either. They've opted to muster their own forces and are waiting to step in once Velazco and Collqui have torn each other apart.

- Guillermo Zamora is the right-wingers' man in Buenos Aires. Zamora was a Colonel in the Bolivian Army before the communist revolution and has good relations with Aztechnology and Argentina's government, which suggest some link to the secretive Legio. He's been known to use runners to smuggle weapons to reactionary cells in Bolivia.
- Quijote

THE ANDEAN TREASURE CHEST

If Amazonia is the Earth's lungs, then Bolivia is Latin America's heart. The energy Bolivia provides with its oil and natural gas keeps the continent's engines running and the people warm in winter. The country has vast underground resources that are the backbone of its economy. If it's a mineral you need, you can find it in Bolivia.

Sadly, the treasure chest is running out, and reaching hands seem to be scraping bottom. The deep mineral excavations are proving to be increasingly difficult. Natural gas reserves are starting to run dry. The main drive behind Bolivia's economic growth is coming to a halt. All bad news for El Comandante, because he needs the money to stabilize the current social crisis. To his credit, Velazco has been very effective at keeping this crisis under wraps. He successfully maintains the illusion of Bolivia as a tempting treasure chest of resources.

- The way I hear it, even the corps are wary of the regime's recent moves. The MOB expropriated a mine near Potosí belonging to Andes Mining. Though Bolivia eventually compensated Tanamyre for its subsidiary's lost asset, no explanation was ever given beyond the usual "defense of our natural resources."
- Don Dinero
- Rumor is the miners found something really big, but the government wanted to keep it for itself. Don't know why Tanamyre objected so lightly, though.
- Digger

Bolivia is entirely landlocked, which hampers the country's economy by restricting the means for exporting its wealth. The country used to control the Arica port in the Pacific Ocean, but lost it in a disastrous war against Chile two centuries ago. You'd think that tempers would have calmed down by now, but the issue remains a rallying point for the nationalists and Velazco's posturing. Bolivia has tried and failed to regain the lost territory through diplomatic means.

- Interestingly enough, Velazco's regime has assigned this as a priority in the current agenda. How the commies are going to achieve this is unknown.

- Valpo Vic

- I heard a few people in Geneva talking about supporting Bolivia's next move in the UN. Of course, the Chilean lobbyists were barking mad at the possibility and they got corporate support.
- Ambassador

CORPORATE PIRACY

Megacorps and communists are usually at odds, but not here. Though Bolivia rejects the Business Recognition Accords, El Comandante's policy has been most pragmatic. If a corp has something his regime needs, it gets carte blanche to operate in Bolivia. The government squeaks about strict regulations and supervising its "commercial partners," but that's all.

- That's not entirely true. Lord knows why, but some areas of Bolivia are a no-go for corporations and foreigners. Security is also provided by the regime, except in the Free Trade Zones. These are located in La Paz, Oruro, Potosí, Santa Cruz and Cochabamba.
- Don Dinero

This case-by-case system has benefited quite a few savvy corps who took the time to research Bolivia's needs. Leading the pack is Australia's **Tanamyre Resources**. Its subsidiaries supply the military, mine the mountains and store toxic wastes in the mines when they're empty. A good deal for the Aussies, if you ask me. Too good for rivals to ignore. Shiawase is aggressively targeting the Andes Mining's operations. The Bolivian military is being courted with alluring offers from the Shiawase Armaments, France's Esprit Industries and Canton-based Baihu Corporation.

- Tanamyre and other corps are getting plenty of flak from the Neolncas. Collqui's anger about the corps' relationship with the regime usually translates into raids against their facilities.
- Pariwana

- It could also be that some corps are simply masquerading their "covert ops" as rebel attacks.
- Crimsondude

One more notable, or more to the point, controversial corp is **Inti T'ika Bioengineering**. CEO Alejandro Yupanqui invested heavily in Bolivian media and biotech sectors. This puts Bolivia and the corp directly at odds with Spain's Sol Media and Meridional Agronomics. Peru has managed to hold their own thanks to some ingenious PR tactics. They've played the Andean nationalism card expertly, having all but accused the Spanish of being Pizarro's heirs, ready to loot the Incan Empire a second time.

- Yupanqui also supports the Neolncas for reasons of his own. He's met with Sancho Collqui personally several times.
- Philomitus

- One surprise project ITB is involved in is a sickly sweet soft drink called *Maná Dorado*. *Maná* is all the hit in the country and is starting to become popular elsewhere in South Am and overseas. The formula is secret and it's produced exclusively in several government licensed "collectives".
- Corp Watcher

FIELDS OF GOD

Coca growing has been a regional staple since pre-Columbian times, its leaves traditionally used for energy-replenishing chewing and teas or even religious rituals. These days, however, cocaine is still the primary reason why coca is grown. And though many coca fields were destroyed in 2007 by landslides, they were re-grown. Too profitable to let a little mud ruin the income. Never mind what it's used for.

- Novacoke is still popular and isn't entirely synthetic.
- Dabblers
- Right, blame us for your problem. People forget that as long as there is a demand for drugs, there will be a supplier.
- Pariwana
- Our problem? Last time I was in Potosí, the slums were full of addicts. It's because of people like you that Aztechnology exists.
- Diamondback

[21 Mp deleted by SysOp]

- Yet another constructive debate between commie pinkos and imperialist pigs down the Shadowland toilet. First and last warning, chummers, can the bulldrek or I will!
- Captain Chaos

When Velazco became president, he publicly executed narcotraficantes and burned their shipments, but that was just a flashy PR show to boost his image (and besides, they were Azzie flunkies). To this day, the communists officially deny any involvement in or support of drug trade (if you believe that, I know some spammers with great offers.) Admitting to it or not, one of the MOB's first moves was to establish relations with the Ghost Cartels. Thus the **Morales Cartel** was born.

Arturo Vargas has led the Cartel since 2062, when an Azzie Otontin warrior geeked his predecessor. Though it wasn't the first time Aztechnology's killed the Cartel's head honcho (and it certainly won't be the last) the Bolivians seem able to shrug off their losses without affecting their operations. Vargas uses the Morales Cartel to give Bolivia a disproportionate amount of influence in Latin America's underworld. This stretches the MOB's heavy hand even into Peru.

- Peruvian authorities (excuse me, the Japanacorps) believe that Bolivia funds the Andes Ahora movement through the Morales Cartel, but have yet to find proof. When and if they do things could get nasty.
- Philomitus

- Bolivia is a mandatory stop over for smugglers on the Andes route. Its mountains provide all kinds of opportunities for skilled riggers to evade detection. Besides, the Bolivian radar coverage isn't that great to begin with.

- Air Sailor
- It doesn't need to be. The Army supplements its forces with spirits. Very nasty ones, I might add.
- Maia

CULTURAL AND IDENTITY

Velazco won the masses over to his rebellion by preaching idealism. Once in power, he built his idealistic society, conveniently a culture supportive of his regime. The Aymaran beliefs and way of life were infused throughout Bolivia to the point that other groups faced assimilation or discrimination: Aymaran is the official language and the only one taught in Bolivian education systems.

The Quechuas resisted for the most part, but minority groups like the Chiquitanos weren't so lucky. Today's Bolivian kids learn Aymaran, heavily dosed with communist propaganda, as their lifestyle. Communal work and absolute dedication to the State are a given.

- For some of us this isn't a big problem, as the government rewards people for adopting the party line.
- Warakusi
- Have you no pride in your heritage? This is cultural genocide!
- Guaraní Warrior
- I take pride in surviving and doing my job right. If that means discarding outdated traditions and replacing them with a few others, so be it.
- Warakusi

This policy is a point of contention for the Native American Nations in accepting Bolivia's request to become an associate member of the Sovereign Tribal Council. For many in North America, especially the Sioux, Velazco's regime resembles the old USA's extermination policy. On the other hand, Bolivia's natural resources are a temptation. The Neolncas has also applied to the NAN for support, asking it to cut ties with Velazco's government. The STC recently met with Florencia Quispe, one of Sancho Collqui's advisors, so maybe there's substance to the rumor.

- Chummer, the STC barely agrees on what day of the week it is. It could be years before they send Collqui a postcard.
- Black Eagle

Other than the differences between Aymaran and non-Aymarans, people in Bolivia classify one another depending on which region they live in. This is particularly valid for *Kollas* (highlanders) and *Cambas* (lowlanders), who enjoy a friendly rivalry marked by pranks and jests.



- I saw this firsthand when I worked in Cochabamba. My Camba friends treated our new Kolla decker in the most condescending way at first, arguing that "lack of air" probably made him a slow thinker.
- Lynch

FAITH

Perhaps one of the most bizarre aspects of Velazco's Bolivia is its state religion (yeah, I know, religious communists?). In his quest to be the perfect socialist man, El Comandante modified Aymaran religion "to adapt it to a workers' society," also adding some Catholic trappings and government propaganda. Yes, ritual offerings to the Pachamama (Mother Earth) and Ekeko (God of Abundance) are frequent, but their nature has changed. They have become a show of devotion and obedience, a tool for social control.

Speaking of tools, there's a small group of Bolivians who follow the Aztec Path of the Sun. They're remnants of Aztechnology's time in the country. Of course they have to keep their faith private. The Azzies still have friends in this community, always a bonus for their agents.

- Religion, the opium of the masses ... Can I have some?
- Groucho Marxist



KISS THE SKY

When most people think of Bolivia, they imagine *El Altiplano*. This majestic plateau looms 3,600 meters above sea level, concentrating most of the country's population in cities and isolated villages. Its landmarks go from tourist-traps like Tiwanaku and Lake Titicaca to the bizarre Uyuni salt flats.

- Uyuni is choking with virgin telesma. Too bad the area is infested with rockworms and worse pests.
- Privateer
- Though the winds are strong and cool, breathing can be a problem for foreigners. Get used to the altitude and lack of air before doing something strenuous, or you'll exhaust yourself.
- Wind Rider

Bolivia isn't just a pile of rocks. Once you go eastward, large tropical lowlands replace the highlands. This area suffered heavily when VITAS swept the country. Whole villages were transformed into empty ghost towns.

- Not so empty. I heard Shedim are becoming a problem for smugglers and rebels hiding in them.
- Picador

La Paz

The world's highest capital city, La Paz houses 2.5 million Bolivians who work day and night in its industries. The city's Free Trade Zone is home to a huge Novatech facility where workers assemble cheap consumer goods for South American markets. The government's Byzantine politics, the corporations' schemes and the increased rebel activity have allowed a thriving shadow community here.

- Security is tough, but not impossible. Yes, there's a zillion Revolutionary Guards patrolling the city, but tourists are so common that foreign runners shouldn't have any problems pretending to be one.
- Paquito

Santa Cruz

If La Paz is Velazco's mountain stronghold, then this is Collqui's tropical hideout. Santa Cruz de la Sierra's inhabitants widely favor the Neolncas movement. Anti-government protests are increasingly frequent. The communists have declared martial law several times, but the situation is only worsening. Me, I'm betting on the rebels.

- Hey Huxley, what keeps you from joining them? Is it because you're a gringo?
- Arctic White
- Not really. It's just that working *pro bono* isn't my style nowadays. They know how to find me if the pay's good.
- Huxley

Santa Cruz is Bolivia's eastern economic hub. The recent discovery of uranium reserves triggered an ongoing fight between Shiawase Atomics and Andes Mining. Both are vying for the collectives' support.

VIRTUAL RUINS

Bolivia's big cities are the only places where you'll find something remotely resembling the Matrix. The public RTG is so lousy and decrepit they had to stick to UMS iconography. Outside the big cities all bets are off. Because corporations are using satellite uplinks to communicate with the rest of the world, decking into their hosts can prove to be difficult if not fatal.

- The government keeps a private system for itself, but it has more ice than Antarctica.
- Decker del Sur

ANCIENT RUINS

Bolivia teems with historical sites that are difficult to reach at best. Some haven't even been explored by archeologists. Standing near the southern shores of Lake Titicaca, the ancient

city of **Tiahuanaco (Tiwanaku)** was the center of Aymaran civilization before the Incas and subsequently the Spanish conquered them. As such, it holds paramount importance to Velazco's regime. Religious ceremonies are held here at the beginning of every lunar month with thousands participating.

- The Neolncas once plotted the assassination of Velazco here, but Collqui discarded the idea at the last minute. He feared that such a move in Tiahuanaco could start a civil war.
- Llama Mama

Archeologically-minded groups like the Atlantean Foundation, Genesis' Terramater and the Dunkelzahn Institute of Magical Research have all petitioned the government to study Tiahuanaco. So far the answer has been a big frag-off!

- Come on, Tiahuanaco's already been explored from top to bottom. It's not like they're going to steal something, right?
- Ancient History
- Maybe they know something we don't.
- Elijah







THE CARIBBEAN LEAGUE

- Usually, the author who sent me this info about the Carib League would need no introduction. Just about anyone who even has a trid has heard of the Gingerbread Man, the self-proclaimed pirate star of the Caribbean. But with this introduction comes a bit of a somber note: two weeks after he dropped this data my way, the Gingerbread Man and his crew vanished in the Bermuda Triangle. The rumor is that he was about to pull off a mega-heist, but whether it happened or not, no one is sure. There hasn't been a peep from his crew in two months. That's unheard of, considering who we're talking about.
- Captain Chaos

JUST ANOTHER DAY AT THE BEACH

Welcome to the sunny Caribbean, chums! Har, I guess I should tell you right off the bat that „chum“ isn't a friendly nickname around these parts. Chum is shark food, and that's what you'll be if you come to the Caribbean League before you finish reading my little primer here. Who am I? If you don't already know that, you must have been living in a cave for the past decade. I'm none other than the Gingerbread Man, legendary pirate of the Seven Seas (more like nine, but who's counting?) and your gracious host to the shady underbelly of the Caribbean. I've only got limited time before my next extravagant maritime heist, so I'll dive right in. But keep your eyes on the trid for me, and you'll see something soon, I promise.

So you want to know how the Caribbean League came into being? Well, it's basically equal parts desperation and distrust that founded the League. Oh sure, it's all parties on the surface, but the undercurrent around here has always been

dark and bloody. The Cap'n (what is he the captain of, anyway?) wanted me to skip straight to the twenty-first century, so let's start at the event that really set the balling rolling: VITAS.

The Caribbean nations were never known for their rock-solid governments; it was common place for them to overthrow their leaders every few years. But when VITAS swept into these largely-poor islands and took with it millions of lives, everything fell apart. And I mean everything. The tourists fled home and governments shattered under the weight of weak health care systems and shabby beauracracies. The violence that erupted in the wake of VITAS killed nearly as many as the disease itself

The suffering Caribbeans called out for help, but with the Awakening, the world had its own problems. The only „help“ that answered the cry came from the corporations. And they were not so interested in the welfare of the people as they were in cheap, unregulated land, labor, and resources. The

late twenty-teens came to be known as the „Island Grab“, as the corps came rushing into the Caribbean to snatch up anything they could get their profiteering mits on.

- Hah, a pirate calling the corporations profiteering! The corporations might have had their own agenda, but they did bring some stability, money, and health care to the islands when they desperately needed it.
- Runners Without Borders
- They also brought racial segregation, unregulated pollution, and human rights violating experimentation.
- Dr. Bones
- The voudounistas answered the cries for help too, though quietly for the local people, as the loa instructed us. We are still in the hearts of the Caribbeans as they remember the dark times.
- Voodoo Lou

The Island Grab became such a rapidly spiraling situation that by 2020, the larger Caribbean islands began to fear a complete privatization of the region. Feeding off of this fear, Guadalupe Martinez's *Partido De la Fundación De Cuba* (Cuba Foundation Party) neo-Communists rose to power and tried to sell the other islands on an idea of a cooperative regional alliance. Rightfully so, they were skeptical of Lady Guadalupe and lukewarm to her idea...until ORO aggressively took over Natural Vat in 2021—and with it a good section of Puerto Rico's farmland. Overnight, the larger islands changed their tune and banded together to form a loose con-federation named the Caribbean League.

- As a League, the islands were able to get better trade agreements, more regional influence, and global recognition. The League may look like it's about to fall apart at any moment, but the individual islands know that they are all better off working together.
- Professional Student
- The League also shares one currency: the doubloon. The nuyen is also widely accepted, as are dollars, pesos, bars of gold, ammunition, drugs, water...you get the picture.
- Moneymaker

CARIBBEAN LEAGUE AT A GLANCE

Government Type:

Confederation of Sovereign Governments

Population: 44,136,000

Human: 64%

Elf: 7%

Dwarf: 10%

Ork: 12%

Troll: 5%

Other: 2%

Per Capita Income: 136,000 doubloons
or 6,800¥ (varies widely on individual islands)

Estimated SINless: 45%

Below Poverty Level: 39%

Corporate Affiliation: 24%

Education:

Less Than Twelve Years: 58%

High School Equivalency: 32%

College Degrees: 8%

Advanced Degrees: 2%

Major Ethnic Groups:

Afro-Caribbean: 34%

Hispanic: 16%

Caucasian: 15%

Mixed/Other: 35%

Major Languages Spoken:

Spanish: 67%

English: 46%

Creole: 22%

French: 19%

Major Religions:

Roman Catholic: 42%

Voudoun: 21%

Protestant: 9%

Other or No Affiliation: 28%

Currency: Doubloon (nuyen, dollars, reais, pesos,
and euros also widely accepted)

Exchange rate: 1 doubloon = .05 nuyen

(1 nuyen = 20 doubloons)

Medical Coverage:

Varies widely on individual islands

- The Sovereign State of South Florida joined the League later, in 2034. South Florida had long been a haven for refugees fleeing from chaos and poverty in the Caribbean, and the decades before the League's formation were no different. Miami's population became so flooded with Caribbean and metahuman refugees that it strained their relations with the central CAS government. Miami found itself getting the short end of the stick far too often in CAS policy and negotiated a better deal in the League.
- Tiburón

GOVERNMENT GONE WILD

Don't let the trid announcements fool you; in the Carib League, the governments and pirate crews are two sides of the same coin. The only difference is that the politicians traded in their sea legs for a larger following. The Caribbean League Legislature is quite possibly the most dysfunctional body of government on the face of the planet... but strangely enough, it works here. And the most fundamental rule to understand about the League Legislature is that „words“ and „reality“ are two vastly different things.

The League Legislature meets once every six months for a two-week stretch in the unofficial League capital, Havana. These meetings are 10 percent legislating and 90 percent social gathering and posturing. The few League-wide issues that come up are voted on using a one-island, one-vote policy (which is actually far from the reality, as usual) and quickly passed or discarded. These laws are mostly for show since there's no central enforcement that binds individual islands to them. You'll learn fast around here that *everything* is for show.

Lemme speak from experience here: these Legislature meetings are a wildly fun scene. Corp executives, mob bosses, pirates, and politicians all gathering in Havana with their respective entourages, more often than not carving out policy over bottles of rum. The list of players changes from one meeting to the next, but it's always an eclectic crowd guaranteed to entertain.

- The „one island, one vote“ policy is a total joke. Essentially, anyone with enough power to get the respect of the other players can show up to the Legislature meetings and get a vote. Sometimes,

CARIBBEAN LEAGUE TIMELINE

2010: Kingston, Jamaica becomes the first Caribbean city infected with VITAS I, which eventually causes the deaths of 1 out of every 3 Caribbeans.

2011: John Hopkins University develops the first treatment cocktails for VITAS I.

2014: Unusual weather patterns caused by the Great Ghost Dance cripple the Caribbean sugar industry.

2015: Natural Vat Food Technologies builds its first mycoprotein fungus farm in Puerto Rico.

April, 2021: Aztechnology acquires Natural Vat Food Technologies.

October, 2021: The Caribbean League is formed at the urging of Guadalupe Martinez of Cuba.

February 2022: VITAS II hits the Caribbean, but new vaccines developed by Johns Hopkins University prove help curb the death toll.

June 2022: The UCAS government learns of unethical experiments conducted by Johns Hopkins on metahuman research subjects. Johns Hopkins loses its university status but files for incorporation in Haiti and becomes the John Hopkins Institute of Health.

2034: South Florida secedes from the CAS and joins the Caribbean League as the Sovereign State of South Florida.

2048: The second phase of the Corporate Court's „Operation Reciprocity“ actions against Aztechnology is launched from Mayagüez, Puerto Rico.

2055: The Morlocks gang in Miami starts violently attacking tourists, leading to Gunderson-led crackdown on street gangs. Casualties of the „Night of Law“, as it is later called, number in the thousands.

November, 2061: Hurricane Rebekah ravages the Dominican Territories.

that results in more than one representative per island (Hispaniola's representation has fluctuated from one to five reps, depending on the meeting) and sometimes the smaller islands don't send anyone or send one person to represent a grouping of islands. Some pirates have shown up who don't even represent an island! The „votes“ are just a fictional cover for what is basically raw influence brokering.

- Carousel

- The League Legislature used to meet every three months, but they changed it in 2060 because Havana just couldn't take these gatherings descending on the city four times a year and no other cities were willing to welcome the craziness that comes with each one.

- Salt

- Even if you're not a bigshot, it's worth it to schedule a Caribbean vacation during these meeting weeks if you can. With all the wheeling and dealing, there are piles of shadow-work coming down the pipe as one power player tries to get a leg up over another. After one night on the town, I woke up with a dozen new leads for work and a cute young Aztlaner lawyer whose name I can't even remember.

- The Vacationer



A PIRATE'S LIFE FOR ME

Listen up *senors* and *senoritas*, because Bread is going to tell you about being a criminal in the Caribbean. Yes yes, I know you're Mr. Badass Cyberspur Sammie back in Seattle or Denver or Neo-Tokyo, but let me drop a bomb on you. It don't mean squat here. The chromed professional act will just get you tossed off the ship for the amusement of the crew as they watch your million-nuyen limbs sink you to Davy Jones' locker.

Mention the Gingerbread Man anywhere in the Caribbean, you'll get a reaction. Some will laugh and joke. Some will swoon and giggle. Some will froth with hatred. *But they all know me.* And that, my friend, is everything in the Caribbean. Back in the Sprawl, you gotta hide what you do, because you're a criminal making a living in a society that pretends to be civil on the surface. In the Caribbean, we have no use for civility. It's the law of the jungle here; the badge isn't going to hunt you down because there is no badge. We're all crooks here, and the way you stay above the others is by being known and having friends.

- It's totally counter to the thinking of most shadowrunners, but to build a rep around here you often need to be as flashy as possible. Pull off the big runs with swagger and a smile and make sure you have the media video-drones rolling. It's a balance of displaying power and knowing your audience, you want to look big enough to be hard to take down while not making yourself a larger target than you can handle.

- Domino

- Also, the more you're known, the more friends you tend to make. The more friends you have and favors you can chip in, the longer you'll live around here.

- Wake

The criminal food chain in the Caribbean is why all this reputation stuff is so damned important. There's no need to look over your shoulder for the police. The law is local here and the only thing that separates the law from the criminals is that they serve the criminal who currently poses as politician. Even Interpol, the only League-wide law enforcement agency that existed, closed up shop around here when it was transformed into EuroPol recently.

- Most of the local ex-Interpol agents found new work in the Cuban intelligence service or Atlantic Security. A few even went pirate!

- Rasputin

Down here, you need to watch out for your fellow criminals. The shadow industry really is a self-starter industry here, from top to bottom. When you pull off a heist or a run, there are hundreds of smaller-time crooks under you looking to feed off your success any way they can. They are thieves, pure and simple, but that's how we all start out here. Reputation is what separates you from them, but they are more than willing to rise through the ranks by stabbing you in the back if they can get away with it. Oftentimes, keeping an eye on your goods *after* the run is harder than the run itself.

The Caribbean League 2064



- While it's not uncommon for Johnsons to double-cross runners back home, here you need to watch out for other runners and crooks operating freelance. A couple months ago, a guy I knew extracted a JHIH scientist for a Yamatetsu Johnson. The run went just fine, but on the way to the handover, he got jumped by Batista mobsters who geeked him and intended to ransom the scientist themselves. JHIH paid out the ransom, but the meet between the Batista and JHIH was interrupted by a freelance runner team who made off with the scientist and left a bunch of bodies behind.

- Cruz

- That was Blacktooth's crew. They filmed the hit on the mobsters and JHIH through their own cybereyes; it's a huge hit on the Round Square!

- Media Watcher

- Yeah, but a couple weeks later, Blacktooth himself was shipped to the rest of his team in four different priority mail packages, courtesy of the Batista Family. I hear the rest of them are living large though, and the scientist has a cushy new job at Shiawase Biotech.

- Salt

- Keep in mind that the nature of shadowrunning in the Caribbean will be alien to a lot of continental runners. There are still Johnsons and fixers down here, but most runners are „self-employed.“ They pick a lot of their own jobs and initiate them, then deal with Johnsons

and fixers in the aftermath as they try to unload the goods, whether it's data, contraband, or an extracted executive.

- Bahama Mama

SWIMMING WITH THE SHARKS

The Caribbean League is a messy patchwork of dozens of islands large and small, and since so much of the action is local in the League, it's good to know what makes one island different than the other. And as the pirate who is wanted by nearly every single one of them, there's no one better than yours truly to give you the scoop on em. But keep on your toes, things have a habit of changing overnight in the League, so if you're not up to date, you may find yourself sunk.

BAHAMAS

Population: 345,000 (80% Afro-Caribbean, 10% Caucasian, 7% Hispanic, 3% Asian)

Major Languages: English (82%), Creole (32%)

Major Religions: Protestant (30%), Catholic (30%), Voudoun (14%), Other/None (26%)

The Bahamas are where you go to disappear, whether intentionally or not. With 23 civilized islands and literally thousands of tiny inlets and coves, the Bahamas are the haven of both corporate interests and freebooting pirates. Most of the larger islands were snatched up during the Island Grab by the wealthy and are governed by proxy through privateer governments

paid off by the island's owners. The smaller inlets are where many pirate crews go to lay low and hide their goods until sale. It's all too easy to operate under the radar in the Bahamas, and that's its main attraction.

- In some cases, the pirates and corps work hand in hand. The island of Eleuthera is owned by Hyatt Host Marriot, the real estate investment giant. It runs the show on its resorts, but off the resorts it has outsourced governing to Vincent Trahan's Silverfin crew, former pirates. Now they pull down a nice paycheck from HHM and get to keep whatever they take from any local troublemakers.
- Bahama Mama

There are two islands to avoid unless you want to accidentally vanish. Andros is the largest island in the Bahamas, but it is uncivilized and wild, overgrown with mangroves and dotted with blue holes (underwater cave systems that connect the inland lakes to the ocean). Aside from a handful of natives, the locals give the island a wide berth: the phrase „off to Andros“ has become synonymous for vanishing off the face of the Earth.

- Andros reeks of latent power and is a tempting treasure trove for arcane poachers, but very few who head that way ever come back. If you ask me, the chickcharnies are to blame. They are awakened owls that can cause magical disorientation, which can be fatal on an uncivilized tropical island.
- Deep Blu
- It's not *just* the chickcharnies. There are some real back-to-nature natives on the island with some serious mojo. They pay homage to Lusca, a sea serpent they say lives in the blue holes and guards great mysteries.
- Weebly

New Providence is also off-limits, but for a whole other reason. The entire island is under quarantine currently and enforced by the World Health Organization and a biomed outfit called Metaluxa. The authorities aren't letting anyone on or off the island, period. I know a few pirates who tried to chase the quick doubloon by running the quarantine—they were dealt with harshly and permanently. The city of Nassau lies on New Providence along with most of the Bahaman population, so the lockdown is a big deal.

- I heard Nassau is crawling with bug spirits! They locked the island down to prevent the bugs from getting out while they figure out how to destroy the hives.
- Tomtom
- The story I heard is a bit more mundane (though no less scary). I know a pirate who has cut through the quarantine twice successfully, and he tells me the place is closed due to some new and highly infectious lethal virus. The WHO has no idea yet where it came from or exactly how it is spreading, but I bet it has Metaluxa's name all over it.
- Swash and Buckle

- That's possible. Metaluxa is a wholly-owned subsidiary of Shiawase, a corporate research lab complex jointly operated by Shiawase Envirotech and Shiawase Biotech. With the relative remoteness and free-wheeling government, it'd be a great place for bioweapons research.
- The Smiling Bandit

BORNINQUEN

Population: 4,680,000 (80% Hispanic, 7% Afro-Caribbean, 5% Caucasian, 8% mixed and other)

Major Languages: Spanish (89%), English (64%), Creole (12%)
Major Religions: Roman Catholic (76%), Voudoun (8%), Protestant (7%), Path of the Sun (3%), Other/None (6%)

Now, I knew Maria Francisca had some serious brass ones, but I think we all underestimated her. When the former pirate of fifteen years declared herself *La Presidenta* of Borinquen (that's Puerto Rico to anyone with a seven year old map) we all figured that would last about as long as it took the corporations to care, and then they'd reassert themselves and Maria's political ambitions would be sunk, literally.

Fast forward to today, and whoever bet on Maria is cashing in the chips. Half the corporations who set up private fiefdoms on the island have left, unable to run profitable businesses under constant raiding from Maria's pirates. The other half have „renegotiated their terms“ with *La Presidenta*; in other words, they have given up portions of cash and power in order to be left alone.

- The corps had their chance to stop Maria back in 2057, but I'm guessing they humored her, figuring she was just another temporary power that would need to eventually beg for corporate support to survive, like all the other Puerto Rican politicians for the past few decades. Oops!
- Bluebeer
- They were so busy stabbing each other in the back that they weren't prepared for Maria's pirate raids, which were truly bloody and vicious...and popular. She became a folk hero around here with the way she'd lead the charges personally, with a wave of her orichalcum-plated rapier against corporate security forces.
- Salt

A big factor in Maria Francisca's success is the way she's brought together disparate groups on the island under her anti-corporate banner. With an iron fist and promises of power, she brought the warring barrio gangs of San Juan under her heel. Popular support came with dashing raids that appealed to the downtrodden natives. Even the Church has given a silent nod of tacit approval: they still remember how the corporations stole power out from under them on the island.

- The Archdiocese of San Juan is very conservative compared to the Vatican. They don't entirely agree with Maria's methods, but they hate the corporations and realize that Maria's popular support contains many more Catholics than the corporate resorts do. So it's in their best interests to quietly back Maria, for now.
- Cruz



Maria regularly attends the League meetings for Borinquen and there's no one left that's powerful enough to stop her. The one snag in her rise to power seems to be that her raids have slowed down lately. Some say she's running out of enemies and others say she's just getting fat off of political power, but I think there's something more to it. I've known Maria for a decade, and the woman has an unquenchable fire that doesn't burn out. I bet the decision to slow down the raids isn't her own.

- Maria's support is made up of a lot of pirate crews that came flocking to Borinquen as her successes kept rolling in. These same pirate crews often have checkered pasts that can come back to haunt both them and Maria. Take Salvador's Saints; they are a crew that claims to have recently escaped from an Aztlan prison. That's no small baggage to drag to Borinquen.
- Jaxon
- Novilunio also moved its operations from South Florida to Borinquen. How those novacoke fiend pirates escaped being wiped off the planet by the Azzies, I have no idea.
- Megalo Don
- It's interesting how so many of Maria's pirate allies have past links to Aztlan when you consider that she's hardly raiding the NatVat fungus farms, which are owned by Aztechnology.
- Corona
- That fact hasn't gone unnoticed. The new Archbishop of San Juan, Eli Manual Arroyo-Lopez, is heavily tied to the Toledo-Borinquen-Aztlan route that the New Jesuits use in their operations against the Big A. Going easy on the Azzies is not part of the deal the San Juan Archdiocese had in mind when backing Maria and I doubt they'll let it go.
- Vat-Icon

CUBA

Population: 13,334,000 (42% Mulatto, 31% Caucasian, 12% Afro-Caribbean, 7% Hispanic, 4% Chinese, 4% Other)

Major Languages: Spanish (97%), English (45%)

Major Religions: No Affiliation (54%), Roman Catholic (32%), Voudoun (10%), Other (4%)

The fact that Cuba has had a stable government for the past four decades almost seems at odds with the rest of the Caribbean, until you realize that the Cuban government is just as two-faced and crooked as the rest of us. The whole thing is run by the *Partido De la Fundación De Cuba* (or Cuban Foundation Party), a neo-communist regime run by the Martinez dynasty. Course, these guys are about as communist as the Corporate Court; they are actually just a totalitarian technocratic elite lining their pockets with wads of illicit cash.

- Cuba actually holds free elections, but the popularity and power of the Martinez family and their pet party keeps the spotlight fixed firmly on them. It doesn't hurt that the armed guards at the polls are paid for by corporations who like the status quo.
- Poly Tick

• There's a polyclub of real Communist believers in Cuba that aren't happy with Martinez. The *Fraternidad Verdadera* (True Brotherhood) is technically a political party, but they've been so frustrated facing Martinez in the polls that they've turned to sabotage, worker strikes, and riots. These guys are increasingly unpredictable, but they often hire runners and pirates for muscle.

- Groucho Marxist

Enrique „Pretty Boy“ Martinez is the head honcho now, and he has a real knack for balancing all the favors that the megacorps and mafiosos buy in Cuba while still retaining his own power. Martinez may be kneeling to the Almighty Nuyen, but he's no puppet. His suave charm, dashing Latin looks, and fiery vision for Cuba's future have made him the second most eligible bachelor in the Carib League (after yours truly, natch).

- The biannual League meetings in Havana happen to fall at the end of the Grand Tour seasons, so a lot of Grand Tour players swing by Havana for extended schmoozing. Pretty Boy Martinez is always a big hit in these circles and he's made a lot of European friends this way.
- Fleur-de-lis

Martinez is focused like a hungry shark on turning Cuba into a formidable military power in the region, and he's pulling in the money, influence, and talent to make it happen. Sadly for us pirates, the Cuban Navy has grown into a considerable power, led by Almirante Rodolfo Serraza, the „Wizard of Az.“ Not to mention they have some decent marines and a nosy intelligence branch that seems to know a bit too much about the pirate trade for my liking. Claudia Romanov was recently attributed with setting up a number of meetings between Martinez and Admiral Lev Rybalkin of the Russian Pacific Fleet. The two have worked out a military partnership between Cuba and Russia that doesn't hurt Saeder-Krupp one bit.

- Serraza is a former Jaguar Guard from Aztlan, who had some sort of falling out. He's a good naval commander, but his real strength has been in teaching the Cubans how to integrate magic with their naval forces. Expect any sizable crew to include a hermetic, a santeros, or both.
- Megalo Don
- The Cuban General Intelligence Directorate specializes in military intelligence and counterintelligence; mainly because of the Azzies being right next door, but the disinformation campaigns tend to hurt local pirates too. Their amphibious special forces, the Tigersharks, are surprisingly well-trained, and are rumored to cross-train with Navy Seals at Ares/UCAS-controlled Guantanamo Bay.
- Picador

I'd be remiss if I didn't mention Havana's thriving underworld. The big fish is the Batista family, run by Raul Batista. They control most of the white collar crime, illegal gambling, and protection rackets in the Carib League and have close ties to the dozens of overseas banks operating here. The Batista

family is infamous for indebting mages to them and exploiting them for talislegging operations or magical actions against their enemies.

- The Sixty-Six Dragons are a Chinese gang operating out of Havana's Barrio de Chino (Chinatown). They have the human trafficking trade through the Caribbean fiercely cornered and it's rumored they maintain links between Henan and the Fraternidad Verdadera communists.
- Down Lo

THE DOMINICAN TERRITORIES

Population: 9,628,000 (15% Caucasian, 12% Afro-Caribbean, 10% Hispanic, 58% Mixed heritage, 5% Other)

Major Languages: Spanish (71%), English (21%), Creole (13%)

Major Religions: Roman Catholic (65%), Voudoun (22%), Other/None (13%)

The Dominican Territories are, to put it bluntly, a damned nightmare. It's a patchwork of turfs carved out in blood and chaos, peopled by metahuman refugees, criminal warlords, Haitian dissidents, and worse. What tenuous order existed here crumbled in November of '61 when Hurricane Rebecca slammed into the southeastern corner of Hispaniola (the island the Territories share with Haiti) with the Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse riding in on its wake.

The eastern half of the Dominican Territories is known as the Black Shallows: it's the ruined and flooded remnants left after Hurricane Rebecca. Anyone who could get out of the area did. Those who remain are either the truly desperate or those attracted to the death and despair that hangs here even three years later. Disease and famine are rampant and a number of apocalyptic cults have made this area their home; the largest being one known as Rebecca's Dead, who claim that they hear whispers of the coming end times in the eternal winds of the hurricane.

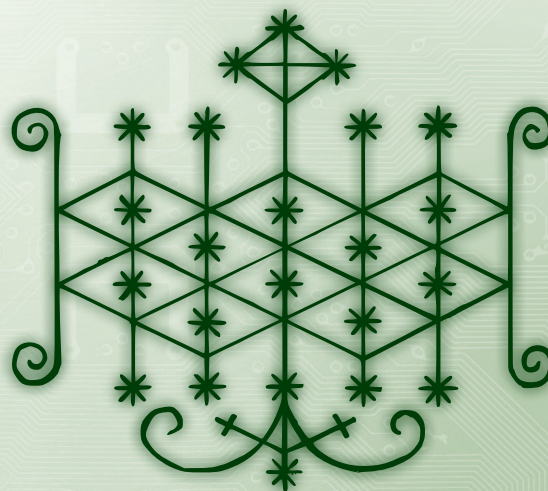
- The higher-ups in Rebecca's Dead actually are dead...they're shedim. They increase their numbers by culling the bodies of still-living followers and by raiding villages. As for what lies at the top of the cult's power structure, no one knows, though some think Rebecca might be a toxic or shadow free spirit or a powerful master shedim.
- Spyder
- The Black Shallows have a frighteningly large concentration of wraiths drawn in by the constant death. It's hard to tell if the atrocities that take place daily here are homegrown or influenced by the wraiths.
- Juju B
- A number of petro voudoun cults also operate in the area; the most influential ones serve Simbi, a water snake loa who oversees the flooded marshlands and is one of the three „cosmic serpents“ who hold the secrets of just about everything. The sacrifices I've heard they offer for a glimpse at these secrets make my skin crawl.
- Monkeyboy

Surrounded by the Black Shallows is the besieged and battered city of Santo Domingo. The survivors of Rebecca huddle in this sprawl behind cobbled-together barricades built to keep out raiders, cultists and paracritters. The strongman that keeps the city in line is Iago Garza, a very rough-around-the-edges dwarf who used to be a lieutenant under Geraldo Montenegro, the previous warlord here.

The western half of the Dominican Territories is divided up between two warlords, Chocolaté in the north and Esfinge in the south. Chocolaté is an ork and former pirate who operates his criminal empire out of Santiago. He used to manufacture BTLs for the Batista mafia, but these days his „Carib Moodies“ are moving through the Jamaican Posses.

Esfinge, the elven woman who leads the eco-terrorist group Verde Manana, technically calls the city of Barahona her home turf. Her group operates out of camps in the Enriquillo Basin and Pedernales Peninsula, among tropical beaches and dry, inland lagoons. Since the hurricane hit, her people have increasingly retreated from Barahona (which lies close to the Black Shallows) and into the wilderness.

- The Batistas got burnt on the BTL biz by the Posses, literally. I hear the Jamaicans tracked down the local Batistas and burnt them alive to make a point, hanging them out as human torches in the yard of their boss.
- Fumado
- The Batistas have struck back by hiring pirates and runners to sink any ship trying to smuggle the Posses' Moodies. A lot of runners are shying away from the work, though, given how messy the Jamaicans are when it comes to retribution.
- Tin Lizzie
- Esfinge has some sort of agreement with Tir Tairingire that is hard to completely understand. They supply her with money, guns, and supplies, and in exchange she supposedly lets the Ghosts and Paladins train on her land and use her camps.
- Banshee



HAITI

Population: 8,574,000 (92% Afro-Caribbean, 4% Caucasian, 3% Mulatto, 1% Other)

Major Languages: French (92%), Creole (84%), English (34%), Spanish (15%)

Major Religions: Voudoun (44%), Roman Catholic (31%), Protestant (10%), Other/None (15%)

I don't think anyone shed a tear when „Le Prof“ Barbin, Haiti's previous dictator, met a spectacular end in a magical explosion in Port-au-Prince. Isabella Fontenot, a cold-hearted slitch from Haiti's *gendarmes*, sure didn't, and she rose to fill the void. Around here, Fontenot is known as *Kouto-La*, which is Creole for „The Knife.“ She's sharp and deadly, so it's an apt moniker.

Behind the curtain, though, the John Hopkins Institute of Health owns Haiti. They keep it on a tight leash through their patents for HIV and VITAS medications and their ownership of the hospitals and clinics that so many Haitians desperately need. Haiti would collapse without their health care and they know it—and remind the dictator-du-jour of that often.

- Patents obtained through unethical experimentation on meta-humans. These monsters were caught in 2022 by the UCAS, who yanked their taxpayer money and university status. They incorporated and moved to a more welcoming climate. Sick fraggers are still at it; the lucky SURGED left Haiti, the unlucky ones are in JHIH labs.
- Bayou Blood

- What's downright scary is that the JHIH is still one of the best medical schools in the world and doctors from around the world come out of their hospitals. Gotta wonder how many of them get brain-washed by JHIH's way of practicing medicine.

- Dr. Bones

- Speaking of downright scary...I was paid to raid a JHIH clinic once and while I was there I noticed some weird drek. Metahumans all lined up on tables hooked up to machines that seemed to be monitoring—I drek you not—extra organs.

- Skreed

If you listen to the whole Voudoun Wars affair, it comes down to Claude-Michael Flaubert versus Marcus Cross. That's right and wrong. It does come down between those two on the world stage, but Flaubert is from down south in Trinidad and Cross is from up north in Houston, and somewhere in between is the spiritual heart of voodoo, Haiti. Port-au-Prince was ground zero for the Voudoun Wars, which in turn brought Le Prof's crackdown on the houngans. There was a lot of blood-letting, but after a year the religious infighting settled down and Barbin claimed victory over the „religious warlords.“

Then a magical explosion turned Barbin into ash. Flaubert's frequent visits to Haiti had him pegged for the act, but I don't really see what he would get out of it. Regardless, numerous magical-tinged incidents have continued to plague the regime since Barbin's assassination and no one has come forward to be the voice of the insurgency.

- It's not Flaubert, it's local. Haiti's houngans vocally got in behind Flaubert, but while Flaubert is island-hopping, they are listening to someone else in the streets of Port-au-Prince. He calls himself Dokte Blan, which is Creole for „Dr. White.“ I can tell you it is not his real name, and he ain't a doctor of medicine, but he's a well educated, soft-spoken mulatto who always dresses in white. All he wants is the government of Haiti to represent the voudoun-practicing people. He speaks for Obatala, the loa of purity and balance, and the loa calls for Haiti to be cured of her ills.

- Carousel

- Enough of the juju-jive drek. Dokte Blan simply wants to replace the current regime with a voodoo regime.

- Tex-Mex

- They operate much like the Palestinian Hamas of the last century. The assassinations and terrorist strikes make the news, but the locals talk proudly of the houngans providing charity, clinics, and schools to the people. Most of the locals don't trust the institutions of JHIH or the regime, but they had no alternative until the houngans provided one.

- Socio Pat

- Motivations aside, they employ some interesting tactics. Though the Barbin explosion was flashy, most of their action is subtle. Curses, ritual magic, and sympathetic magic are common, as well as planting serviteurs in the ranks of the regime for loa to possess when necessary.

- Faktè

JAMAICA

Population: 3,120,000 (85% Afro-Caribbean, 3% East Indian, 2% Caucasian, 2% Chinese, 8% Other)

Major Languages: Patois English (88%), English (72%), Creole (18%)

Major Religions: Protestant (48%), Voudoun (25%), Other and Assorted Spiritual Cults (19%), None (8%)

Ah, Jamaica, home sweet home. There is no possible way to describe the land that birthed yours truly except to say that it's a little bit of everything. Everybody can find a home in Jamaica regardless of race, metatype or affiliation and everything, illicit or otherwise, passes through this nation at some point or another.

Raj Makhija is the current representative for Jamaica at the League meetings, but he's in no way the leader of the island. Power is local in Jamaica and very often loosely defined. If you ask the average Jamaican who leads them, they will either say „I do“ or refer to their religious higher power (which changes on a monthly basis).

Aside from Raj, there are four main notable powers in Jamaica that showcase the character of the island. Ed Patterson is the de facto head honcho of Kingston, a gunrunner-turned-fixer whose network controls upwards of a third of all illicit guns and money flowing through Jamaica. He's richer than most megacorp execs, but the man still lives his life through a bottle at this favorite dive, The Sargasso.

- Don't let the drunken ex-pat act fool you (though it's not really an act). Ed has friends everywhere and damn near everyone owes him big-time for something, and that is what keeps him alive and in power.

- High Stakes

- Raj Makhija is a slick customer. He was once a banker for a very successful overseas banking operation in the Bermudas, but he announced his retirement and started personally investing in Jamaica. It's hard to trace where much of his investment went but he's garnered a lot of influence through it, enough so that the many regional Jamaican powers are fine with the idea of Raj representing them for the League.

- Domino

- Before he was a banker, Raj was the infamous decker Lion of Punjab, renowned for some impressive hack-and-snatch hits on Renraku datastores. I have to wonder if it's a coincidence that he retired from banking right after Renraku took over that bank through four fictional front companies.

- Demonseed Elite

De Mon runs the Black Light Posse, the largest pirate crew in Jamaica and one of the larger ones in the League. Even I got my start with De Mon, and though I've moved on to bigger things, I don't regret a day there. If you ever see an Afro-Carib dwarf with thick dreads and red eyes leading a pack of pirates sporting lots of UV lighting, you've met De Mon. They are ferocious raiders and control Jamaica's sea ways, but they are always willing to let you do business if you pass them a cut. If you don't, they'll have a „cut“ for you.

From pirates to preachers, David Lloyd Ford is Jamaica's favorite messiah and his custom religion, Fordianism, is still a big craze. His not-so-little cult is a sort of apocalyptic lovefest. They preach that the Awakening was a signpost to the nearing of the End Times, but that mankind, united by love and acceptance, can defeat the „legions of Hell's judgment“ and live to see the „light of Heaven's Dawn“. It sounds fruity, but the man has thousands of adherents and quite a bit of influence, even after the recent falling out he had with some members of his Hell's Teeth bodyguard.

- For a happy love cult, Ford has quite the fanatical freakshow surrounding him. Faeries, changelings, vampires...hell, some even say there are paracriffers and free spirits in the Hell's Teeth guarding him. I'm not even quite sure why he needs a special bodyguard. Aside from the beating he got from Azzie guards in Tenochtitlan, there haven't been any attempts on his life that I know of.

- Kino

- Aside from the recent shakeup, there doesn't seem to be any dirt on Ford that anyone can find. In a world where everyone seems corrupt, that is one of Ford's largest draws. That and the fact that he offers haven to all those the world holds prejudice against.

- Whistler

The new faces in Jamaica's power scene are the Jamaican Posses, the loose network of criminal syndicates that have burned a swath of control in the Caribbean League through unrestrained violence and persistence. Bloody and mean, the Posses control the drug and BTL trade through the region now and have strong links to the Ghost Cartels in South America, Africa, and Portugal and are part of the Black Trade Triangle.

The Posses are essentially large and violent gangs, often named after their most infamously gory method of enforcement. The Cut Eye Crewe is the most influential in Jamaica and is based in Kingston, led by a man called Bull Locke. They control a number of smaller posses through a pyramid of intimidation which puts them at the top of a mean criminal heap here.

- These guys are not to be confused with the Kingston Machine Posse, who met their end during this syndicate's rise to power. Some wonder if Ed Patterson had a role in that, since the Machine was his main competition. Others wonder if it's a coincidence that the Posses skyrocketed about the same time Raj „invested“ in Jamaica.

- Props

SOVEREIGN SOUTH FLORIDA

Population: 2,380,000 (61% Hispanic, 24% Caucasian, 12% Black or Afro-Caribbean, 3% Other)

Major Languages: English (98%), Spanish (45%)

Major Religions: Protestant (36%), Roman Catholic (35%), Voudoun (18%), Other or None (11%)

Have you landlubbers ever seen a shark feeding frenzy? If not, take a look at South Florida and you'll see an example. The entire fabric of South Florida was meticulously controlled by the Gunderson Corporation. When that corporation unexpectedly imploded, all hell broke loose.

When Gunderson started shedding assets in a futile attempt at survival, the other corporations zeroed right in. Piracy and shadow ops peaked as the former tried to take everything not bolted down and the latter moved the pieces in the great corporate game. Crime boiled over in the region as Atlantic Security's iron grip on law enforcement slipped in the confusion. Neo-Anarchists flocked in to witness the spectacle of a corporation's death throes first-hand. Everglades eco-terrorists even blacked out Miami for a week after an attack on the Turkey Point power plant.

- Damned fools came too close to causing a meltdown, which wouldn't have been too pretty for the Everglades. I don't know what they were thinking.

- Miami Dice

Miami is a city in anarchy, effectively. Without Gunderson's support, the government is too weak to function and the criminal elements have taken over while the corporations settle their scores. It's a pirate's playground, with lucrative smuggling up through the Orange Curtain to the CAS, as long as you avoid getting caught in the corporate crossfire.

Here's the corporate scorecard so far: Montclair Industries got snatched up by Global Oil, who is using them to augment their Gulf of Aztlan oil rig operations and expanding into manufacturing at the same time. Wuxing bought TransSea whole, which was easy given how wrecked their fleet was. Knight-Errant swept in to take the place of the failing Atlantic Security, but then Aztechnology surprised everyone by somehow convincing former Gunderson CEO and primary shareholder J.J. Harvin, Jr. to sell Atlantic to them.

- No one knows how the Azzies convinced Harvin to sell. The man simply would not part with his shares, which were a controlling interest in Atlantic Security. Ares, Lone Star, and MCT all tried and were denied. Threats or blackmail would be my guess, given the Azzies' modus operandi.
- Corona
- Actually, I have heard something more interesting. That in addition to being retained as Atlantic Security CEO, he was given a decent share of Aztechnology shares and a seat on the board.
- Pyramid Watcher

Now Atlantic Security and Knight-Errant are fighting it out for law enforcement contracts. Atlantic Security, through previous contracts, was able to keep most of the Miami and shipping defense contracts, but Knight-Errant slipped in and was able to snatch many of the contracts to operate the private prisons in South Florida.

- Knight-Errant is actually passing many of those prison contracts to their fellow Ares subsidiary, Hard Corps. I hear the KE execs are focusing on other avenues (like Havana) while arranging for shadowruns to make life as difficult as possible for Atlantic Security in Florida.
- Paddy
- Don't think for a second that the idea of Aztechnology running Atlantic Security hasn't made the Caribbean League and the CAS nervous as a long-tailed cat in a room full of rocking chairs.
- Good Ole Boy

While most of the action takes place in Miami these days, that sprawl isn't the whole of Sovereign South Florida. The Everglades make up a large and ungovernable portion of South

Florida, largely occupied by SINless transient tribes, eco-action groups, and paracritters. I've been told the Glades are rich in magical materials, but that the local occupants don't much care for intruders. I do know that the SINless tribes are a good method to smuggle goods up to the CAS if you want to avoid dealing with the Gambione family. The Gambione Mafia operates out of Miami and is the second largest mob family in the region after the Batistas. They flaunt their wealth, but they run a clean ship, taking a cut of smuggling operations and running prostitution and gambling in the tourist traps.

- The Gambiones used to be run by an eight-person council, but in the recent upheavals, a power struggle broke out. Bianca Gambione came out on top, with the others killed or fled. Bianca's a strange one, eccentric and superstitious. She insists on binding her criminal family together through elaborate blood rituals.
- Coral Reefer

Trapped between the Miami sprawl and the expanding Everglades is a field of dying suburban towns dating back to the turn of the century. The towns that aren't sinking into the Glades have become the homes to a major side industry in South Florida: private prison complexes. Keep this in mind if your pirating or running down here, because the Carib League islands usually don't have their own prisons and send their undesirables to these.

- Half these fragging prisons are sinking into the swamp, which makes conditions horrible. Not that Atlantic Security cared before and Knight-Errant isn't any more sympathetic in their place.
- Caged Bird

TRINIDAD

Population: 1,560,000 (43% Afro-Caribbean, 38% East Indian, 19% Mixed/Other)

Major Languages: English (96%), Spanish (18%), French (16%), Hindi (15%)

Major Religions: Roman Catholic (29%), Hindu (27%), Protestant (10%), Voudoun (10%), Muslim (8%), Other/None (16%)

Normally Trinidad wouldn't make the list of important places in the Caribbean League, but not only has it undergone some real growth lately, but I've also been hearing lots of strange rumors coming out of it. Trinidad is an odd place to begin with, populated by the descendants from two different



indentured cultures, Africans and East Indians. The resulting culture is a bizarre mix of Asia, Africa, and South America that is unlike anything else I've seen. It's not unusual to walk down the streets of Port-of-Spain under the neon glare of Hindi script and Chinese characters and among a constant din of Creole and English chatter. All of this less than fifty miles from the coast of Amazonia.

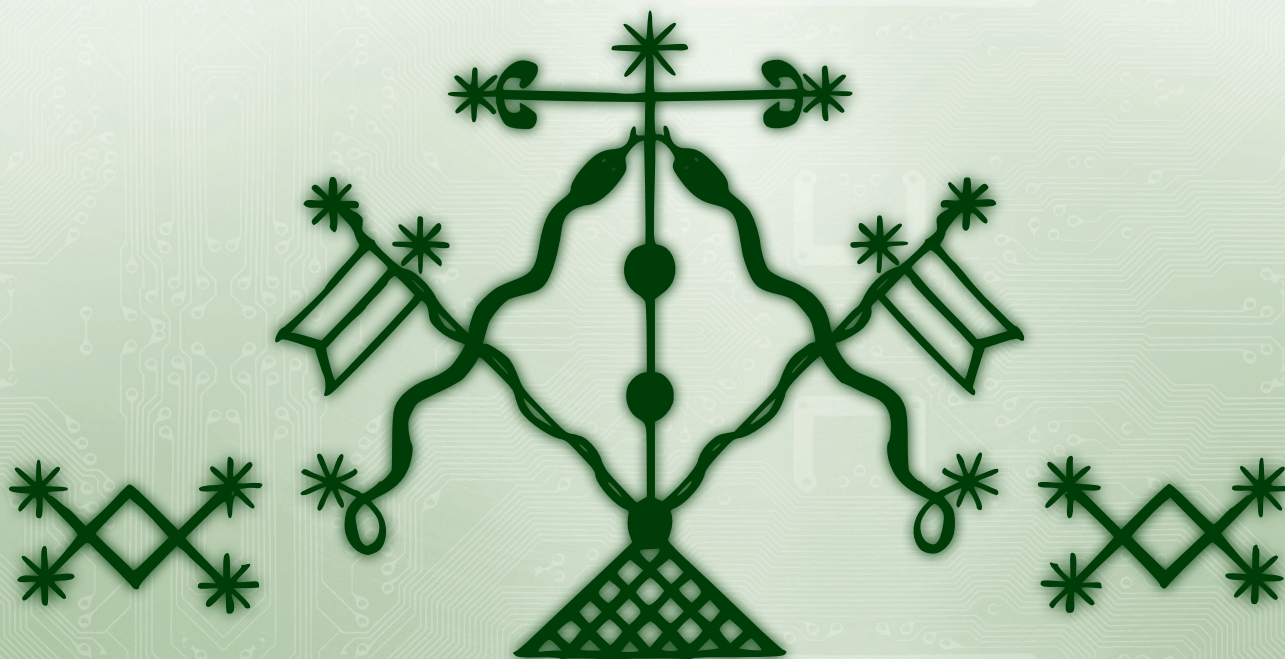
- The channel between Trinidad and Amazonia might seem like a great way to illegally enter Amazonia, but think again. The Amazonian government has the channel littered with so many sensors that if a fish breathes, they know it.
- Ghost on the Coast

Just five years ago, Trinidad was crippled with unemployment, corruption, and instability. Then the Trinidad United Growth (TAG) party swept the parliamentary elections on a promise of accountability and national development. The amazing part is that, so far, it's working. Through borrowed money and corporate backing, Trinidad paid for public works projects that employed its people and cleaned up the country, specifically working to maintain (and even capitalize on) their cultural diversity. Tourism is booming and some advantageous trade deals with nearby Amazonia make it a great destination for corporations that can't afford to operate in the crowded Amazonian cities.

The current prime minister is Claire Sun, an economist of Chinese/East Indian descent who negotiated the trade deals with Amazonia. Trinidad's Carib League representative is also their Minister of Foreign Affairs, Nathalie Nieves, and she's been working very hard to increase Trinidad's influence in the League.

So everything sounds peachy, right? Wrong. Something about Trinidad just isn't right, and you know if you visit there. For such a beautiful, tourist-filled island thriving on a better standard of living than most of the League, the people seem haunted. The local atmosphere, once you get out of the tourist traps, is private and edgy. The locals don't talk and seem afraid. Of what, I don't know, because they won't say. But a number of governments have noted high rates of kidnappings and disappearances among tourists; not enough to kill the tourism trade, but enough to make a note. I personally have lost contact with a number of pirates I knew from the area, it's like they just dropped off the face of the Earth in the past couple of years.

- The disappearances are more than a freak occurrence. The *sukuyan* are behind them; the Vanished are becoming food for the Trinidad vampires.
- In the Dark
- They have their fangs sunk into the TAG party too. The power structure of the whole island is infested with them. By day, thriving success story of the Caribbean; by night, feeding orgy for the real island powers.
- Stalker
- Nieves also looks remarkably young for her position. She's a very dark-skinned beauty, and though anti-aging treatments can fudge the numbers significantly these days, I wouldn't peg her as over thirty.
- Don Juan
- Good luck rocking the boat too much in Trinidad. The corporations like it just fine the way it is, regardless of what is causing the disappearances. Choice real estate near Amazonia with preferential trade deals doesn't appear often.
- Sarafina



OPEN FORUM

- The Gingerbread Man's report was extensive, but there are still many secrets in the Caribbean League he didn't touch upon. So I've opened a forum for any other insights anyone wants to share.

- Captain Chaos

- What about the Dragon Isles?

- Deep Blu

- You must mean the Caymans? A lot of tourists call them the Dragon Isles since Dunkelzahn's will revealed they were owned by the late wyrm. It's believed Dunk bought them to help establish a network of offshore banking that allowed him to shuffle his money and assets around secretly.

- Keynesian Kid

- Not to mention the old training grounds for his „special assets“ and a handy place for them to lay low and vanish after an operation.

- Prime Runner

- Grand Cayman is run by the Draco Foundation these days. The western end of the island is still a resort strip and the eastern end hosts a vast botanical garden that Dunkelzahn restored and expanded to include awakened plants. The center of the island is off-limits to unauthorized personnel and the Foundation isn't saying much about it.

- Bluebeer

- Officially they claim it's an exclusive retreat area for Draco Foundation employees and guests, but that doesn't hold water. For one, there's far too much cargo shipping moving to the central region and too few people. Second, satellite imaging shows a few buildings that could be recreational, but it also shows what appear to be bunkers built into hillsides and underground.

- Kino

- Little Cayman Island is also held by a Dunk legacy group: the Dunkelzahn Institute of Magical Research. The tiny island is locked up tight; it doesn't accept any sea transport and spirits patrol the waters up to a few miles out. There is one small airstrip, but good luck landing there if you're not expected. No idea what they are doing there, but it must be serious.

- ParaSci

- It's called the Magellan Project. What it is exactly I couldn't tell you. What I can tell you is that according to some patents that have come out of it related to „deep projection“, that is, astral projection for extended periods of time. The name attached to the techniques is Dr. Edward Oden, a professor from the University of Chicago and a DIMR director.

- Marley

- I traced some funding back to the DIMR for a lobbying outfit that is pushing for laws regarding discovery rights for astral space. Curiously enough, this has pit them against the Astral Space Preservation

Society, which is publicly fighting the idea of anyone privatizing sections of astral space. I have to wonder if this connected to the Magellan Project.

- The Almighty Nuyen

- The island also houses a top-notch team of psychologists who specialize in catatonic disassociation brought on by trauma or sensory deprivation. Led by Dr. Isabella Monta, who published a number of famous research documents on this topic while under the pay of the National Security Agency back in the days of Echo Mirage. And that's just the data that the NSA allowed to reach the public.

- Syzygy

- The Draco Foundation passed Cayman Brac into the hands of Transys Neuronet. There was a line in Dunk's will that gave the island to whomever set up communication with dolphins, elephants or satyrs first. Transys had a successful program that enabled communication with dolphins through a headware rig. Now they are retrofitting the island as a research center for this technology, including a large aquatic center off the southern coast.

- DC Insider

- They aren't just chatting with the dolphins either. They are preparing to license the technology to military outfits and corporate entities who wish to use dolphins to scout and map coastal areas and rumor has it they are also researching how dolphins interpret and interact with the Matrix.

- ParaSci

- Why am I not surprised that Celedyr chose Cayman Brac as his prize? The island not only has a Welsh name, but is unique in the Caribbean League for its historically Welsh culture. Probably the dragon's home away from home.

- People Watcher

- The Caymans aren't the only dragon islands. Don't forget that Lofwyr owns Curacao in the Netherlands Antilles. The island isn't open to the public, but the personnel there are from the relatively small Saeder Krupp South America division, as a support station for the French Guiana launch site.

- Belle

- Except for the special S-K Prime extension there that keeps tabs on Aztlan and Amazonia.

- Grey Knight

- It's not technically an island, but you shouldn't forget about the Round Square. It's the Carib League's own homegrown data haven, specializing mostly in pirate media and software of all stripes, but like any haven, it tends to packrat anything valuable. To find it though, you need to get the latest address, which is passed mouth-to-mouth. Like most things in the League, this is where it pays off to have friends and a rep.

- Kino



- If the Round Square is even online tomorrow. It's been trashed by someone about a half dozen times in the past three months. I hear Mills and Siren are scrambling to keep the haven afloat. They are asking for help from the local deckhead community, but some of them are still holding a grudge over their mutiny against Double Take, the haven's founder.

- Smiley

- Some of them are even helping Double Take hack the haven. Mills and Siren should have finished him off when they had the chance.

- Cold Soup

- Chum, take the Double Take ghost stories elsewhere. The Azzies are the ones trying to take down the Square; the way the haven keeps rubbing their faces in it by re-broadcasting uncensored pirate Aztlan newsfeed.

- Diamondback

- I dunno ,bout that scan. Word around my rock is that the Cubans are behind the whole smokescreen; using a takedown of the Round Square as a test for a new batch of military deckers they've been training. It's a good target that won't catch them much flak, since the big boys don't care much if a pirate datahaven goes down.

- Cruz

- Despite the crashes, don't worry about the juicy feeds and data. Mills and Siren learned from their own mutiny to distribute the stuff. A dozen buoys, floating out in the Caribbean in undisclosed locations in the middle of nowhere that periodically receive burst transmissions, back up the files, and go silent again. Even if the main servers are ruined, the data will be safe out there in the ocean until Mills or Siren go and pick it up.

- Dipper

- Has anyone else noticed how many resources Global Oil has been pulling into the region? Global Oil cargo stopovers in Havana and Miami are up five hundred percent. What's going on?

- Agent 68

- Look roughly three hundred kilometers northwest of Havana. They have a new project going with Sandstorm Engineering, with whom they are merging. It's called Station Deep Never, and from what I can gather from a little data mining in their hosts, it's an ultra-deep sea resource drilling and mining platform. A record-setting offshore well to be specific: 7,000 meters deep. It's using cutting-edge automated expert systems and drones; word is they got the systems cheap from Renraku. They just not selling well after the Arcology incident.

- Whistler

- There's something more to Station Deep Never. The platform is completely automated now. They moved the living personnel off the platform recently, all very hush-hush, but I heard that they've resurfaced in a Cuban mental asylum. If something they are working with caused that, it would explain why they'd rather use expert systems and state of the art drones.

- Link

- Speaking of deep water operations, the Atlantean Foundation has something going in the Puerto Rican Trench, the deepest part of the Atlantic that runs parallel to Borinquen's northern coast (yeah, the trench kept the old name). Don't know why they would be interested, but they hired a salvage team to bring something up.

- Deep Blu

- The salvage team did bring something up. However, all ten employees of the salvage team then died mysteriously over the next month. Looks like whatever they brought up was cursed.

- Capricorn

- Yeah, the curse of the Atlantean Foundation getting rid of the witnesses.

- Arlight

- That's not AF's only project in the area. They are also studying the undersea Bimini Road off the Bahamas, which the locals have said has been emitting a visible glow which can be seen from the air. The old new age theory is that the Bimini Road (which looks like a stone road underwater) was a remnant of Atlantis, and the Atlanteans are apparently taking it seriously enough to check it out. Both of the AF operations fall within the Bermuda Triangle.

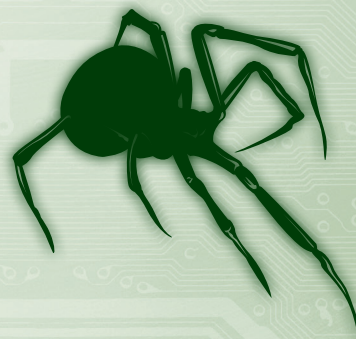
- Digger

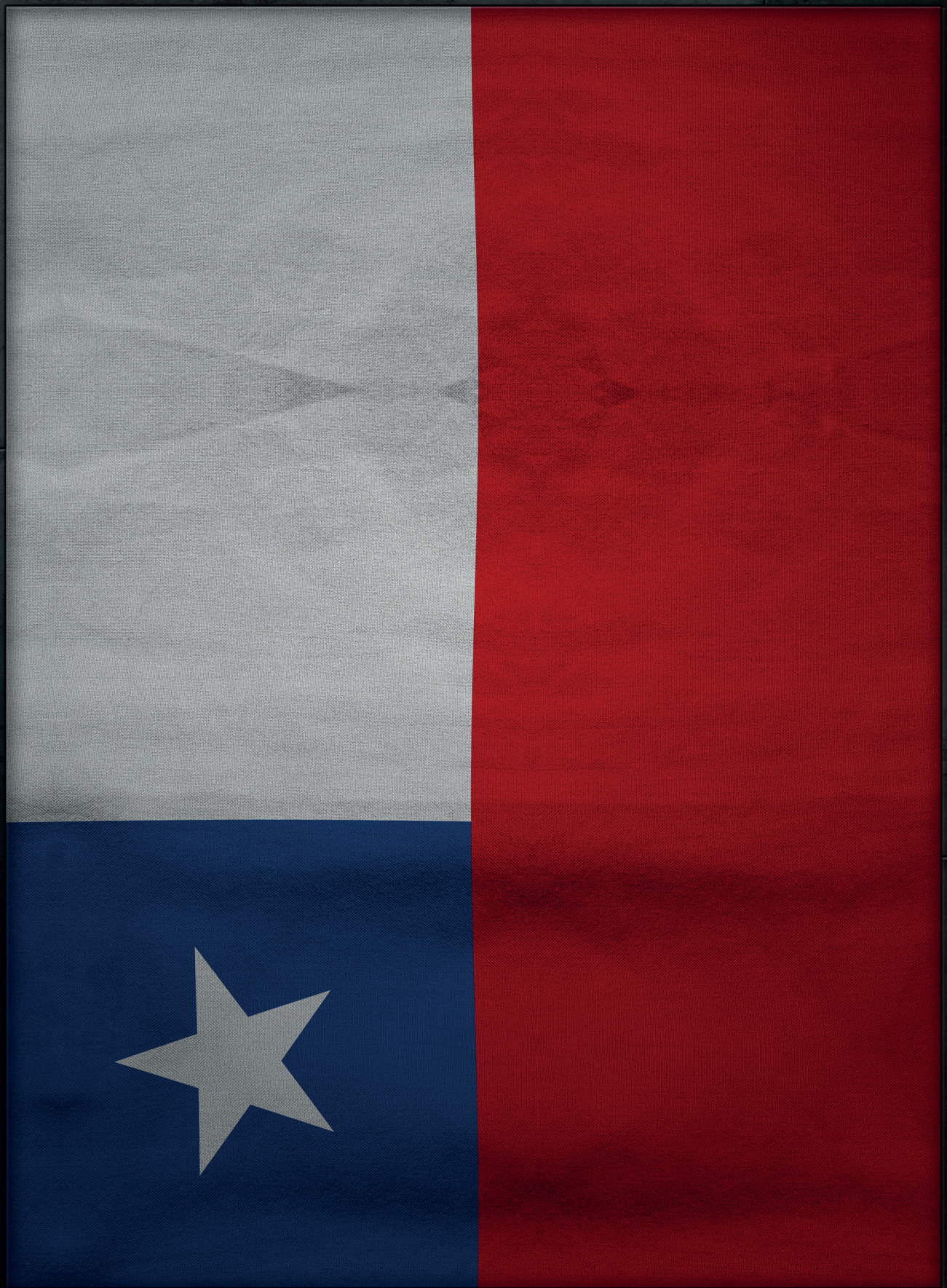
- Which is where the Gingerbread Man's crew vanished a couple months ago. Is there any link here?

- Curious George

- Captain Chaos has gotten a flood of requests from people who owe GBM some favors and want to help find his crew. He asked me to share what I know. GBM hired me to watch the Matrix from the Bahamas during his operation and to arrange for pirate media crews to be in place when he sailed triumphantly home. The heist was supposed to nab a cargo ship bringing agricultural drones from Athens to Veracruz. We already had a deal to sell the goods to Borinquen and GBM was going to intercept the ship at sea. The interception went fine, from what I know, but I was called and told to scrap the media coverage. The ship was a ruse; it had no agricultural drones on it, just a few crates from the Apep Consortium and a shipping log that said something about „scales.“ They had transferred those crates to their ships and were on their way back when they mentioned unexpected fog conditions and heavy weather and then that was the last I or anyone else heard from them. That was thirty-six days ago.

- Tres







CHILE

By Sinpega

• I had to make and break a few promises (so no complaining about how the extra security is laggin' your connection a few picoseconds), but I managed to get SinPega [Auto-translate<Y/N> without work/job] to give us the background on Chile, and the real reasons why you would want to schlep down there even if your job involves elsewhere.

• Captain Chaos

Hello friends, my handle is „SinPega“ (aka Johnny Sinpega), and I'm supposed to talk to you all about the wonders of progressive and prosperous Chile and... Okay, sorry Cap, but the feel good intro just isn't working. Short version, Chile is a toxic hell-hole, but then so are a lot of places. My reason for being here is to tell you why you might find it interesting and profitable to drop by my particular toxic hellhole.

• I'm getting a little tired of these 'experts' posting under false names.

• Buscemi

• You'd be posting anonymously too if you were listed either as a "permanent retire" or a "forcible hire" for every corp you care to name.

• Decker del Sur

• If he is so badass, why is it that this is the first I've heard of him?

• Asymmetric

• Maybe because you're a dreckhead with stunning delusions of adequacy?

• SinPega

A TASTE OF CHILE

Chile has been a functioning democracy since the 19th century, so when it was crushed by a brutal military dictatorship late in the 20th century, it came as a bit of a surprise. No few assassinations, strict martial law and many "vanishings" later, democracy was finally restored. But ever since, the elected governments (and the voters) have worked damn hard not to make waves and piss any power players off. So when the rest of the world agreed to sign the Business Recognition Accords, Chile was eager to comply. When the corps wanted to strip-mine the country, the government said "sure".

For the previous century, Chile had been trying desperately to get out of the resource industry and into the information industry. In exchange for its countryside, Chile gained investment in information technology which served it particularly

well when the Indian and Chinese competition crumbled in the years following the Awakening. For a lot of people, it was a good trade-off for an improved standard of living.

- Frikkin'-A, with cheap filters you could still breathe the air and you could even download free sims of the old National Parks.
- Hot Chile
- More than 95% of the population is urban these days compared to about 45% at the turn of the century.
- Socio Pat

Chile is currently governed through a parliament-like institution called the General Ministry of Chile, which is the epitome of political cowardice. All matters of state take a back seat to economic affairs. Decisions are carefully made to avoid offending the corps while keeping the electorate content. The General Ministry has representatives from seven different parties that consistently and alternately win elections.

The current government is a center-left coalition heavily influenced by the three most powerful parties of the seven. The largest and most influential party is the Social Democrats led by Victor Cuevas. The Social Democrats balance the humanitarian demands of the Christian Greens while frustrating the Nationalists' militaristic tendencies. The Christian Greens are guided by Tito Parra; their platform is that increased habitability of the cities be the government's primary concern. The Nationalists are headed by Gloria Matta and strongly desire a more military-fascist even anti-corp style government.

So in the cities, there really is a government, the corps loosely play by the rules, the trash is picked up, trains run and the toxic residue is washed off the sidewalks every morning. On the other hand, the gutted countryside is littered with abandoned machinery, dead oil fields and ghost factories. Rural areas are a study in Mother Nature losing her marbles, so not many people venture far into the wilds without military or corporate backing and some Big Iron to boot.

Classism is more common than racism in Chile, with people caring more about a chummer's credstick balance (and what kind of lifestyle they can fake via generous long-term credit plans) than his tusks. The corporate mindset fits Chilenos like a glove, turning

the nation into a cozy haven for global corporations. The previous Chilean government capitulated to the megas long before I was born, and even then laws were lax concerning resource exploitation.

But here's the thing foreigners can't seem to get their heads around: Chile is a functioning democracy. One where a bribe slipped in along with a permit will get better results, *but* one where filling out the permit still matters and public elections are just as important.

For instance entering the country is all who you know and the nuyen you bring. Bring a corp-stamped passport, and you'll be amazed at the prompt and courteous service you get. Everyone else has to pass the "Economic Self-sufficiency Assessment" before they'll even consider letting you in. Trust me; fronting a well-placed bribe is easier than getting a passing score, customs is so corrupt that it gives new meaning to the word "bribe".

CHILE AT A GLANCE

Government Type: Corrupt Democracy

Population: 11,124,568

Human: 89%

Elf: 1%

Dwarf: 2%

Ork: 5%

Troll: 3%

Other: 1%

Per Capita Income: 15,000,000 pesos or 22,000¥

Estimated SINless: 28%

Below Poverty Level: xx%

Corporate Affiliation: 83%

Education:

Less Than Twelve Years: 27%

High School Equivalency: 30%

College Degrees: 28%

Advanced Degrees: 15%

Major Ethnic Groups:

Mestizo: 45%

Asiatic: 26%

Other (including Immigrants): 10%

Indigenous Indians: 0% (officially)

Major Languages Spoken:

Spanish: 85%

English: 56%

Other dialects: 19%

Major Religions:

Roman Catholic: 62%

Evangelical: 20%

Other or Atheist/Agnostic: 15%

Currency: Chilean Pesos (nuyen also widely accepted)

Exchange rate: CHP \$750 = 1 nuyen

Medicarro Coverage: 90% (only in sprawls)

Guaranteed Response Time: 12 minutes

OUTSOURCING THE ECONOMIC LIFE

So what did Chile gain by letting their countryside fall into ruin? Well, Chile now has a large, technically adept professional population and a long-term relationships with transnational corporations making it perfect for outsourced labor.

Outsourcing was the predecessor to the modern norm of working via Matrix, but fell out of favor when the cheap sources of skilled labor, India and China, descended into chaos. Due to a timely educated population influx from the EuroWars and a reasonably conflict-free location, Chile earned the proud title of provider of the cheapest and most expendable skilled labor in the world. And they're not just blue-collar either, some remotely run factories and others craft code and do datamining.

But why bother using what are essentially "workers by the hour" rather than vetted and loyal employees? The answer is those in-house employees come fraggin' expensive. For instance, if your Matrix help line gets a crush of inquiries because of a new release, it's more cost-effective to bring in outsourced employees to cover peak hours than pay regular employees to be underutilized during the remainder of the work cycle.

Plus not every line is considered core product to the producing corp. Minor tweaks to non-core products can be effectively outsourced (such as a specialty interface for a small user base program).

- Stuff like the logistics of company stores used by the corps to entice employees to spend company scrip must be carefully managed and having it done internally can spawn conflicts of interests.
- 01110110111

Ares, Cross Applied Technologies and Novatech have been the best supporters of outsourcing (though Novatech has recently been using more in-house employees due to security concerns). The Japanese megas, Aztechnology and Saeder-Krupp value internal loyalty and have only dabbled in outsourcing. Wuxing, and the rest of the PPG have begun using outsourcing as a way to compensate for being outmaneuvered by their competitors but they're focusing on India and Southeast Asia. Yamatetsu is the exception They have an outsourcing manager, Maris Massau, providing support for community initiatives. The fact that she has set up facilities in the slum districts adds to the difficulty of runs against them. And for every mega, there are hundreds of subsidiaries that are at arms reach, but do not have a mega's full backing. There are tens of thousands of smaller companies that need assistance for products, but do not have the capability to do it themselves.

Outsourcing works in one of two ways: either the corp hires individuals on a per-needed basis, or contracts out to a virtual company for the entire project. A virtual company is one that has no physical address but that of their Matrix address and makes its living contracting out services. While there is no need for them to be located in Chile, many of them are because it is easier to interview and hire employees or gather employees to a secure site. The outsourcing equivalent of a Johnson is a Mr. Bumble.

- Some corps have their own facilities, others lease them as needed. Most of them are either warehouses or lofts, so when there isn't a need, they shut it down and take the equipment leaving the site empty.
- Transito Seto
- So how do you know one is to be used?
- Xeneize
- Infrastructure. An office can be set up in hours, as they truck in chairs, networks, etc. Get in with the companies that specialize in that, and you have a window to bug/hack the place.
- Enki
- A couple of local nodes have forums of outsource specialists with every kind of skill imaginable available. If you have the nuyen, you can hire researchers to do some data mining while you hit the street. Put both kinds of data together, you can get a much better idea how much trouble your Johnson has gotten you into.
- DangerSensei
- There are about a dozen major outsource companies, but they seem to merge, close and reopen randomly, so any listing would be out of date rapidly. Check the local employment nodes. Data-Source and PotenciaPueblo are relatively free of corp influence.
- Salazar

So why is this important for people here? Where there's nuyen, there are jobs. Let's say Ares has outsourced a job, and they gather their outsourced employees virtually into a node, and use a secure link for traffic to and from that node. For deckers, these are back doors or quick exits. Having outsourced programmers makes it easier to introduce 'features' into utilities, such as a copy of all keyword triggered research done and sent to the runners. Even riggers, since some corp facilities that use drones as security outsource additional operators, giving every drone a controller when security is alerted.

Or let's say Pratt & Whitney needs to make an engine modification. They get some outsourced engineers to do the redesign so they can focus on the big money jobs. But if the engine's for a military LAV, slipping in a design flaw (say making those jets easier to detect if you use an unusual frequency) would be "profitable". Using outsourcing, factories can be managed around the clock remotely. Any additional production can be arranged by savvy runners who need customized equipment.

- Or let's say you are between gigs and want some pocket nuyen. I've known runners to parlay their unique skill sets into nice change, but remember to maintain your anonymity, otherwise someone may connect your different personas.
- Craquero

TRIADS AND DATA PIRACY IN CHILE

I'll go into it in more detail later, just believe me when I say the Chinese community has rapidly expanded in Chile and with it came the Triads who've become a major part of the Chilean underworld. What about the Ghost Cartels, you ask? They have negotiated a lucrative arrangement with the Triads. The Triads handle local distribution without interference as long as the Triads buy exclusively from the Cartels. A sideline is that the Triads act as a pipeline to sell BADs throughout Asia competing with local upstart druglords there.

Every new generation of Triad and Ghost Cartel youngbloods clashes in the hopes of proving the other is ripe for takeover, but these short wars have always ended inconclusively. The Yakuza presence (mostly offshoots of groups from Peru) keeps itself within corporate walls. The leading Triads in Chile are the 8 Cranes and the Silver Carps.

The 8 Cranes is led by a well-loved, elderly businessman called Antonio Wu and makes its home in Nuevo Santiago. The Cranes boast by far the biggest guns and baddest razorguys. Its street operations are directed by a slitch called Patricia. Politically, they hold a lot of sway, but the churn of elected officials prevents them from controlling too much. Smuggling, metahuman trade and drug traffic is all controlled by the 8 Cranes. Wu keeps things running smoothly by working on street level with the cops. The Ghost Cartels rep, Bernardo Prat, has a great deal of respect for Wu and frequently sides with the 8 Cranes during internal Triad disputes. Foreign shadowrunners are expected to pay respect to the 8 Cranes; and while getting onto Wu's good graces doesn't really bring any advantages, landing on his bad side usually requires rapid departure from Chile.





The Silver Carps are a quiet member of the so called 'Triad network', which includes the Yellow Lotus in Hong Kong, the Golden Flames in SanFran and the White Tigers in mainland China. Most are unaware it even exists, but its presence is clearly felt in the underground SOTA electronics, datasofts and even in premium Kongs. No one knows who the members or leaders are, and the Silver Carps has taken extreme measures to keep it so. Rumor has it that if you have the right connections in the Matrix and a drekload of *dinero*, these guys can deliver miracles.

The 8 Cranes and the Silver Carps seem to coexist quite peaceably, but how the arrangement works is anyone's guess. Preferably someone else's, I have enough folks gunning for me already. I wouldn't advise approaching them unless you have no other alternative. As a juicy tidbit though: in one of Nuevo Santiago's scum districts' is an ork-only bar called „la Dama Oscura“ (The Dark Lady), and within that bar there's a private Matrix access that can lead to the Silver Carps Matrix drop points. Jack in at your own risk to find their public face, Transnochar.

- Question: how does this drek-head know all about something the Tongs are so gung-ho to keep secret?
- Imp o'Possibility
- You're welcome to go exploring the Chilean LTG, Imp. Just make sure you can speak Chinese or leave a forwarding address.
- Decker del Sur
- When one has mastered the Opus of the Matrix, all is open.
- White Tiger
- ...okay....
- TriCity Blues
- Just pulling your chain, check out the Open Source entry. I suspect that will answer your question on the how at least.
- White Tiger
- I've heard of these guys, but aren't they Korean?
- El Tunche

NUEVO SANTIAGO

Nuevo Santiago is Chile's capital and largest city despite having the original parts of Santiago reduced to gravel by a series of catastrophic earthquakes at the beginning of the century. The largest occurred in 2011 off the Central Valley coast. It registered a 9.6 on the Richter scale, flooded close to 10 miles inland, and folded Valparaíso into oblivion. The drooling monkeys with abaci masquerading as a Statistics Bureau never managed to estimate how many people got bagged and tagged or just out right disappeared. Despite two generations of reconstruction, parts of Nuevo Santiago are still threatening to collapse. This is either due to unpredictable sinkholes or because a sufficient bribe was paid so a dilapidated building would be allowed to pass the semi-annual inspection. Nevertheless, the cosmopolitan nature of old Santiago still lives on,

and more metahumans reside in the capital than anywhere else in Chile. Nuevo Santiago retains the old European look and feel of its forefather, and maintains a similar cost of living.

Nuevo Santiago, along with other Chilean sprawls, has always had a large European émigré population. The EuroWars caused the last major influx to cross Chile's borders, mostly displaced from Central and Eastern Europe. But in the last decade, Chinese and Korean immigration has grown to proportions that do not allow the Asian community to be ignored. While there are many other cities across Chile, Nuevo Santiago is the heart and soul of all economic life and houses no less than five arcologies.

- After I sent this in, but before the file was posted, Eastern Tiger managed to navigate the thicket of bribes and permits to become the proud (soon to be) owner of the sixth arcology in downtown. Needless to say, the established Triads are squawking about the impending arrival of the Korean Jo-Pok.
- SinPega
- Mysterious new bribes, permits and construction shortages are slowing down the arcology and the Jo-Pak's plans. Most likely, Eastern Tiger will soon work with PPG local rep Nicanor Rojas to eliminate corp support for the Triads, but that will still leave a brewing mobwar.
- Sombrero

Nuevo Santiago is located in the Central Valley region of Chile. This means it's surrounded by breathtaking mountains. No, really, I mean breathtaking. You see, they make an ideal trap for air pollutants. Please take the in-flight health warnings about Chile seriously; most people have a hard time acclimating to the city's environment. I'd recommend continuously wearing some of those cheap nose filters at least for the first few weeks and maybe even longer. Certain areas of the city, named the 'scum districts', are so toxic that only dwarfs and orks seem able to tolerate the air without filters (one guess which districts require additional permits for dwarf and ork-friendly low ceilings or wide doors).

There is talk about possible solutions to the toxicity problem and even a lucrative contract between English and Amazonian investors was floated, but no one has footed the bill. A bond issue is likely to be up in the next election cycle supported by the head of the city council, Alberto Ayala. Carcinogens and the prospect of having to have surgically implanted air filters to live past the age of 50 is all part of life in the big city.

OTHER PLACES AND EVENTS

While all roads in Chile do lead to Nuevo Santiago, there's a lot more to the country than our capital. Here's a primer to some sites and events you might come across here in the ass end of South America.

The Copper Mines

In an age where the average runner is as dependant on electronics as a decker is on a datajack, copper makes everything from maglock wiring to ammunition casings. Gigantic, open-air

pits and shaft mines are scattered all over Chile, though most of the open-air pits are concentrated in the Central and Southern regions. In most of these mines, aging machinery causes frequent loss of life, so cheap and disposable labor is always needed.

Several prisons in Chile and neighboring countries are all too eager to whittle down their bulging numbers and are therefore happy to meet manpower demands. In most places rad poisoning and asphyxiation are the least of your worries, as other nastier hazards are constant despite military and corporate precautions. For instance, the microbe farms used for ore purification have this nasty tendency to spawn necrotizing strains. Nothing hardened criminals can't handle, right?

There are also all manners of Awakened 'complications' to deal with. This is a shining example of how sterile corp-speak can be. Only they would call packs of Awakened, carnivorous llamas a "complication". Reports of these 'complications' have ranged from angry, Awakened flora and fauna to toxic elements. Military protection provided by either in-house sources or 'borrowed' from the Chilean military is often a necessity. For the more lucrative (and invariably more dangerous) facilities, the military units are often complemented with mercenaries.

A common saying to visitors in Chile is „stay here long enough, sooner or later you'll visit the mines.“ Whether or not the visit will be short or really short depends on whether you are a criminal trying to pay off your sentence before your lungs are reduced to caustic goo, or if you're a guard trying not to be chewed to pieces by something large, ill-tempered and toxic.

On a more cheerful note, chief foreman Capitan Victor "El Ogro" ("The Ogre") Varilla, head of the largest Central Valley mine, recently met his untimely demise when he fell victim to a vicious grazing attack by the afore-mentioned llamas. Surviving workers are desperately hoping that whomever S-K sends next will run a tighter ship, stifling some of the rampant corruption.

- Please! Whoever Saeder-Krupp sends will be another exile that screwed up so badly they couldn't come up with a corporate execution sufficiently painful and prolonged to satisfy Lofwyr. Throw in the fact that said exile will probably be a dwarf or an ork so Saeder-Krupp won't have to pay for filtration cyberware and what do we get? We end up with a corp meta who has a chip the size of an Awakened Redwood on his shoulder and is desperate to prove his worth. I predict the new management will put forward a plan to double profits by any means necessary within a week of arrival.

- Felix

Mapuche War Parties

For thirty years, government and corporate installations all across the southern cone (mostly in Chile) have suffered from increasingly potent magical guerilla attacks. Most folks just assume it's the cost of doing business in the tox-lands. However, Captain Alejandro Littin, head of counter-insurgency operations against such attacks, has managed to find a pattern. These attacks are now attributed to small groups of toxic shamans claiming to be Mapuche. Despite PR flacks and officials trying to keep this under wraps, info is leaking out somewhere. There are consistent rumors that a powerful Mapuche lonko

(war chieftain), calling himself Lautaro, is recruiting more of the scattered toxic shamans into his guerilla army to further his holy war on all non-Mapuche in southern Chile.

- Why do we give even regurgitated conspiracy credence here? There's no evidence that Lautaro exists, and while toxic shamans are a major threat in southern Chile (considering those sims I downloaded from the site SinPega mentioned, I almost agree they have cause) the chance of any group remaining stable for a week, never mind for over a decade, is virtually nil.

- NazCar

- But {Data Stream Interrupted}
- Conspir-I-See

- What part of NIL do you not understand?
- NazCar

- And what part of maintaining data integrity on the Shadowland nodes is hard to understand, Naz-Car? Consider this Dump and Ban a not so gentle reminder. Have fun trying to read the board in tortoise mode.

- Captain Chaos

- A while back someone tried to upload a recording of an attack on a Yamatetsu installation near Mount Osorno, but it was too badly derezzed. The claim that there was a monstrous wave of alien elementals remains unsubstantiated.

- Neon Puma

- The wetware source of the recording was compromised and is undergoing intensive therapy to tone down her gibbering. It's disturbing the rest of the inmates at the facility.

- Sombrero

Currently, these skirmishes have been localized around the worst of the toxic areas in the South (near where the old national parks existed). So far, few attacks have occurred around Punta Arenas or Tierra del Fuego, two major jump points for corps' Antarctica operations.

Renarku has the largest presence, but tensions are rapidly building and some corps are pulling out security forces from Antarctica to secure their gateway in. No one knows how far

the conflict will spread since these new Mapuche appear to be gaining strength. Of course, considering their apparent lack of sanity, they may have always been this powerful and were simply too distracted to act before. Local corps employ runners to hunt down the Mapuche. Payment can reach as much as 25K a head (double pay with proof of kill.)

Some hysterical execs are claiming Lautaro is just a vanguard of a larger wave of toxic attacks, but it has been written off as scare tactics. Regardless of that particular truth, Chile has become very magophobic of late. Non-indigenous shamans and particularly flashy hermetics have found themselves the target of serious harassment, with some disappearances in Antofagasta. Through PR efforts, Yamatetsu has managed to deflect anger away from the metahuman community (much to its relief and gratitude). Government sanctioned disappearances are a very sore topic. So the fact that it is happening and no one (including the government) seems to care is starting to stir dangerous resentment.

- A buddy of mine was in Neuvo Santiago earlier this year and thought casting a simple healing spell would get him in good with the locals. Fortunately, the job was an aboveboard guard detail, so the hiring corp was willing to spring him out of jail.

- Steel Pancho

- Aren't the Mapuche natives also called 'Araucanos,' as in they come from Araucania?

- Elijah

- So?

- Montasanos

- Just curious. Something I've been meaning to look into.

- Elijah

- I'm starting to like the way you think Elijah.

- Lone Gunman

- Whenever people say they are 'just curious', it usually means they are sitting on info so fantastic they can't help smirking at the rest of us. Usually they are conspiracy loonies only one step above the folks pushing the latest immortal elves spam.

- Maestro Huariguero



Rapa Nui: Easter Island

Chile has officially abandoned the island while still retaining sovereignty claims, but has made no further attempts to reclaim it. In the past, occasional high rollers have paid insane amounts of nuyen for quick day trips there, but after a mid-level Novatech exec's yacht was found floating abandoned, the number of victims with more nuyen than sense has dropped.

The island itself dissuades visitors by radiating a mysterious 15 klick EM field that shorts out electronics and by emanating an overwhelming sense of dread once one goes ashore. And for you driving tech-head nuts, no one has managed to get a clear aerial/orbital photo there since the Awakening. Privateers occasionally land on the island using pre-Awakening maps to deposit merchandise or dissuade pursuit, but few dare remain after sunset.

There is a persistent rumor that a Chinese expedition, led by a man called Chiin-Ngaan, made it back alive after exploring the island for two days, but what they found and who laid out enough nuyen to pay for the expedition no one seems to know.

- Lung paid for it and is planning another, supposedly with some mages and other arcane equipment to take advantage of whatever they found.
- Discuss
- Uh-huh. Sure. Either way, I was on one of recovery teams for that lost exec, Ares man by the way, not Novatech, and after what happened, I wouldn't go back unless Lung himself was riding shotgun.
- DeepSix

Stranger still are the tales of a freakishly large leviathan attacking nearby shipping lanes. So far, no ship has managed to repel the creature but relatively few are attacked. Survivors of one attack tell of an insane sea dragon calling itself Hotu Matu'a and warning them never to return. Consequently, the PPG shipping lanes have become a lot more dangerous these days, and vessels often hire extra muscle when traveling near Rapa Nui.

- A leviathan in the Pacific? I think the name Hotu Matu'a is more significant. A quick dip in the historical archives shows that is a name of an ancient Polynesian chief said to have lived on Easter Island around the 16th century. We're probably dealing with indigs who have shamanistic backup.
- Sagan
- How many shamans leave chew marks on composite hulls?
- Dark Blood

The Andes Race ("Las Piratas")

Every two years, in early summer, a race takes place in Chile that attracts international attention. Though not as prestigious as Le Mans, Las Piratas has a following amongst less reputable racers. The race dates back to pre-Awakened times when it was only a sailing regatta competition. While that challenge is still held, a much more interesting one takes place on land.

Starting from Antofagasta and ending in Puerto Montt, the course is nearly 3,000 kilometers along the coast and through the mountains. The event is 'casted, and a winner's purse of a quarter million nuyen ensures viewers a healthy dose of dastardly competition. The money is well-earned given the scope of the trials the racers face. The toxic and Awakened danger of the abandoned rural areas of Chile are not for the faint of heart as all manner of unknown critters inhabit the ill-maintained roads and environmental conditions test even the toughest vehicles. Out of the seven hundred racers that start, usually less than fifty cross the finish line; while the others either pull out, med-evaced, or never heard from again.

- It's not that tough. Nasti Nikki won it, and she was never that good.
- Claymore
- Nikki was that good, once. In fact, I can tell you exactly when she lost it. It was during the 27 minutes the vidfeed went out on her vehicle. She has never talked to anyone about those 27 minutes, and she hasn't done a run through Chile since.
- Picador

The media splashes almost as much attention behind the scenes as it does on the actual race. It's an open secret that race teams frequently hire runners as pit crews. The drivers and pit crews often combine their assorted talents of rigging, counter-intelligence, sabotage and not-so-subtle trickery to provide endless entertainment to the masses. Depending on how much of the team's strategy relies on said runners, the pit crews can be paid as well as the drivers.

OPEN SOURCE CENTRAL FORUM

Well, while that was fun, now let me state the reason I am justly paranoid. I am the current spokesman, and thus the only publicly known figure, of the Open Source Central Forum. The Open Source Central Forum, for those whose connection was accomplished by inserting program A into port B, is the central managing body of the Open Source Programming Movement. Open source is the idea that all programming and software code should be open to users to modify and use as they see fit.

Obviously this drives corps absolutely nuts. There have been legal and not-so-legal challenges to the very concept of open source, dating back to the dawn of the Matrix. Even the primitive versions of open source wares led to ever widening usage; that is until the triple assault of the Awakening, the Crash (which fried everything, irrespective of programming) and the rise of the megacorps (whose leadership in the creation of the Matrix allowed them to eradicate open source from the new programming environment). The core Ideologues behind the Open Source movement were in northern Europe, and because they were caught up in the EuroWars, they were unable to respond.

It was the emigration of some of the core groups to Chile that led to the resurrection of Open Source. It took almost a decade, but they were able to link up with the surviving members and recruit local members from among the Chilean programmers.

- What SinPega doesn't mention is that this effort was continually hobbled by programmers disappearing, being extracted, or being unable to find work because corp stooges ratted them out. At the turn of the century, open source looked like it was going to wipe out proprietary software and their high profit margins. Some execs, especially an Ares exec named Phillip Exeter, have tried to shut it down whenever they had a chance, but it never had a high enough priority to be successful.
- People Watcher

Since the Fifties, Open Source started making a comeback, but mostly in infrastructure and other 'invisible' software. However, things came to head last year. We released a new program kernel that almost anyone could manipulate. Accordingly, usage climbed. Within weeks, the two other known members of the Forum disappeared, and at least a dozen "independent" organizations and lobby groups formed to convince people and governments that Open Source was dangerously inferior, easily hacked and would bring about the end of mankind.

Fortunately, we do have friends. Lots of deckers contribute to Open Source projects, and minor corps see it as a way to compete without having to create massive programming departments. The Central Forum has resources, and we've been known to organize volunteers and hire help to make sure the movement stays alive. There are some exciting changes in store for Matrix-ware, and we are going to be at the forefront of it all; you've heard about Virtual Overlay and AugReality?.

WHAT IS OPEN SOURCE?

With so many eyes looking at every line of code, coding errors are corrected quickly, and program conflict problems never arise. Every modification and additional use is added back to the central database. Major improvements are added to the core program by decision of the OSCF, which makes sure the core programs maintain functionality, interconnectivity and ease of use. Yet everything is still available, even the non-core mods, and it is all free. With that flexibility and number of participants, programming tends to have fewer errors and be more robust, even though it requires a little more work to understand and master. Because of that lag time, sometimes it is a step behind the SOTA, but it is always sturdier.

Other than the usual suspects, some exceptional OS programmers include Chilean deckers Borjas and Ariel, along with indy groups like the Dead Decker's Society, Magestone and Shockwave Riders. Corps that aggressively support OS software include Cyberdynamix, Horizon Software and the Mega-Watch organization.

Many Matrix networks now use open source in the underlying software. Low profit products and 'ware that requires stability tend to be open source. GridGuide started using open source a couple iterations ago. Schoolware for municipalities have started to be open source, since it can resist anything a kid can throw at it.

- I've been hybridizing my personas with open source for a while, using it mostly as Bod-ware. It tends to be a step or two behind the SOTA, but the programs resist damage better than anything else I've tried.

- Red Wraith

- The current version of the OS program language is called Opus, which has tons of add-ons to let you do virtually anything. Programming in it is a snap, and there are always a couple of modules that are close to what you are doing that can be modified.

- FastJack

- Mangadyne, Renarku and MCT have been sniffing around some of the programmers. Not sure what for.

- Renarku Fox

- I think those corps are interested in virtual overlays on reality. A doc acquaintance of mine told me that someone snatched a programmer who was working on virtual overlays for brain-damaged patients who couldn't connect what they saw to specific activities.

- Switchback

- Stranger-than-usual Otaku have been hanging out on the OS forums trying to get a handle on Opus infrastructure-ware. Why, I have no idea, because I thought Otaku functioned on the instinctive level. Maybe they are trying to do something unusual. Or big. Or both.

- Wandering Eye

- So that's where the roaches have been hiding.

- Ronin

- As if we would be that careless...

- Amor







ECUADOR: LAND OF DIFFERENCES

• Greetings from one of the smallest countries in South America—Ecuador! Don't be fooled, though: its size just means that the action is more concentrated. With the Ghost Cartels seemingly losing their longtime grip on the country, things are heating up. And let's not forget that Ecuador is a melting pot of cultures, each vying for a piece of power. Who's on top, who's climbing, and who's paying the most? I asked my good friend Aguilar to clear things up for us.

- Captain Chaos
Transmitted: XXXXXXXX

A NEW SEASON

Most people tend to forget our little corner of the world. It's not like we have civil wars or get invaded by Great Dragons. However, this doesn't mean that Ecuador is boring. Far from it, in fact—now that we have a new President who's willing to take on the corruption permeating every facet of our country, things are really heating up.

Where to start? Ah, yes: the election of 2062. That was the closest Presidential race in this century, with two main candidates vying for the prize: Fernando Monasterios from the *Partido Nacional de Ecuador* (National Party of Ecuador) and Gustavo Nunez from the *Partido Democraata Popular de Ecuador* (The Popular Democratic Party of Ecuador).

The Partido Nacional came about as a union of several small parties along with the *Partido Cristao de Ecuador* (Ecuador's Christian Party) and the *Partido de las Nacionalidades Indiginas de Ecuador* (Party of Indigenous Nationalities of Ecuador). Since the early part of this century, the Catholic Church has supported cultural diversity in Ecuador and encouraged a policy

of coexistence. Meanwhile, the native population has become more united in an effort to protect their rights and territory. Because the Ghost Cartels have trampled the toes of both groups, the two have found the Cartels to be a common enemy.

- Church property has been the subject of increased scrutiny. Several priests who were openly against the ruling party and the Cartels have been framed and convicted of false crimes. Of course, the Catholic Church has not taken this lightly.
- Sepulveda

The ruling party since 2038 has been the Popular Democratic Party of Ecuador. Behind the scenes, the party's real power is the Ghost Cartels and their money. In return, these politicos do their best to protect the Cartels' interests and keep the police away from their leaders.

Somewhere in between are the people of Ecuador, who wanted only to end to the corruption sapping their country's strength. As is often the case in such matters, they were left

by the wayside. Ecuador became a haven for drug lords and Cartels, while closing itself off from foreign investments and the rest of the world, all done in the name of environmental protection. To this day, Ecuador does not allow extraterritoriality to any foreign corporation unless they pass a strict pollution test. These safeguards are meant ostensibly to protect Ecuador's environment and rich native culture, but in reality the Cartels simply don't want foreign interference in their businesses.

This brings us back to the election of '62 when, after years of corruption, Ecuadorians wanted a change. The change came when two influential powers in Ecuador, the Catholic Church and CONAIE, came together. They offered a young charismatic ork named Fernando Monasterios and a well-known and beloved Shuar leader named Tshuin. Together the two succeeded in winning the Presidency from the Cartels and from that point forward they have been working tirelessly to help our people.

- Please, spare me the melodrama. CONAIE and the Church have agendas just like the Cartels do. Each was looking out for its own interests.
- Pragmatico

- The Cartels are scrambling to cope with the changes. After their defeat, they tried to prove election fraud. Unfortunately for them, our team came up with evidence proving that there was indeed fraud—but also that they themselves were behind it. Needless to say, they lost face with the people.
- El Condor

AN ORK AND HIS COUP

Monasterios didn't come out of nowhere; he was well known as the mayor of Quito for several years. He also didn't just decide one day to run for the Presidency—behind the run, much larger machinations were at work. Before getting into the fray, Monasterios and Tshuin had devised a plan to eliminate most of their competition—or at least as many competitors as they could get their hands on. To do this, they gathered as much dirt on high-ranking military officials and politicians as possible.

Once Monasterios officially became a candidate, he and his people defined several targets for blackmail, and many of these targets were exposed to an independent media concern. Others

were less fortunate. Some top ranking officials were assassinated (as you might suspect by now, Ecuador is a bit of a violent place); others were framed as spies and their fates were sealed.

- The "independent media" is actually a subsidiary of GloboTrid, which is a subsidiary of PanAmerican Investments, and, well, you get the point.
- Pragmatico

After election, Monasterios began a deep purge. The Popular Democratic Party of Ecuador has been in a state of confusion for the past three years, while the military is now almost completely in Monasterios's and Tshuin's hands.

- The purge isn't over—Monasterios's people are still seeking a lot of talent to help him consolidate his position. Naturally, the other side is also hiring.
- Sombrero

THE POPULAR DEMOCRATIC PARTY OF ECUADOR

The undisputed ruler of Ecuador until '62, the Populists, as they are called, are in complete disarray. Gustavo Nunez has been working 21 hours a day to reclaim the party's power. His biggest obstacle has been the steady stream of scandals assailing his party members.

- No less than fifty scandals have surfaced since '61 when Monasterios started his campaign, and there were at least a dozen before that. The scandals are usually reported by Cotopaxi Media, which as we know now is a subsidiary of GloboTrid. The corporation has been increasing security steadily for the past three years, and there are a lot of new faces around.
- Atahualpa

The party still controls the Congress, though Monasterios's enormous popularity with the people has ensured that Ecuador's Congress doesn't block many of Monasterios's changes. Already, Gustavo seems to have stalled the new president's momentum, and the number of scandals has decreased. It seems that now Gustavo will finally begin to concentrate some of his efforts in containing Monasterios and the opposition. This is good news since the party's funds come from the Cartels,

ECUADOR AT A GLANCE

Government Type: Democratic Republic

Population: 13,894,124

Human: 61%

Elf: 6%

Dwarf: 3%

Ork: 17%

Troll: 3%

Other: 10%

Per Capita Income: 18,400¥

Estimated SINless: 15%

Below Poverty Level: 23%

Corporate Affiliation: 19%

Education:

Less Than Twelve Years: 29%

High School Equivalency: 31%

College Degrees: 36%

Advanced Degrees: 4%

Major Ethnic Groups:

Mestizo: 74%

Spanish: 11%

Shuar: 5%

Huaorani: 2%

Oriental Quichua: 3%

Other: 5%

Major Languages Spoken:

Spanish: 90%

English: 25%

Native dialects: 45%

Major Religions:

Roman Catholic: 65% (less than 42% practicing)

Umbanda: 9%

Santería: 7%

Unaffiliated/Other: 19%

Currency: Real (nuyen also accepted)

Exchange Rate: Real \$5 = 1¥

Genesis National Medical Coverage: 100%

Guaranteed Response Time: 25 minutes

which are none to happy with the way things are going in Ecuador. Through the party, the Cartels have secured themselves a nice position in Ecuador and they don't want to lose it.

- Gustavo is under intense pressure from the Cartels to produce results. He's used Cartel muscle and his own for most of his operations, but now he's bringing in international reinforcements. Money is flowing freely and there's plenty of work.
- Hernandez

THE OPPOSITION

Four years ago, one would be excused for asking, "What opposition?" Not anymore. Things have changed, all right. The opposition today is Monasterios's Partido Nacional de Ecuador, and if you bothered to read the history intro, you know where they came from. So who's in charge? Besides Fernando Monasterios and the VP Tshuin, there are a couple more heavyweights you should know about.

- Monasterios is still top dog. There are some that think that someone else pulls Monasterios's strings, but I personally don't believe that.
- Hombre

ECUADOR TIMELINE

2010: VITAS I hits the Andean population particularly hard. Several native communities are decimated.

2011: Andes volcanoes erupt, and several new volcanoes are identified. Small towns and villages along the Andes are destroyed by the volcanoes. Quito narrowly avoids being destroyed by nearby volcano Guagua Pichincha.

2012: Anti-Awakened Papal Bull causes outrage among most of Ecuador's clergy. Ecuador's natives protest hand in hand with Catholic priests.

2014: Fraudulent elections cause a near-revolution. Most established politicians lose their seats in Ecuador's Congress. Cartels secretly back the newly elected congressmen.

2029: The Crash wipes out most criminal records. The government "claims" to do its best to recover most of the data; however, any data concerning the Ghost Cartels disappears.

2034: Ecuador's native population is the first to support the birth of Amazonia. Fearing that the country's own natives might want to join the new country, the Cartels expand the natives' territory and their powers within it. Most of the territory east of the Andes falls under native jurisdiction.

2038: The Ghost Cartels' grip on Ecuador's government strengthens when the first of a dynasty of Cartel-backed Presidents is elected.

2049: Amazonia's invasion of Colombia sends a wave of refugees, many of whom were part of Ghost Cartels based in Columbia, into Ecuador. Ecuador now stands as the stronghold for the Cartels.

2062: In a surprise turn of events, charismatic ork Fernando Monasterios wins the Presidency. Supporting him are the Catholic Church and its party along with CONAIE — the Confederation of Indian Nationalities of Ecuador. His election marks the end of the Cartels' dominance over the Presidency of Ecuador.

The first person to keep an eye on is Archbishop Celso Flores. Flores was quite vocal against the "filth" that the Cartels peddle on the streets of Ecuador, and also against the influence they exert over Ecuador's youth. The last straw for Flores was a series of sexual harassment cases brought against several Catholic priests. Though most of the priests were acquitted of the charges, the fact that the accusations went as far as reaching court was enough to give the Catholic Church a black eye. As a result, Flores sought friends within CONAIE to help mount an offensive against the Cartels.



- There's also some evidence that the good old Archbishop plays for the other team, if you know what I mean, and that in his youth he might have done some of the things his fellow priests were accused of. But most of it is gossip and there's little hard evidence.
- Penitente

- The Church's involvement in the situation seems overblown compared with its obvious interests in the country. I'm wondering if they're all riled up for some other reason.
- Crowley

For years, most thought that CONAIE was the only opposing force to the Cartels' puppet government. The truth was that the Cartels only agreed to preserve the rainforest to appease Amazonia, and not incidentally to keep a pristine area for growing various drugs (of which the jungle's diversity offers a great source). CONAIE couldn't keep the Cartels' from their lands, and weren't too happy to see drugs being produced all over the rainforest. They also didn't appreciate drug dealers within their communities.

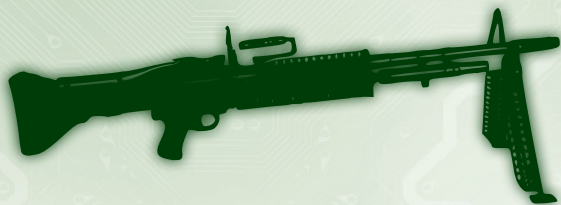
- The Cartels went too far—if they had been content in only farming on the edges of the forest and keeping their wares away from native communities, CONAIE might have kept quiet. But they went deeper and deeper into CONAIE territory every year. Eventually the natives got tired of it.
- Hernandez

- CONAIE's a puppet. And we all know who's pulling the strings.
- Atahualpa

Even though it was unable to stop the Cartels from invading its lands, CONAIE still succeeded in curtailing some of their power. When the Catholics proposed an alliance against the Cartels, CONAIE was more than willing to snatch the opportunity. Tshuin, then the leader of CONAIE, quickly recruited the energetic and charismatic Monasterios to run for president, while adding himself to the ticket as VP. Catholic priests were quick to endorse Monasterios as a good Catholic and a great man (even though he's an ork). Meanwhile, CONAIE and the Church used (and still use) every available resource to bring the Popular Democratic Party of Ecuador down.

CONAIE is led by Carlos Quirantes, a Shuar shaman personally picked by Tshuin as his replacement. Carlos has a “tough man” approach to things, and usually takes care of business personally when it matters.

- That means that Carlos is often the Johnson for really important operations. And he hires *a lot*.
- Atahualpa



HOME SWEET HOME

Now that you have a bit of an understanding of what’s going on in Ecuador, I think it’s time to give you a description of my neck of the woods. Ecuador has everything: lovely beaches, tall mountains, lush rain forests and sprawls. And did I mention the volcanoes? You’d better steer clear of those. They’ve been a bit temperamental since the Year of the Comet.

- No drek. Guagua Pichincha has been on the verge of blowing its top for four years now. Lots of rumors running around that someone’s using magic to keep the lid on it.
- QuitoMole

QUITO: MOLTEN TENSION

Welcome to Quito, capital of Ecuador and city under siege. With the constant threat of eruption from Guagua Pichincha, the city has been on edge and many businesses have moved out to Guayaquil.

Quito is a unique city. It is located nearly 10,000 feet in the Andes, nestled in a long valley at the foot of Guagua Pichincha. The city is 5 km wide and around 34 km long. Several residential neighborhoods are located in the shadow of the volcano, and it’s in these neighborhoods that most of the city’s gang activity is now located.

- He fails to mention that after Guagua Pichincha started to rumble, these were the first neighborhoods to empty. That meant that there were a lot less police around, and only squatters really live there now. A lot of runners have their safe houses in the area.
- Hombre

Most of the city’s industry resides in the northern quarter of Quito, while the southern section now serves as the main residential area. In the middle lies the old town. Regarded as a national and international historical treasure, the old town is home to the city’s only airport and most of the government’s buildings.

- Many of these buildings have already been relocated. Security has been pretty tight, but several security breaches and data thefts have already occurred. There’s still a lot of prize information being moved around. Most of this stuff was kept on offline servers, and it all needs to be moved to its new homes.
- Sombra

Quito was also the home of the Genesis Consortium. The Consortium has been busy monitoring and studying Guagua Pichincha in the hope of figuring out why it has not erupted yet, and, more importantly, if they can do anything to prevent this from happening in the future.

- The volcano has not erupted because someone or something is keeping it from doing so. All scientific evidence points to the fact that the volcano should have blown its top. Who or what is keeping it from doing so is a mystery.
- Machiavelli

GUYAQUIL: ECUADORIAN GOLD

Guayaquil is Ecuador’s largest city and the country’s most important economic hub. It is also the home of the infamous Guayaquil Cartel. The city’s Puerto Maritimo handles most of Ecuador’s legal and illegal imports and exports, and is a major center of activity. They’ve got plenty of grey markets around, taking place in empty warehouses. You can find just about anything you want there: guns, drugs, cyber, bioware—you name it, it’s there.

- It’s also one of the most corrupt places I’ve ever visited. If you’ve got money, you can make a bundle buying skyjacker loot or smuggled Amazonian teslas.
- Corazon

- And all of it overseen by the Cartels. There’s a lot of biz going down at the Puerto Maritimo, and there’s always someone interested in a bigger slice. The new President’s also been putting pressure on the port authorities, and that could mean trouble for the Cartels. Preemptive arm twisting is already taking place against any officials foolish enough to try anything against the Cartels’ stranglehold on the port.
- SangreFrio

Guayaquil has seen a recent boom as businesses formerly located in Quito have relocated to escape the threat of Guagua Pichincha’s wrath. Further, as the country has become friendlier toward outsiders, newcomers have started to find their way into town. In addition to GM’s presence in Ecuador, Yamatetsu, Renraku, Novatech and Ares Macrotech have made new investments for their subsidiaries to enter the Ecuadorian market.

- This hasn’t been viewed favorably by either the Cartels or the local businesses. Expect a heavy increase in shadowruns against the newcomers.
- HotTamales



- The newbies are bringing in outside muscle as well as hiring locals to help bolster their security. Guayaquil has become a shadow battlefield where newcomers battle the old power of the Cartels, while Monasterios's allies try to keep the peace.
- Corazon

ESMERALDAS: THE GREEN PROVINCE

The province of Esmeraldas, along with the city of the same name, is the most ethnically diverse province in all of Ecuador. Here Afro-Ecuadorians, Mestizos, Andes natives' descendants and regional natives all live together peacefully. At least, most of the time, they do. The region is also famous for its drug production. The Cartels use the jungles to cultivate all sorts of narcotics for sale. There are plenty of work opportunities in the region, if you're willing to for one Cartels versus another whenever one thinks they can get away with it.

- This usually means runners and mercs. Since there are about four active Cartels in the region between Ecuador and former Colombia, it's hard to pin down exactly who torched your harvest. Outside talent is preferred for these jobs, so it's even harder to track down the responsible party.
- Easy Pickings
- The government has also upped their operations in the region and it's the current regional flashpoint.
- Hernandez

The province's capital, and the nation's second most important port, is the city of Esmeraldas. The Cartels don't use this port, since it is controlled by the province's local Afro-Ecuadorian syndicate. The city also boasts the highest crime rate in Ecuador, and is a center for mercenary activity.

- Lots of mercs heading toward former Colombia and Peru stage from here. Most come from North America, and they are easily recognizable. Esmeraldas is definitely not a place for tourism.
- Sombra

GALAPAGOS: EVOLUTION'S PLAYGROUND

The Galapago islands have seen a flurry of activity ever since the passing of the Comet. In an effort to better understand the changes in the islands, the Genesis Consortium has rented the rights for exclusive scientific research there from the Ecuadorian government.

The islands' fauna and flora have experienced a sort of evolutionary forward-and-backward step. Some have obviously devolved into more aggressive forms, while others have evolved into something more advanced. This balance is of great interest to the Consortium's research, which was set up in an aquacology so as to not disturb the islands' environment.

- Critter specialists Parashield and Green Global Int. are dying to get their hands on Genesis' Galapagos data. Both the evolved forms and the primitive aggressive fauna are amazing. One local variety of seal has developed an iridescent multicolored skin which scientists believe it uses for basic communication and the Galapagos turtle has developed a couple of aggressive strains with elemental abilities!
- Genepeacer
- Some interested parties are already looking for ways into the islands. Newcomer Universal Omnitech is sending people in to collect some samples, and Yamatetsu is not far behind.
- Inquisitor

The Consortium is currently examining new theories of evolution that take magic into consideration. This research is also tied to magic genotech, and how these genes evolve and affect the biomass of the islands.

- Security on and around the islands is pretty tight. The Ecuadorian government has given the Consortium a small military fleet as protection. The fleet guards the islands against intruders, but as long as one knows its itinerary, it's not too hard for a small boat to slip in unnoticed.
- Collector
- There's also the recent attacks on the Proteus Arkoblock off the coast of Ecuador to consider. So far no one has spoken up to take responsibility for the attacks. My money is on eco-terrorists funded by Amazonians.
- Hernandez
- I don't see why Amazonia would mess with that particular hornet's nest. I think it's someone else.
- Q

CULTURAL SMORGASBORD

Ecuador is a diverse country, home to many different cultures struggling to keep their identities. Some have faded into obscurity; others have thrived in this Awakened world.

Ecuador is composed mainly of Mestizos, people who are a mix of cultures—usually natives and Europeans. Mestizos generally act and behave as Europeans, but some still hold superstitions and traditions from their ancestors. With Europeans also came Africans as slaves. Today they have effectively blended in with the population, though they are still famous for their marimba music and dance festivals.

- Afro-Ecuadorians tend to practice religions such as Santería and Umbanda. They do retain a bit of their own culture, but it's largely overshadowed by mainstream society.
- Hernandez
- Some of those festivals and dances carry more meaning than others. Rest assured that some of them are actually used to disguise ritual magic in disguise. And a few of them are plenty potent.
- VoodooWatcher
- There are rumors that a particular group of Umbandistas tied to the Amazonian Quiumbanda syndicate practices blood magic. The government has quietly offered a bounty on their heads. Finding them, however, is not easy. Those who tried were made examples of.
- Daywalker

THE SHUAR INDIANS

The Shuar Indians are best known for their practice of shrinking heads. The heads (called *tsantsas*) have gained significant importance after the Awakening, as they are often used as components for anchored spells, especially defensive spells and sometimes for conjuration of spirits. The Shuar separate their shamans into the Penser Uwisin and the Wawek. The Uwisin primarily deal with healing and protective magic, and are also responsible for the creation of *tsantsas*. The Wawek devote themselves to “bewitching”—combat- or offensively-oriented magic. Both types of shamans are respected members of the Shuar community, and often the richest tribal members. The most famous Uwisin is Tshuin, the current Vice President of Ecuador.

- Getting your hands on one of these *tsantsas* is quite a task. Each is made using a complicated ritual, and they're given only to worthy warriors. However, people pay a lot of money for them, especially since a lot of scholars still don't know exactly how they are made.
- Collector
- The shamans make these *tsantsas* from fallen foes. Headhunting is a common practice among Shuar warriors. I have seen proof of this after one of my mates was killed in Shuar territory. A couple of months later, I spotted a warrior in Quito with my friend's shrunken head around his neck.
- Sombra

The Shuar live in the southern region of Ecuador on the border with Peru. Shuar tribes also live in Peru, and Ecuadorian Shuar would like to see this territory annexed. Some have even gone as far as taking action toward this goal. So far, though, outright war has not yet been declared, and action has been limited to hit-and-run and guerrilla attacks. Little is known about what they intend to do, but most bets are that the Shuar will be taking a lot of heads for their *tsantsas* in a major offensive.

- The Shuar are not the only ones who would like to see Ecuador invade Peru. Several hard-line generals have openly talked about retaking territory that is rightfully Ecuadorian. Monasterios has tried his best to calm these generals down and prevent a war, but pressure is also coming from CONAIE, and a lot of Ecuadorians believe that it's the right time to retake what's theirs.
- DarkFang
- Wonder where the pressure is coming from...
- The Laughing Man
- Quiet, you. Meddle not in affairs which are none of your concern! I will not be as tolerant as my brethren.
- Solitaire

THE SIERRA QUICHUAS

The Sierra Quichuas, direct descendants of the Incas, numbered close to 2 million at the turn of the century. However, VITAS struck them harder than most, while volcanoes decimated several of their towns. Today most of these natives have scattered into other tribes or the general population of Ecuador. A few still practice their ancient traditions.

- Shame, really—their culture has mostly vanished. A few small tribes still remain, but the younger generation is fleeing for the cities. Another twenty years and they'll all be gone.
- Socio Pat
- Many went into the rainforest with the hope of starting over. Most were absorbed by the tribes already living there. Some trespassed into other natives' territory, and those who did not want to convert were slaughtered.
- Q

THE HUAORANI

The Huaorani are a fierce people that shun modern civilization and have kept themselves as isolated as possible. During the Awakening, they became increasingly more active in CONAIE and governmental affairs.

With no differentiation between the physical world and the spirit world, the Huaorani believe in three greater animal spirits: the Harpy Eagle rules the skies, the Jaguar rules the land, and the Anaconda rules the underworld. The Huaorani place a greater emphasis on the Jaguar; many Jaguar shapeshifters make their homes in Huaorani territory, where they are revered.

The Huaorani are also famous for their tendency to fanatically defend their homes and ideals, even to the point of suicide. Many Huaorani shamans have been known to pass out from the drain from the frequency and power of their spells. Some went as far as to inflict physical wounds upon themselves.

- Never enter Huaorani territory without some heavy backup. These fraggers love to blow themselves up to protect their homes. And a lot of good telesma and bio samples just happen to be located around where they live.
- Latin Smuggler
- The Huaorani are backed by a Great Anaconda named Obe. That's where they learned their magical mojo. It's their magic that keeps everyone at bay.
- Q
- Obe has ties to M'Boi, who in turn is tied to Hualpa. Easy to see where CONAIE gets its resources from. I figure it's only a matter of time until Ecuador becomes an Amazonian pawn.
- Machiavelli
- Please. Great Anacondas are a myth, just like M'Boi.
- Conspir-I-See

The Huaorani territory covers the northeastern tip of Ecuador. Their numbers have grown considerably since the Awakening, and some suspect that this was the result of a migration of Huaorani from the cities. It's also theorized that other tribes have merged with the Huaorani. At the beginning of the century, they numbered only around two thousand strong, but these days there are close to one hundred thousand Huaorani.

- What? Are you kidding me? There's no way the numbers could have changed that much, right?
- Inquisidor
- It's just like Aguilar said: a lot of Quichuas from the Andes sought refuge in the Amazon rainforest. Most were absorbed by other tribes. Also a lot of natives in Ecuador have formed large settlements in the jungle, with better farming and many of the amenities of urban life.
- Obe Watcher

THE ORIENTAL QUICHUAS

The Oriental Quichuas practice a religion that mixes Catholicism and their own beliefs. They believe in more than one God and keep a distinct culture, a mix of those of the Shuar/Huaorani, the Catholics Europeans and their own ancestors. They usually follow a shamanic tradition with ancestor spirits and some animal spirits (such as Anaconda and Jaguar, similar to the Huaorani).



- The Oriental Quichuas are an odd mix. They were the most numerous native tribe residing in the rainforest at the turn of the century. Today they only lose out to the Shuar, which, like the Huaorani, have seen a large increase in their numbers.
- Hernandez
- Several of the Sierra Quichuas joined the Oriental Quichuas, and the two have mixed their cultures.
- Vargas

THE OTHER SIDE OF ECUADOR

That the Cartels are a little upset with Monasterios's rise to power would be the understatement of the year. Still, the Cartels are keeping their cool and a major war between Ecuador's police and the Cartels has not happened yet.

- Things are heating up for sure. The Cartels are preparing for an offensive, and so is Monasterios, though we all thought it would have happened by now.
- Decker del Sur

Three Cartels in Ecuador all share real estate in Guayaquil. What do they do in Ecuador? Management—all their businesses are managed by hotshots in Ecuador. Because most of their management and leadership is located in Ecuador, the Cartels needed a certain degree of protection. After all, if you lose a farm in Amazonia, there's no problem as long as you have someone who can coordinate the opening of another one.

By cleaning up Cartels' influence in the government, the police and the military, Monasterios has gained enough space to be able to go after them. Because the Cartels' leaders often dealt directly with their corrupt cronies, having rounded up many of the lackeys means Monasterios has a direct line on who's important to the Cartels and where they are. Yeah, they're sweating bullets right about now.

- With all this info, one could put an enormous amount of pressure on the Cartels.
- Zorro
- Perhaps we are missing the point of this. It could be that someone only wants to control the Cartels and use their network for their own personal gains.
- Machiavelli

Good sources on the streets claim that the Cartels' leadership has been talking not only with Monasterios, but also with some outsiders. This is one time I would love to be a fly on the wall (or a roach in the sink) to know what's really going on.

- The Cartels don't want to lose their business, and Monasterios doesn't want bloodshed on the streets. You do the math.
- Hombre
- I think it's a bit more complicated than that.
- Q

Another infamous criminal organization, simply called the Syndicate, operates out of Esmeraldas. A branch of Amazonia's Quiumbanda syndicate, they fiercely oppose the Cartels' influence in Esmeraldas. Most of their activity is centered on tesmas smuggling, along with bio samples from Ecuador's jungles.

I also want to note that the shadowrunner community here in Ecuador is quite diverse and generally open to outsiders. Most of the police are still very corrupt, so runners can usually get by inspections fairly easily by slipping some nuyen the cops' way.

No outside corporate police force exists in Ecuador—individual cities take care of all law-enforcement duties. Police procedures do not change much from city to city, since the central government has instituted a standard for police procedures.

- What does change, though, is the amount of money you have to pay for them to look the other way when you mistakenly show your assault rifle. Backwater towns are a lot easier to get away with stuff, while Guayaquil and Quito are a lot more expensive. Remember that before thinking that you can just walk away from the police by bribing. Things can get pretty expensive really quick.

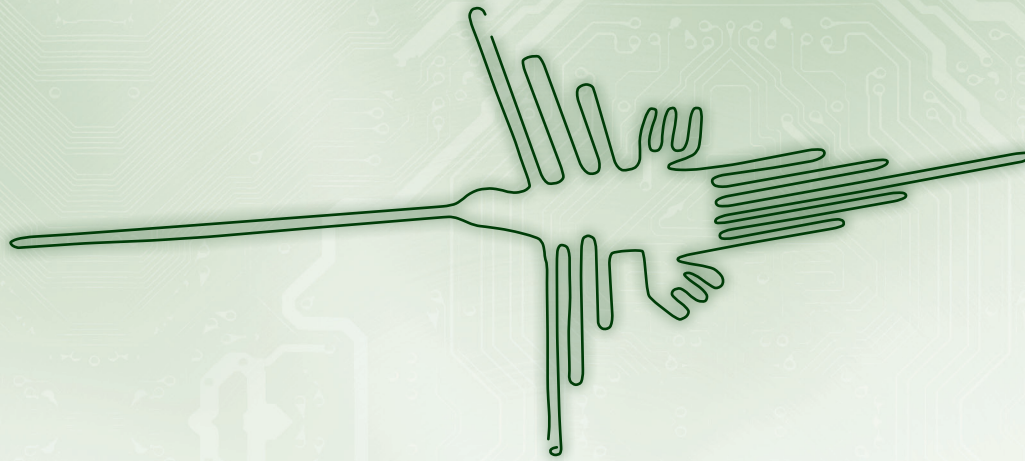
- QuitoMole

- Ecuador's Matrix is a bit antiquated, and they don't have a lot of drek-hot deckers either. The Cartels are always looking to hire, and so is the government. If you know your stuff you could easily get a nice full-time job securing either party's data.

- Decker del Sur







PERU

By Aguarí

- If you feel adventurous, Peru is the place to go. Make the right moves and meet the right people, and you might just make enough to retire. The country is a delicate balance between the Japanese megas and the government on one side and the rebellious groups trying to oust them on the other. Currently both sides are in need of talent to fill the scales. Your host will be Aguarí, the Iquitos datahaven sysop, who's been gracious enough to compile this download. So read on and don't come crying to me saying Uncle Chaos didn't warn you.
- Captain Chaos
Transmitted:

So you're interested in doing business in the Andean Paradise, omae? Think twice. Gone is the Japanacorp economic boom. Corp infighting is starting to produce copious heaps of collateral damage. The country is on the verge of balkanization. Bioware smuggling is rampant. Add a healthy dose of terrorism to the already lethal mix of Ghost Cartels and weird Awakened stuff, and you have a drek of a good time! On second thought, I think you just hit the spot. Hurry up, make as much nuyen as you can and don't forget to leave a big fat tip. It's appreciated.

CRITICAL MOMENTS

Peru's recent history boils down to two profoundly significant dates. Granted they don't exist in a vacuum but they're the critical moments that shaped everything else. Other countries were shaken by the chaos of the Awakened world but Peru has mostly taken even these world-shaking events in stride and gone about its business.

Peru's economic loyalties shifted smoothly from the disintegrating United States of America to the Japanese Imperial State in the early decades of the century. Since Fujimori's government in the last decade of the previous century, the Japanacorps have made Peru their home away from home. Thus, when our former partner started to experience difficulties, we remained quite stable through the collapse of the USA, the VITAS crisis and the Crash.

- That's one side of the story. Very picturesque too. Realty was a little darker. Along with the "stability" that kept the privileged few content, there was also brutal repression. Though things were rosy in the cities, in the Andean countryside we had to fend for ourselves against the Cartels, Shining Path and what have you. Doesn't leave much energy to take over the government, though our time will come soon enough.
- AndinoAhora

New Year's Day, 2035

Everything changes when an expeditionary force of Japanese Imperial Marines disembarks just weeks after the Brazilian coup, no doubt to preempt any spread of the Amazonian revolution and secure Japanese assets in their Peruvian beachhead. The government welcomed them with open arms on behalf of the Peruvian people. The Marines accepted the welcome and assured continued stability in Peru, as they comfortably settled in—an occupation force in everything but name enforcing peace, stability and the conditions for prosperity. Of course, stability was artificial since very little of it had to do with Peru or the Peruvians. It's only recently that things have become as "exciting" as our granddaddies knew them.

- The arrival of the Marines was coordinated with the government and carried out when everyone was off guard and worried about Amazonia. All those involved should be executed for treason.
- Aloha
- On their behalf you've got to grant that life in Peru had never been as prosperous and they didn't rub state corruption in your face like they do in Argentina or Ecuador.
- Naysayer Sensei

November 2061

The Japanese expeditionary force was recalled by the new Emperor in late 2061, leaving the government and the Japanacorps high and dry and quickly losing their grip over the rest of the country. The Ring of Fire wrought disaster on several major cities, including the proud southern city of Arequipa which was buried in lava and volcanic ash. Peru didn't begin as much of a cohesive people and when the comet disrupted the communications, it was a perfect setting for the countries stability to die in the ashes.

POWER STRUGGLE

The shakeup wrought by the Comet and its fallout have left the country in an up-for-grabs situation. The government in the capital city of Lima and its Japanese allies are desperately trying to secure their assets, regroup and retake control of the rest of the country. The Andes and the jungle bordering Amazonia hide several rebellious groups who are taking advantage of this chaos by securing as much territory as they can.

Through a few connections, I have the inside stories on this power tango between the capital and the Andeans. Meet my two chummers. PowerGrabber

is a fixer in Lima; who operates mainly in the political and corporate shadow scene. Greengo is veteran merc, operating in the mountains.

- Greengo is from the UCAS if I recall correctly, hence his street name. Still, I'd listen to every word he says. He's survived longer than any merc I've heard of operating in the Shining Path operation areas.
- Charly D'Fault

PERU IS LIMA

By PowerGrabber

The reawakening of the Ring of Fire incinerated more than a few cities and forced the Marines return to Nipponland, leaving the government was left with an emaciated Army to protect and patrol the country. The Peruvian military, unable to handle the situation, retreated to vital areas, extending its protection only to larger cities and the mining and agricultural interests of the megacorps in the Andean foothills. Jungle installations fell to the protection of private corporate armies or prominent families. This is where the reformist and outright hostile groups coordinated their organizations.

The Japanese megas began to reconsider the terms of their alliance with the weakened Peruvian body politic. The rumormill says the megacorps are talking to powerful local families about new alliances and the families are scheming to prove their nuyen worth.

The Japanacorps

Peru has become one of the Japanacorps foremost overseas investments. The biggest Japanese names, Mitush-mama, Shiawase and Renraku have all invested heavily in Peruvian mineral mining, desert arcologies, off-shore mining and aquacologies, fish farms and agro-industrial complexes. In so doing, they've secured vital resources for Japan.

Make no mistake the Japanacorps command the respect of many Peruvians for the prosperity their presence has brought. Peru is one of the few friendly nations in an otherwise hostile continent, and despite the pullout the two countries interests remain intertwined. Thus it's not surprising that when internal strife and foreign threats make the Japanacorps uneasy they respond by taking a more active role in the running of the country.

Renraku and Mitsuhama formed a council to decide common defensive policy, the council in turn is putting a stranglehold on the Peruvian government. The only result so

PERU AT A GLANCE

Population: 34,560,000

Human: 62%

Elf : 8%

Dwarf: 10%

Ork: 12%

Troll: 7%

Other: 1%

Per Capita Income: 18,500¥

Estimated SINless: 38%

Below Poverty Level: 37%

Corporate Affiliation: 52%

Education:

Less than Twelve Years: 27%

High School Equivalency: 52%

College Degrees: 17%

Advanced degrees: 4%

Major Languages Spoken:

Spanish: 91%

Quichua: 24%

Aymara: 11%

Japanese: 9%

English: 2%

Major Religions:

Roman Catholic: 75%

Protestant: 20%

Native: 5%

Currency: Nuyen

Medicarro Coverage: 75%

Guaranteed Response Time: 15 minutes



far is the government's public anti-Emperor stance. Yasuhito's rise polarized the corporations even in Peru. Shiawase was not allowed to participate in the council, which reduced their maneuvering capabilities. Shiawase is desperate to cut a deal with whoever will offer a solution to the Peruvian problem with minimal losses. If it finds a taker, it hopes to get even with the other Japanacorps.

- Among the Andes Ahora, I was surprised to hear that some local Japanese social clubs sometimes offer funding. Investigating further, I have found that the nuyen trail leads to Shiawase.
- Decker del Sur
- A Sonoda-san hired my team to raid several Mitsuhama-Benguet gold mines in Cajamarca guarded by Peruvian regulars. My take on why? Shiawase, besides disrupting Mitsuhama's operations, wanted to discredit the government and ease the election of Andrés Carasco, the Andes Ahora candidate for major in Cajamarca.
- Deathwish

Yamatetsu was a late comer into the Peru foray. It found a saturated agricultural and mining market, so it concentrated on biotechnological research in the Peruvian jungle. By 2059, the Yamatetsu Board was no longer respectable enough to stay in its Peruvian Country Club, so the other three Japanacorps lobbied for a ban on all Yamatetsu operations. The government was shocked by this request since it meant paying hefty compensation to Yamatetsu. Seeing no other way around this, the Japanacorps decided to bankroll the operation, and in 2060 Yamatetsu officially closed shop in Peru.

It was also agreed that former Yamatetsu assets had to be sold to locals, not to the other Japanacorps. This move was spun by the government as an "unprecedented boost to our national economy". However, Yamatetsu made sure that its former jungle biotechnology assets were bought by fronts. So as soon as the threadbare government was unable to enforce its ban, namely when it retreated from the jungle, Yamatetsu flouted the ban and returned stronger than ever. Now their focus is only on biotechnology without the dead weight of their other assets.

- Paradoxically, Yamatetsu's publicized jungle "exile" is probably the principal reason why the Japanese are still doing business in Peru and have not been kicked back to their side of the Pacific by an Amazonian army.
- Golden Sphinx
- The unenforced ban is another reason Shiawase, Renraku and Mitsuhama have to do without their current Peruvian pals and find new ones.
- Sombrero

Peruvian Trade Families

The Japanacorps are brilliantly reinventing their powerbase, finding new allies with influence and ruling power. Perhaps their shrewdest long term move was partnering with the major local business families. The most



prominent alliances included the Aparacio family allied with Shiawase, the Larcos with Mitsuhama and the Del Campos with Renraku.

The Japan megas arranged for their respective families to keep things running smoothly for them. However, the honeymoon between these illustrious trade families and their Japanese masters has recently soured. The megas are keeping their options open for new families to hook up with and their current partners in crime are resorting to more ruthless measures to prove that they are still worthy allies and can keep the multiplying rebel factions under control.

- We're seeing bloody infighting between the families to prove which is the strongest and most reliable. Did you hear about the beach house assassination of the Chairman of the Board of the Banco de Comercio Peru Nippon, Pedro Esteban Del Campo? No rebel group had access to him there. Anyone know which family arranged it?
- 16 volt
- The Japanese live in a nice little bubble of their very own here. They haven't adapted to our erratic and amiable way of doing business. They cannot do without Peruvian liaisons.
- Pejerrey

Prop Government

Last and definitely least of these power players is the central government, which conceals itself in Lima. Peruvians love their leaders even though they are just a collection of likable figureheads that make the whims of the real powers palatable. The Japanacorps do not meddle in the administration of the country. Peru is not their colony. They are not Spaniards. The trade families are too rich and aloof to command any support or love from the masses. They also have shown no interest in running the country. Not from a Lima government office anyway.

As a result, there are no real political parties in Peru. Political campaigns are a refined blend of mind control techniques, opportunism and *caudillismo* – leader worship – brewed by well paid companies like Midas PR or Investigaciones Sociales.

- As useless and powerless as the government is, the people here are still very impressed if you have some connection to a politico.
- Pejerrey

Lima is a place shrouded in layers of intrigue and subtle hierarchies. If you're good enough to enjoy a precarious hold on a slice of the power, and you don't die when it's time to jump to another slice, you'll find enough nuyen to make it worth your talent.

LIMA IST NOT PERU

By Greengo

What the Japanacorps and their minions in Lima hadn't counted on was how much their absence opened a window of opportunity for several groups that used to be effectively suppressed by the government. They're all in a frenzy to become the next power players.

Shining Path

Active for more than eighty years the Shining Path (SP) is a neo-communist paramilitary terror group whose agenda is to establish a Maoist regime in Peru. It effectively adopted the guerilla warfare strategies proposed by Mao Zedong of China and has successfully adapted them to include cyber and magical warfare and modified them to difficult geography of the Peruvian terrain.

When SP leader, Abimael Guzman aka Chairman Gonzalo, was captured in 1992 its activities died down to almost nothing. By the turn of the century the SP almost disappeared. In 2011 they used the Awakening as an excuse to resurface, blaming the government for all the chaos. Guzman died that same year under very strange circumstances.

- The government claims that Guzman died from a stroke while serving his life sentence, yet they haven't disclosed his meatbod's whereabouts. Security reasons they claim.
- Monolobe
- Chairman Gonzalo's spirit guides us! Viva la Revolución!
- Toro Rojo

The SP stages its operations in the province of Ayacucho, its birthplace. They use peasant support for their actions, which they secure either by conversion or terrorizing them. It's common for the SP to storm villages and small towns and hold revolutionary tribunals against the authorities who represent the central government. These are usually found guilty (I have yet to hear about one who was found innocent) and are publicly executed in front of the local population. The SPs make their message very clear: either you're with them or against them. The peasants have little choice. They aren't willing to rebel themselves and the government isn't something they can depend on.

One amazing fact about the SP is that they have independently supported and supplied themselves. For runners, this means that if they offer you a job, don't expect much cash. On the other hand, you may can pickup a lot about operating in the Andean hinterland, which can be quite the valuable experience. The SP funds itself by extorting money from the local Ghost Cartels operating in SP controlled areas and running a few smuggling scams. The cartels find it cheaper to pay them than raising private armies to fight against them. The SP supplies itself by high-jacking and stealing armaments from the national and private military.

Before 2061, the military and Marines kept the SP contained. When the bulk of the Marines were recalled to Japan, the SP began to spread like a wildfire, and today it controls parts of Apurimac, Cuzco, Junin, Pasco and Huanuco. savagery of the SP is almost mythical. Its gruesome attacks and reputation make most armies retreat, allowing it to hold territory larger than its militia should be able to control. The only thing that has kept it from seizing the Andes foothills is the resistance mobilized by Andes Ahora. Although it has capitalized on its strengths, I predict its rapid chaotic spread will one day become its Achilles heel.

- My unit was patrolling near Liracy, Huancavelica when we received a distress call from another unit. Our mage was sent to perform an astral reconnaissance and five seconds later he blacked out. When we finally found the other unit, we didn't know whose body parts were whose. Our mage was relieved of duty for psychological reasons. Later I heard from another mage about an unbearably high background count in the area.
- Neon Puma

Tupac Amaru's Fist

The Tupac Amaru Revolutionary Movement was born from a splinter arm of the SP in disagreement with the core movements tactics. Although the TARM had always been smaller than the SP, they are notorious because they managed to capture the Japanese ambassador's residence in 1996 during an official ceremony. Although the TARM didn't earn anything from this, even losing their leadership in the rescue operation, they managed to get their 15 minutes of terrorist fame.

After losing their command, the remaining forces split into several groups with various agendas. Although each continued to use the name TARM, most of them stopped fighting for a cause and developed into loud-mouthed thugs, mercenary groups, and killing squads, all for hire. Their biggest clients have been the Cartels.

This all changed when the Japanese invaded Peru in 2035, galvanizing the old guard of the TARM with nationalism. They reorganized and resurfaced with the name of Tupac Amaru's Fist, to avoid association with the old name tainted by the mercenaries. They have been very secretive and never show their faces when addressing the public. Their leader is a woman who identifies herself only as Victoria.

- I was hired to smuggle arms from Amazonia for the TAF. We were given exact coordinates in a god-forsaken place along the Amazon to await for our contact. Before we had time to react we were boarded by a squad lead by a female ork who introduced herself as "Victoria". Later on, when watching a TAF pirate cast where of a trial of some captive corp suit for crimes against Peru and the ecosystem, I realized that the judge was a "Victoria", who although masked, didn't have the build of an ork.
- Huaquero
- I've had my share of dealing with the TAF and each time, the person in charge was a woman named Victoria. I think that the TAF is organized by a tribe of Amazon warrior women and Victoria is sort of a symbol.
- Chancatanques
- The National Directorate Against Terrorism (DINCOTE in Spanish) is the department responsible for combating terrorism. They claim there is a real Victoria, though they have no face nor name to attach to her.
- Neon Puma

The TAF's main agenda seems to be anti-capitalist and anti-corp, targeting the Japanacorps and their lackeys. Their modus operandi usually consists in kidnapping high-flying businessmen

and execs for ransom. They also target companies whose activities exploit and pollute the rainforest and though they operate throughout Peru, they stage many of their actions from the jungle wilderness. Intelligence suggests they may actually be run by Amazonia's DISA, which would explain their ecofriendly agenda.

- Personal security providers are finding Lima very profitable thanks to the likes of TAF. There's a shortage of elite bodyguards; so if you are out of a job and not afraid of being killed by angry savages, consider relocating. I've heard that they throw in a nice life insurance package with most jobs, and they give you bonuses if you die "heroically" (you ate the bullet not the suit). Your loved ones will be taken care of.
- SteelPancho
- The Japanese are not playing the game of kidnap and rescue anymore since Shiawase's Shiro Akashi, a top level biological weapons engineer, was returned infected by a bacteriological weapon. Before they realized what happened, 14 employees including Akashi were dead. They had to seal off the bioresearch facility where he worked. Besides the casualties, lots of biological experiments were ruined and the company took a lot of heat because it looked like they had been negligent with their facilities.
- Romero Andino
- This wasn't a terrorist action. This was certainly a shadowrun made to look like the TAF's work. I wonder if they nabbed the ransom money in addition to their regular pay.
- Birdie

Andes Ahora

Andes Ahora is a political party that mixes Socialism and Andean Nationalism. It was founded in 2055 by Julio Calisaya, Francisco Aparicio and Benito Acahuara. They seek to change the Peruvian government and bring due recognition and respect to the plight of the Andean people.

Aparicio and Calisaya founded a small political party with little public exposure called Unidos por los Andes back in the Forties. When Acahuara joined them in 2055, he brought with him black bag funds from the Bolivian Velazco government to kickstart a Bolivian-style revolution in Peru. Calisaya assumed the role of the public face of the new party. Meanwhile Aparicio faded into the role of silent partner. He was not of Andean descent and, even worse, his surname evoked the oligarchies they were fighting against. Reputedly he was more the philosopher of the group, setting the ideals that they were fighting for.

- PowerGrabber

Since the beginning, there's been a clash of policies between Calisaya and Acahuara. The first is a pacifist, while the latter is a fan of armed revolution. Calisaya is a charismatic smooth talker and is regarded as the leader, whereas Acahuara is the administrator who always gets things done. During the first six years since Andes Ahora's founding, Calisaya has set the inspirational tone for the political party. They campaigned

extensively and ran for the Presidency in 2061. The government launched a defamatory campaign that made it impossible for him to be elected.

- Calisaya is too idealistic. He doesn't realize that there is no way he can take down the Japanese controlled government peacefully. They've got all the media controlled.
- Characato
- Not all... There's Televisa, which is run by the Azzies. Of course, so far all it's done is continuously buzz in the ear of the government and the corps.
- MediaMogul
- Ignoring Calisaya's idealism, Acahuara organized a paramilitary group called the Sinchis. It pissed off Calisaya, but the Sinchis have already proven their worth by fending off multiple Shining Path attacks.
- Neon Puma

Aparicio was murdered by the Shining Path during a public rally in 2061 and Acahuara seized the opportunity. He exploited the fears of a possible Shining Path revolution and gained many adepts. He deployed the Sinchis to protect government abandoned cities and villages in the Andes from the SP. Andes Ahora has sustained its actions by securing these unprotected regions and thereby controlling their natural Orichalcum deposits during 2061-62. It still has some savings left from the rush, but the comet is long gone, and they are depleting fast. Not to mention the Bolivian government has its own problems now and is unable to provide covert aid.

- I escorted some Televisa suits on a trip to Junín, where they met with Calisaya himself. I "accidentally" happened to overhear a conversation involving the Battle Channel. I wonder if Andes Ahora is willing to sell the rights for a televised skirmishes in exchange for a little bit of help from the Azzies?
- Illapa

BIOPIRACY

Peru has always been infamous in the past for smuggling and piracy. Looking leniently on enterprising citizens getting hold of wares that were too expensive or too rare. Just as drug production could be fingered as the great savior of Peru's economy in the past, illegal biotech is no different today. All of this didn't happen overnight, however. It was a slow process that the Japanacops spawned themselves.

For years, megas tried to entice the Brazilian government to allow them access to their jungle treasure chest for genetic and pharmacological research. They were ready to accept any of the draconian conditions (pun intended) just for the exclusivity. When the Awakened revolution swept Brazil, the corps watched their hopes vanish in smoke... almost. The answer lay just next door. The Japanese invaded Peru exploring and exploiting the natural resources and its own Awakened rainforest. A maze of flora and fauna to be studied, catalogued and profited from was right in their backyard.

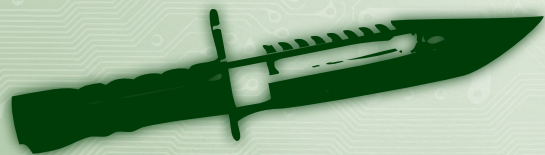
The first corp to pounce on the bio market was Yakashima's Biogene in 2037. Soon thereafter the rest of the pack followed, but Biogene's headstart allowed them to lead the race in biotechnological research. A decade later an explosive exposé all but shattered Biogene when it exposed what was going behind the doors of the pristine Andean research labs accusing Biogene of performing experiments on unwilling and unwitting subjects, mainly metahumans.

Biogene's biggest research lab in the Madre de Dios' jungle was immediately attacked by the TAF. The ensuing wave of scandals forced the company to shutdown many facilities and lay off scientists and technicians who were quickly picked up by its competition.

- Fernando Salinas is the reporter who blew the whistle on Biogene. He rode the wake of his fame and continues to focus on investigating biotech and genotech scandals. Coincidentally he works for Televisa. Wonder why he's never targeted UniOmni?
- MediaMogul

Shiawase stepped into the biotech arena before Biogene's carcass had been scavenged. They schemed to secure an exclusive top slot in the field. Using the panic of involuntary experiment patients, Shiawase successfully lobbied for new government regulations on bio experiments under the Copenhagen Accords. The law passed requiring anyone wanting to produce and research biotech products to first license with the Peruvian Ministry of Health and Ministry of Defense. The cumbersome requirements and tedious bureaucracy required resulted in a negligible number of licenses granted every year. This forced many small companies and startups to close shop. When the bill passed, Shiawase was the first megacorp certified. This bought enough time for them to corner the market. They hired most of the laid off techs and bought the assets of other bankrupt companies.

When Yamatetsu proved uninterested in the leftovers and the other Japanacorps were exploring other alternatives, the Ghost Cartels moved in to consume the leftovers. They bought the remaining companies for change and hired the remaining techs. The Cartels' businesses relocated to the northern jungle fringe, around the city of Iquitos. Their activity developed, far away from the stifling central government, concealed by geography and vegetation. When the government and corps realized what was going on, it was too late. Illegal biotech was spreading all over the country.



Mad Science and Modern Poaching

Chop shops are good. Good at their specialty. Some can even grow cultured bioware. The problem is they do not have the resources to do research be it biotech, genotech or pharmaceuticals. The shops leave that to the Japanacorps and their endless resources and steal it once it's developed. So they lose the cutting edge of new products, but they don't have to spend money coming up with any.

In 2060 Shiawase Biotech announced their plans to open the Tambopata research facility in Puerto Maldonado in Madre de Dios, a huge installation by anyone's standards complemented by mobile research labs which will allow Shiawase to investigate the different natural reserves in the area. Part of the facility is already underway and functional and it tops even the underwater facility Yakashima built off-shore and was wrecked during the Ring of Fire cataclysm.

- Details about Shiawase's successes are sketchy. The security around this place is paranoid and activity is 24/7. There is top nuyen being offered to get some hard data from the research and breakthroughs. Several friends of mine have disappeared trying to accomplish this.
- Matasanos
- No wonder! Besides their regular shadowrunner uninvited guests, they have to deal constantly with Tupac's attacks and the Awakened jungle. I've heard they have a big contingent of Awakened security. Just in case.
- Neon Puma
- Forget the wildside. Scan their compound, they've got paracritters patrolling that you've never even heard of!
- Ultimate Castro
- Not just any paracritters: warforms.
- The Smiling Bandit

One other notorious research corp delving into the Peruvian resources is Universal Omnitech. Despite the government's ban on anything related to Aztechnology, it has taken advantage of the lack of enforcement to open up a shop. As usual rumor says it's operating an underground research facility somewhere in the jungle and are performing unspeakable experiments.

Of course, besides the corps there are plenty of independent crews and operators working the biosmuggling angle, raiding the rainforest and poaching from Amazonia. Other bio and genotech outfits like Green Globe International, Proteus and Zeta-ImpChem's Genom which the Japanacorp pressure keeps from getting appropriate licenses infiltrate their own representatives among these indies to get a piece of the big green pie. Dangerous work but plenty of cash to be made.

- There's even a lucrative sideline in smuggling big game hunters in land while doing some poaching. Half of them don't come back but that's not a problem if they pay you up front, so ka?
- Iquitos Bastard

Hack & Slash: Practical Applications

Biopatching and smuggling are only half the picture. The other half is the medical applications of the tech developed. Legit corps, not so legit corps and illegal chop shops all battle for the same market. And believe it or not, the small ones are winning. Small shops specialize, they become very good at one thing, to the point of challenging even some of the household names in the field. What this means for the consumer, is that you can get your wetware at much lower prices. The catch is there are no guarantees of what you're getting.

- Although their prices put Oslo and Chiba to shame, not all chopshops are on the up and up. You never know if you are going to wake up the next morning with something you didn't want, something missing, or if you have been supplied with a machine that doesn't blip when it should.
- Bom Amigo
- Be very careful whose hands you let inside your body. Check with your local contacts before going under the knife.
- Matasanos

The chopshops keep both their profile and their costs low. They bring portable equipment to a customer provided location and recovery equipment is rented to the patient after the op. The profitable market which is drawing less reputable types from all over South America and beyond has prompted the corps to get in on the game. Within the past year, two high profile betaclinics have opened shop. The Iquitos crew has uncovered their attempt to obscure their ties to Shiawase and Yakashima, who use these fronts to take advantage of the absence of law by selling without permits.

Let's not forget Yamatetsu has established a branch in Iquitos even after being black balled from the country. What it is actually doing is buying the bioware produced by hundreds of small shops and reverse engineering and rebranding it as their own for the international market.

- Renraku's pet project is called "Clínica de Biotecnología Avanzada". And CBA business is booming. Moderately legal, passable quality control. Clients are flying in from other countries to get things plugged in. CBA asks very few questions, and the variety of products on offer is staggering. If you have the dough, they will get you designer and cultured bioware. Problem is the line to get the first appointment where they ask you to cough and show your tongue is getting pretty long.
- SteelPancho
- What people do is relocate to Peru to work for a while. During this time they get their appointments, and a few months down the line they leave the country with a tweaked and plugged new body ready to do work somewhere else.
- Greengo

- CBA asks very few questions because they will get their later. All the 'ware they install is tagged. Even if you're just switching datajack or upgrading your reflex enhancers they have ways to tag you and sniff out all your information later.
- Decker del Sur

PLACES IN PERU

Most anywhere you go in Peru will challenge your ability to stay alive. I will give some information on a few choice areas that may enjoy the attention of foreign runners in the coming months.

LIMA

By PowerGrabber

Lima, the most important city in the Spanish South American empire, suffered from years of obscurity until it became the pampered capital of that other *empire* here in South America. Even though the Japanese have lavished attention and care, investing heavily in urban renewal and other projects, the city has eluded attempts to tame its chaotic nature to Japanese sensibilities. Even though you can cross the sprawl just under twenty minutes on the bleeding edge *Lima Chikatetsu* (subway) and walk along San Isidro will make you think in Akihabara or Chiba, large districts remain untouched by the Japanese. This is especially true of the shanty towns in the outskirts of the city where poverty is endemic.

- To our credit, it should be mentioned that the Japanese aversion to the *kawaruhito* has not influenced us. Even where the Japanese influence is strongest, if you are a meta, do not expect the cold shoulder from the natives. Unless, of course, you walk into one of their corporate buildings.
- Zoociologist
- Bulldrek. Our "bleeding edge" Chikatetsu has separate wagons for the Japanese and other "respectable citizens", and we allow this to happen.
- Red Dawn

Lima's business districts are found in the heart of the city: the modern San Isidro, Miraflores and the traditional Cercado de Lima. Along the waterfront in the southern part of the city, the Japanese suits, the most important families and the fattest politicians have established their homes along 90 km of some of Peru's prime beachfront real estate. Lodged between the rich and the shanty towns on the outskirts of the sprawl are the homes and businesses of humble *limeños*.

- There is nothing humble about the *limeños*. They have always been disdainful of the rest of the country even though they can't do without us. Where do you think their food and cheap labor come from? From the Andes and its people.
- AndinoAhorra

The recall of the expeditionary force and the resurfacing of rebellious movements cast a gloomy pall over the once care-free city. Lima will have a serious facelift if any of these groups manage to take power.

- Pablo Romero is an infamous crimelord and the real power in the eastern outskirts. He's been recently forming armed groups called "Comités de Defensa Vecinal". These Neighborhood Defense Committees are comprised of people living in the shanty towns. We're all wondering who he's working for. He's certainly making it difficult to figure out if he's planning to defend the city from outside forces, or take the city for them.

- Red Dawn

- Lest we forget Lima has the biggest Yak presence on the continent with a big contingent of Nagai-gumi operating on the fringes of Japanese corporate holdings and mixing it up big time with the *limeno* native syndicates. Lima serves as a beachhead for many different operations and the many entry point for Japanese BTLs and skill slaves.

- Undersider

IQUITOS

Iquitos is a fluvial port on the shores of the Amazon River bordering Amazonia, Aztlan, Ecuador and Caracas, and surrounded by some of the thickest rainforest in South America. Iquitos' features have made it perfect for trading, smuggling, drug trafficking, and recently, biotechnology smuggling and development.

- The Ghost Cartels are pretty big in the area. Not only hasn't drug trafficking slowed down but it's actually to blame for the biotech boom. Where'd you think the Cartels have been bioengineering their next-gen Awakened drugs?

- Mosca Loca

There has been little use for the government in Iquitos. The people still resent the government for ceding portions of the rainforest to Colombia and Ecuador; the locals even threatened secession then. The landing of the Japanese Marines was seen as a direct threat so once again, Iquitos threatened to secede. The Marines responded with swift brutality. This enabled the central government (and their Japanacorp puppeteers), to maintain a rigid control over the wild forest areas. When the Ring of Fire devastated the region again, forcing the Japanese retreat, and leaving the government forces to flee back to the cities, power returned to Iquitos. A parallel local government was quickly established working to support Iquitos' claim to become a de facto free city. Plans to be officially independent within five years are being developed and depend on securing corporate and international support.

Iquitos requires all corps to maintain a symbiosis by heavily investing in the city infrastructure. The corp is granted lax regulations and profit from the big bio-boom. The mutually beneficial arrangements have profited both sides. The first corp welcomed to Iquitos under the new status quo was Yamatetsu.



- In the Peruvian jungle the incidence of metatype non-human births is 4.85 times higher than the world average. Dwarfs and orks are the most common. Awakened births are estimated to be 3 times higher than average. Currently studies are being conducted to verify if the superior mana levels in the Amazonian jungle is related to these birth trends.

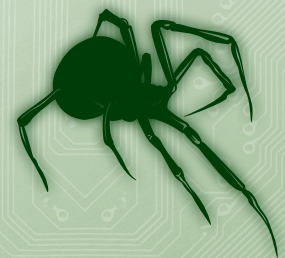
- The Smiling Bandit

- I assume you have noticed the beautiful Japanese villa built in the outskirts of the city. Well, it's authentic, brought from Japan piece by piece. Guess who's the owner and regular guest? Hideo Yoshida himself, playing Mikado surrounded by a court of bootlickers.

- El Tunche

- Yamatetsu is the principal investor in the Iquitos Grid Company. They vamped up the grid so they could have Matrix services up to their usual standards. In addition, the RTG is independent from the Peruvian RTG, incidentally breaking Renraku's monopoly over the local networks.

- Limbo



- The Matrix underground in Iquitos is flourishing. The Iquitos data-haven attracts all those who don't wish to waste energy dodging Japanese attacks. Did I mention there have been a lot of Otaku tribes popping up lately? They seem to be zealously aligned with the indigenous culture of the Amazon tribes.

- Decker del Sur

Iquitos is run by Mayor Alejandro del Águila. In general, the population supports him because the city seems to be prospering under his direction. Besides, he can always be replaced. Iquitos is always changing. It houses a very volatile crowd.

- The mayor is a regular contractor of black ops, mostly intelligence gathering. I guess he's covering his bases from backstabbers.

- El Tunche

- Belisario Rodríguez, the local Ghost Cartel baron, is gunning for del Águila's position. He is certainly interested in running the place, but so far he has uncovered zilch.

- Mosca Loca

There is no official security force in the city, so the law of the jungle reigns supreme. Each must take care of their own. Foreigners may find an armed mob after them, but Iquitos is far from being a bloody chaos. When problems arise, it's the community as a whole that passes judgment. Locals tend to be civil, and issues are dealt with swiftly.

- Bodyguards and merc forces are highly sought after to fill the vacuum. You can go to Platoon City, an outpost 10 clicks from Iquitos, to find out about jobs. It's a non-partisan trade base, where available forces go for some R&R and supplies.

- Greengo

Buzz in Amazonia has approached the city's leaders. It is allegedly offering full protection if Iquitos becomes part of Amazonia. The citizens are not convinced they need to become another city under a ruling body. Unless its offer is really juicy or something happens to force Iquitos to need the protection, it will most likely be declined.

- We are already being culturally colonized by Amazonia. It's too easy to move across the border since the Marines left. Amazonians are doing business in Iquitos, and half of the population speaks both Spanish and Portuguese. Additionally, Amazonia is an Awakened state, which makes it very appealing to the increasing metahuman population. Annexation will come in time.

- Zoociologist

- Recently a couple of Aztlan fixers popped up in the scene to offer a few jobs. For safety's sake I won't go into details, but it makes sense. Iquitos may be the next toy Aztlan and Amazonia are going to fight over.

- El Tunche

CUSCO & MACCHU PICCHU

By Greengo

If Lima is the giant metroplex where deals are made and broken and Iquitos is the new frontier where a guy with biotech fever and a gun can make like the next Damian Knight, Cusco is glamorous old world charm with a mystical twist.

Cusco has been one of Peru's biggest tourist traps for almost a century. Most of the services offered in Cusco are tourist centered: five stars hotels, gourmet restaurants, tres chic Alpaca clothing lines, ten story dance clubs, you name it. This also means that the glory of the Incan capital has been transformed into a circus for the amusement of visitors.

- The most notorious example of corruption is Macchu Picchu. Usually, if you astrally perceive an Incan ruin, you're able to see subtle auras emanating from the stones. But Macchu Picchu is dead cold. The site is awash with tourists just looking for a way to spend their nuyen and gobble the drek that the guides feed them. Their vacuity has corrupted the place.

- Northern Shaman

- Next to Macchu Picchu lies Wayna Picchu Mountain where a ruin called Killawasi, or the Halls of the Moon, is located. This place was open for visitors in the past, but the steep trail was unsafe and so fewer tourists visited. Today it has been closed off since it seems that it still retains some of its magical properties. Nobody knows who is studying it, but my money is on the Japanese.

- Dr. Jones

- Wagemages in particular and foreign mages in general are not sensitive to the teachings that the Apus whisper in your ears. Nor are they respectful enough to thank them with offerings. They only come here to get what they want and leave, just like the Spaniards did. They will never going win the favor of the gods with such an attitude.

- Brujo

- Macchu Picchu has been despoiled by what looks to have been a Toxic group recently. I'm staring to think that it isn't dead after all, but tainted.

- Dark Blood

Nevertheless, Cusco is certainly an intriguing city. There's always need for shadow talent among the thriving corp populous visiting the city, as corps use it as neutral ground to meet and scheme and sign deals. The visiting simstars and Latin celebrities are always on the look for a good bodyguard with competent street knowledge and they pay handsomely for information, like where to nail the best BADs to allow them to astrally project for a moment and feed on the peculiar vibes of the ancient city. Finally, there is the Office of Strategic Human Resources, where you can go and sign up for a job as a merc. This usually consists of patrolling the city's surroundings and tourist archeological sites to keep them free from any terrorist threat.

- Hey, if you or someone under your responsibility is interested in trying meta-drugs, be careful where you go to feel your projection. Strange things can happen, especially in an ancient city like Cusco. You can encounter old and angry spirits. Projecting in a place full of despair will surely be a bad trip. People talk about places in the city where the land vengefully engulfs astral forms and prevents them from returning to their bodies.

- AciDreamer

- There is a legend about an underground network of passages that span below the city interconnecting major sites, like the Qoricancha (Temple of the Sun) and the fortress of Sacsayhuaman. There are a few alleged entry sites, but there is no confirmation if this is true or not. People who have ventured deep into these caverns are said to have never been seen again.

- Villac Umu

- It is said that the intricate network can lead to the Golden Orchard, which is a replica of a garden made all in gold of the Inka. This place holds treasures and relics salvaged from the Spaniards pillaging. At the time of the Inka return, all of this will be revealed.

- Inca Sun God

NAZCA

If Cusco is the preferred destination for tourists, then Nazca is the preferred destination for magic types, nutjobs and not a few runners these days. This is due to the coverage it has received in previous shadow posts. Of course it's hard to know what to expect as currently security has been tightened. Also, some friction has arisen between Peruvian officials and the Japanese "guarding" the archeological site since they declared zero access to the area.

- My sources informed me this is because a clan of Andean shamans infiltrated the site and performed some ritual magic. Supposedly the ritual changed the Aspecting of the site. This has ticked off someone higher up in the chain that seems to be interested in controlling the area.

- Greengo

- I've seen some pretty weird stuff in astral space around Nazca from Eastern dragons to strange spirits. Its amazing but dead scary.

- Wiz Kid

- The Nazca lines are known to be an astral shallow, so whatever you saw doesn't mean that it was physically there. And yes, I've also seen a dragon, and it is eastern.

- Brujo

- Also beware of the magical Paracas. They are a mixture of sand and manastorm. They can be very nasty.

- TankBruiser

There is thaumaturgical evidence that the Nazca site is an important node where several manalines of the Ring of Fire meet. This lends us to think that it is a powersite where we can tap energy from the network. This would explain the interest of the Amazonians and the Japanese in this place. Recently, MCT's Thaumaturgical R&D department has opened up an outpost in the town of Ica, the closest city. I doubt that they will be opening the lines to the public anytime soon, if at all.

- I doubt that too. And I also doubt that the government will do anything to upset their Japanese masters. This means that it is up to us to do something. We have to do something to regain our heritage before the Japanese corrupt it!

- AndinoAhora

- One wonders maybe it's too little, too late?

- Orange Queen

- Never too late to reset the balance. Never.

- Deepest Green





SMALL CORNERS

CARACAS

By Carmaux

It's like a drug, y'know? Every time I have enough nuyen, I tell myself I should get the hell outta here. Instead, I end up at the latest vice den, penniless and flying high on Ecuadorean Gold, laughing at the mere thought of it. I know it's going to kill me one day, but I just can't get enough of it.

Welcome to Caracas, chummers. Hell never looked so good.

Government Type: Oligarchy

Population: 22,874,000 (Venezuelan: 85%, Brazilian: 6%, Aztlaner: 4%)

Major Languages Spoken: Spanish: 93%, English: 28%, Portuguese: 17%

Major Religions: Roman Catholic: 61% (less than 30% practicing), Santeria: 13%, Path of the Sun: 2%, Unaffiliated/Other: 20%

Currency: Bolivar (nuyen also accepted)
Exchange Rate: CBo \$5000 = 1¥

FALL FROM GRACE

Long story short, Aztechnology had a puppet government in Venezuela ready to merge with Aztlan, but Hualpa called dibs on the country first—Amazonia's invasion caught the Azzies with their pants down and Venezuela quickly fell to the Green Goliath, though UN Blue Helmets shielded Caracas and the hordes of refugees flocking to it. Never a good loser, Aztechnology mounted a military counterstrike, but only went as far as retaking part of Lake Maracaibo's oil industry.

- Officially, the UNAF deployment was humanitarian. Off the record, we all know who the UN bows to—the megas simply secured their major investments in Caracas and drekked on the rest of the country. Better the scraps than nothing at all.
- Don Dinero
- Not that Amazonia bothered itself with Caracas, right?
- Machiavelli

So here we are, still alive and partying like there's no tomorrow (there probably isn't, but I'm a pessimist). It's congested and jampacked, crooked through and through and almost lawless at times, but most of the world still thinks Caracas is a tropical hellhole, a modern-day Port Royal. They're right, of course, but who cares?

SIN CITY SUR

The Cisneros, Jiménez, Carmona, Osorio and a few other rats took over the disgraced Venezuelan government after Amazonia's invasion. All of them have close (*bah*—carnal) relations with a higher power, be it the Cartels, the megas or Amazonia. As long as biz remains smooth, they're left alone

to play in their sandbox. The *patrones* live *la vida loca* in their penthouses and nightclubs, while the masses survive in cheap towers and slums.

- There's not a single patch of green in Caracas (except for the golf resorts, of course). With so little space and so many people, every available square meter matters.
- Bauhaus
- Caracas's misery and suffering spill into the astral. Definitely not a *chévere* place to live if you're Awakened.
- Adriel
- There are tons of rabble-rousers in Caracas, all of them as corrupt as their enemies. For example, the old Fifth Republic Movement (MVR) is now Aztechnology's black hand in Caracas. Chávez must be spinning in his grave.
- Che
- I beg to differ, but the Catholic Church has been making a killing of late. Maybe there's still hope for Caracas.
- Missionary
- A killing, eh? Interesting choice of words ...
- Brother Data

Getting around Caracas can be a horror story, and I'm not talking about the go-gangers squeezing some *peajes* from unwary travelers, or street peddlers jamming traffic. Chips? Useless. GridGuide? Don't make me laugh. Get a good guide, because you *don't* want to get lost here. Most of them know Caracas' underworld, which isn't a bad plus.

- Caracas's RTG is also drektastic. Know, though, that while the grid might have more holes than a Swiss cheese, there's an awful lot of red hosts hidden in there.
- FastJack
- The city is the perfect place to vanish or get enhancements. You can become an entirely new person in Caracas's shadow clinics. Good prices and good 'ware, but be damn sure to double-check the clinic's rep.
- Anonymous

The Caracas Stock Exchange houses some of the shadiest corporations you can imagine, which would never be allowed to trade in "respectable" places like Boston or Tokyo. Charon BioMed and El Dorado Entertainment are notorious examples. Charon was once involved in a human experimentation scandal in Marseilles, so the owners relocated here. Meanwhile, EDE is a world leader in extreme adult entertainment. No comments please.

It's not just infamous scum that does biz in the Chacao financial district, but also famous scum. All the big R&D names are here: MCT's ParaShield, Cross Biomed, Genesis, Universal Omnitech, Yakashima, Genom ... the list goes on and on. Simply put, the corps *love* to test stuff in Caracas: zero regulations, zero lawsuits.

- Genesis's Caracas complex is a real zero zone: no one gets in, no one gets out. Having heard some nasty stories, I shudder to think what's going on inside.
- Espion
- Fact and fiction sometimes come hand in hand.
- Mutatis Mutandis
- I hate teasers.
- Synner

Speaking of regulations, plenty of foreign companies use the city as a flag of convenience, registering their ships here to avoid their own national regs. Caracas proudly boasts one of the biggest merchant fleets in the world, though you can bet most of those ships have never seen port here.

Entertainment is another biggie. Venevisión and other local outfits compete with international players like Sol Media, Televisa or GloboTrid, churning out some of the worst mindless soap operas and simflicks you'll ever see. I figure it's subliminal propaganda and the almost-explicit content, but folks love that drek. Blood flicks and similar niceties are also a major cash cow for the studios, though all of them will deny taking part in such illicit activities.

- Illicit outside Caracas, you mean. The city is a sex tourism hotspot, with pervs coming to experience (sometimes buy) the latest meat dolls, straight out from surgery. Those who don't make it out end up in Tamanous's hands. Waste not, want not...
- Kink
- And I thought I was sick.
- Carmaux

The Port of La Guaira is the other reason this city isn't broke. Telesma, slaves, BADs, guns, biotech samples ... I've smuggled so many things in and out that I've given up keeping track. There's so much going on around here that smugglers almost have to stand in line to pay the *matraca* (that's a bribe, in case you're wondering). Add in the Caribbean pirates selling their loot or the merc recruiters looking for cannon fodder, and you get one fraggin' big black market. If it's illegal, you'll find it here and at a reasonable price.

- The Cartels use La Guaira to export scores of drug shipments to Europe, North America and the Caribbean League. Rumor is they're also importing some *very* interesting goods...
- Juju Juan

- I'm sure Aztechnology and Amazonia will be mighty interested in that rumor.
- Corona

FRENCH GUIANA

By Peppermeister

- Peppermeister likes to say he's been kicked out of every decent French-speaking country in the world. I don't know about that, but while on "business" down there three years ago, he fell in love with French Guiana and hasn't come back yet, so I figured he'd do to give you the inside scoop.
- Captain Chaos

Government Type: Région d'Outre Mer

Population: 249,000 (Asian: 12%, Creole: 65%, Euro-Caucasian: 20%, Other: 3%)

Major Languages Spoken: French: 96%, English: 32%, Local Pidgin: 53%

Major Religions: Roman Catholic: 72%, Santeria: 6%, Druidic: 1%, Unaffiliated/Other: 21%

Currency: Euro (nuyen also accepted)

LIFE IN LITTLE FRANCE

French Guiana is a Région d'Outre Mer (or Overseas Region for you hopeless anglophones) of France. That means you need to dust off your French linguachips before you get here. Native French Guianese businesses accept euros and nuyen, and operate under French laws. French Guiana has its own Regional Telecommunications Grid connected to the rest of the South American Matrix, operated and maintained by Hermes Telecom, a Saeder-Krupp subsidiary.

On paper, French Guiana may maintain the same borders it did at the turn of the century, but the French Guianese have largely abandoned the interior of the country. VITAS decimated most of the small towns, and the survivors who didn't flee to the cities had to contend with increasingly aggressive paranormal animal attacks and hostile incursions by toxic shamans. The encroaching rainforest and opportunistic smugglers quickly took over abandoned townships. Almost the entire population huddles around the cities of Cayenne and Kourou on the coast.

French Guiana served as a training ground for the French Foreign Legion during the EuroWars, but was otherwise in the background of French politics until Amazonia invaded Guiana and Suriname in 2039. After a six-month arms buildup in 2040, French and Amazonian officials had a face-to-face, closed door meeting in Cayenne, after which Amazonia and France signed a truce.

- No one knows for sure why the Amazonians backed down, but rumor has it the French have a secret nuclear stockpile in French Guiana and S-K representatives were at that closed-door meeting.
- Frenchie



- Rumor also has it that the French aren't the only nuclear power in the region; Proteus AG is said to have a single device under lock and key out on Devil's Island.
- Papillon

SHADOWS OF FRENCH GUIANA

Every major syndicate in Europe and Latin America has a hand in the French Guianese underworld. The big players act through countless local gangs and ethnic mafias, trying to get a bigger share of the prize by having their proxies fight it out over shipments and territories. With all the competition, there's plenty of room for ambitious independents with connections, or for anyone who doesn't mind being a mule or muscle. I know some runners prefer being paid off in product rather than cash; the big boys are a lot happier giving you one new Ares Alpha out of a crate of fifty rather than parting with cold hard cash.

The true coin of choice in French Guiana is information. European countries wary of Amazonia's magical prowess and rabid ecological policies all have agents in place, as do corps from both Latin America and Europe looking to break into each other's markets. Industrial sabotage and data theft is the order of the day among the entrenched megacorps around the high-tech corporate enclaves and launch sites. Novatech in particular is hiring counter-espionage and freelance security types recently.

- Several gold mines are scattered throughout the abandoned interior. Too costly to maintain profitable operations. Rumors say that a few of them developed veins of orichalcum during the Year of the Comet.
- Frenchie
- I've also heard that Tamananus sold the last bunch of runners you talked into going after the lost mines for spare parts, Frenchie.
- 49er

CAYENNE: NOVAHOT

A tightly-packed urban sprawl, the regional capital of Cayenne houses most of French Guiana's population. It's a swath of shantytowns and cheap prefabricated tenements surrounding the docks and a modest collection of corporate and government buildings downtown. The few upscale cafes and private bars in downtown Cayenne are where movers and shakers among the corps and organized crime meet with civil servants, and where those same people turn around and hire a group of shadowrunners to eliminate the competition.

A few years ago, Novatech chose Cayenne as the site to construct its new floating orbital platform, in exchange for a series of tax breaks. The agreement has breathed new life into the local economy, but recently Novatech holdings and the launch site itself have suffered difficulties. Local industries, which supply the raw materials and workers for the construction, have been agitated by interruptions in their suppliers and transport. Miles Lanier has taken a personal interest in security around this considerable investment, and has requested greater assistance from the local authorities.

- Sounds like Art is up to his old tricks again.
- CasaNova

KOUROU: CORPVILLE TROPICAL

In 2050, when Saeder-Krupp purchased the European Space Agency's launch facilities in French Guiana, it based its operations out of the small city of Kourou. Since AA corporations and national governments used S-K to launch their materials into space, they soon set up their own facilities. Today, Kourou remains smaller than Cayenne, but far more modern and affluent. Large sections of the city have become little more than corporate enclaves: self-contained living, work and entertainment areas for corporate scientists, astronauts and big-wigs. The BSC (*Brigade de Sécurité Corporatiste*) supplements the plethora of corporate security forces on the street.

Away from the gritty streets and rampant street crime of Cayenne, the clean corporate havens of Kourou harbor sanitized, sterilized and no less deadly intrigues. Data theft, sabotage, national and industrial espionage and corporate maneuvering are the order of the day. Because the corps keep their workers happy with drugs, BTLs and paid companionship, most of the local outfits specialize in smuggling contraband and people on or off launching shuttles, stealing bandwidth from satellites or extracting key personnel.

- The black market in Kourou is something else. It'll cost you, but with the right contacts you can get meteorite samples, virgin tesla from the moon, experimental cyberware, laser weapons and bleeding-edge Matrix gear. The stuff those space-boys throw away amazes me.
- Garbage Man

PANAMA PAN-CORPORATE-ZONE

By Uncle Benny

- I'd never heard of Uncle Benny before, but he's been personally vouched for by FastJack. Given that it's not something he does a lot, I think we can trust the following information.
- Captain Chaos

Government Type: Corporate Protectorate

Population: 20,000

Major Ethnic Groups: Pan-Corporate citizenship 80%, Panamanian Aztlaner 20%

Major Languages: English 95%, Japanese 41%, Spanish 37%

Currency: Euro (nuyen also accepted)

Welcome to the Panama Canal, arguably the most valuable and corrupt strip of land in the Americas. Now, I know Caracas looks like it could give the Zone a run for its money on the latter issue, but it's like comparing a sleazy, down-on-her-luck stripper with an uppity, high class escort girl. In Panama, we do it with style.

- Please Benny, you haven't been here in years. We've only gone further down the drekhole since then.
- Carmaux



- And you think we didn't?
- Uncle Benny

A TALE OF TWO CANALS

Panama's strategic position was first noticed by the Spanish, who transported countless treasures across the isthmus on their journeys to Seville. In the early 20th century, the good old USA built the Panama Canal, a feat of both human engineering and political backstabbing. The Americans managed the Canal until 1999, when they handed it over to the Panamanian government. Aztlan annexed Panama lock, stock and Canal in 2048, but didn't have a chance to enjoy its new toy. Shortly after the infamous Veracruz Settlement, the Azzies ceded it to the Corporate Court.

- With an estimated 500 trillion nuyen worth of cargo crossing it every year, the Canal plays a major role in the global economy. There was no chance in Hell that the other megacorps would let Aztechnology keep it.
- Don Dinero

For the past sixteen years, the Zone (that's what we call it around here) has been a tool for the Court's whims. Though day-to-day operations are efficiency incarnate, the big boys enjoy perks like preferential rates and priority service. Meanwhile, the smaller fish can only watch this abuse with impotent (and growing) frustration.

This situation could change overnight if Aztlan builds its Nicaragua Canal. More than a dozen shipping companies have already signed special agreements with Tenochtitlán, with rumors pointing at Wuxing as a potential ally. If they get away with it, the Azzies will control maritime traffic between the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans, while the Panama Canal slips into oblivion. Interesting thought, neh?

- Not if the other megas flex their muscles ... and you know I'm not talking about legal protests.
- Abraxas

LIFE IN THE ZONE

When people talk about the PPCZ being a corporate country, they mean it. The Panama Canal Authority has a Board of Directors with lavishly-paid delegates from all the Big Ten (except Aztechnology), who choose a Governor from its ranks every year. Predictably, the Board is a nest of vipers that shifts into overdrive when elections approach.

Except for some Panamanian wageslaves, everyone else here is an import with temporary "citizenship" status. Though this was originally an effort aimed to promote teamwork between rival corpsters, the suits take every opportunity they can to backstab fellow Pan-Corporate citizens from other megas. Truth is, as long as it doesn't hurt the Canal and the corps' pockets, anything goes.

- Say an Ares data manager is a shoo-in for promotion, but his Renraku pal thinks she should have the position. All she needs is someone to take a few embarrassing pictures of Mr. Suit having some Novacoke-induced fun in Panama City ...

- Nisarg

- If you're talking about Joachim Larsen, he's been AWOL for a week. The only clue that Pan-Corp security has so far is a bunch of half-burnt, nonsensical notes amid a pile of ashes in his house.

- Uncle Benny

- There's more than meets the eye here. Word at the Helix is that Larsen was treading dangerous waters.

- Munin

Panama City: Lights and Shades

Yes, it is on Azzie soil, but it's within spitting distance of the Canal so Zoners love coming here in their free time to have some fun. And boy, do they get plenty of it. From classy night-clubs and members-only country clubs to sordid brothels and fortune-telling *brujas*, the night never stops in Panama City. Zoners love it so much that more than a few end up here when they retire.

Though the sprawl welcomes Zoners (and their nuyen) with open arms, so does Aztechnology Corporate Security. Covert operations have increased dramatically since the Nicaragua Canal was announced, with both CS and PPCZ agents working hard to gain an edge over each other.

Despite the heavy Azzie presence, the Zone and Panama City are good places to enter Aztlan unnoticed. Just slip through with the masses crossing the Canal every day from one side to the other and you're in. You need to grease a few palms (how much "grease" depends on what you want), but it's so common that Zoners joke about their "retirement fund."

- Panama City is also a hotbed for Catholic rebels and the Great Colombia policlub. Collaboration against Aztechnology isn't unusual—rumor is that Pan-Corp reps meet with the dissidents to discuss mutual interests.

- Silent Opposition

- Hey Benny, you forgot the big one.

- FastJack

- No I didn't. I just don't want anyone's ghost hunting me after being flatlined.

- Uncle Benny

- What are you guys talking about?

- Kid Code





- There's another place you can slip into from the Panama Canal—or, more accurately, from its RTG. The system acts as backup for Zurich-Orbital's main terrestrial link in Switzerland—you know, just in case "something" (yep, that's you and me) ever happened to it. If you ever manage to find it and sneak through the best security that a group of paranoid megacorps can buy, drop me a line. I think Benny is also getting bored of being part of a two-man club.

- FastJack

PARAGUAY

By Ñandu Glasswalker

Population: 7,619,000 (75% Paraguayans)

Major Languages: Guaraní (official; 81%), Spanish (official; 64%)

Major Religions: Awakened Christianity (63%), Roman Catholic Christianity (29%)

Currency: Euro (nuyen also accepted)

Welcome to Paraguay, amigos!

When the ecofreaks talk about embracing Mother Nature, they usually mean living deep in the jungle studying mystical mumbo-jumbo. But there's a different way to do it: shamanic magic and the latest envirotech can make a modern city grow together with the surrounding environment. Paraguay chose this approach thanks to their mixed European and native Guaraní ancestors: when the Awakening came, they were ready to accept magic as just another part of the Sixth World.

Paraguay's take on environmental protection keeps the economy growing, Mother Nature healthy and Hualpa's hungry claws at bay. Perhaps Hualpa hasn't invaded Paraguay 'cause he wants to see if this envirotech business works; one step in the wrong direction might change things for worse.

- Not true. Hualpa needs Paraguay's help in the diplomatic scene; after all, everyone is scared of the big bad serpent so his proposals sound a lot sweeter when they come from the friendly Guaranís.

- Dragonslayer

Paraguay's ecological balance is maintained by using envirotech on a massive scale. Yamatetsu and Shiawase came to Paraguay to explore this market, and they brought along top scientists and engineers from all over the world. The corps invested a lot of nuyen here, which, combined with their cut-throat attitude, means a lot of jobs for us runners.

SUSTAINING THE ENVIRONMENT

Paraguay is a small country with a lot of urban pressure. To add to the problem, west Paraguay is covered by the arid shrub lands of the Chaco, home only to nasty critters and a few reclusive Mennonite settlements; most people live east of the Paraguay river. To save space, they're holed up in self-sustainable arcologies; the rest of the land is a huge man-made garden, crisscrossed by "green corridors" linking wild nature preserves in a giant green web.

Everything is kept under tight control by our gardener, the all powerful Environmental Management Secretariat (SEGAM). The current secretary is a free spirit called Moñai (yep, free spirits can hold public office in Paraguay). He's a real stickler when it comes to enforcing environmental protection laws; the corps can't understand what makes him tick, which makes him virtually unbribeable.

- Once I took a contract to sabotage a water recycling plant in the Paraná river: their security had everything from guardian spirits to a heavily armed strike team. This is way too much for a natural reserve, amigos—my sources tell me that Moñai's up to something he doesn't want anyone else to find out.

- Chaco Warrior

- Your sources don't know drek about ecosystems. The ecological balance in Paraguay is pretty tight and could collapse with even a small disaster like that. Someone has been trying real hard to bring down the system—probably the Argentinean government. They'd love to blow up Amazonia's greatest ally in South America.

- Kurupi

- Bulldrek. If you're looking for culprits, blame SIRRUG; he's really bothered by this mix between tech and nature, and he'd love to see it all replaced by a "proper" wilderness.

- Dragonslayer

Magic and Shamans

Paraguayans can't waste their natural resources like others do, so they use magic in everything from pest control to big construction projects. This gives the local shamans (called *pajés* in Guaraní) a powerful position in the social food chain. They make up an elite group, complete with an old boys' network and a powerful lobbying group known as the *Kai*. They're usually cross-trained in scientific knowledge as well; remember to check if that engineer you're kidnapping can also summon spirits.

The *pajés*' greatest ally is Paraguay's Awakened Christian Church; it combines Christian beliefs with local Guaraní ideas on the sanctity of nature. Most *pajés* are Awakened Christians and the Church even preaches that, since Nature is God's work, shamans worship God through their animal totems. This makes *pajés* a sort of scholarly saints in the eyes of the average Joe Guaraní, and you can imagine the power that it gives them.

- Ñandu is overreacting. *Pajés* work for the corps and they don't take this mumbo-jumbo. Work hard, get nuyen – that's life, even for *pajés*.

- Luisón

- Ñandu was talking about "soff power". Take Marcos Taracúa, Kai's leader. He made his fortune as a consultant for Shiawase and Yamatetsu, but his aura gives him many contacts all over the Paraguayan government, and I bet you that every judge and policeman in this country bows down to Doctor Taracúa – for free.

- Kurupi

- Who cares. The point is that this respect rubs down to visiting mages as well. Hint about your power and everyone will call you “doctor,” traffic tickets will disappear and you’ll get inside all the fancy night clubs.
- Bruja

The Living City of Asunción

Paraguay’s capital is the world’s largest arcology, and a good example of city life Guarani-style. It feels like a crowded jungle, with all the hanging gardens and wild parks; the buildings are made up of biotech materials that collect solar power and rainwater. There are no highrises except for the occasional “bionic tower,” filled to the brim with people to save precious space. Forget about cars here; only public transports are allowed, so bring your running shoes if you need to move fast.

- Bicycles work better. Just bring some flash-bang grenades to keep the crowds at bay.
- Farandolé
- Astral travel in Asunción isn’t easy. So much living material around makes astral space look like a maze. And it’s a deadly maze in some places—astral security in Asunción is tight, especially around major city facilities and corp offices.
- Bruja

The city’s attractions include its river port, from which ships can float down the Paraguay river to Buenos Aires and the Atlantic, and quite a few biotech and envirotech labs. The labs are built around the University of Asunción, which is gaining a global reputation as *the* place to learn shamanic magic. Asunción’s faculty is really keen in making shamanism as reputable as hermetic magic, and often you have great lectures by Moñai and other top experts on the Awakening.

- Watch out Prague and MIT&M; the pajés are out to get you!
- Bruja
- This city gives me the creeps, especially at night when city spirits (the *pombreros*) wake up and take care of the little stuff like garbage collecting and repairs. They’re the police’s eyes and ears, too, so be extra careful if you don’t want to be seen.
- Xunga XL

THE PLAYERS

Paraguay sits right on the front line between Amazonia and Argentina, and it has relied on Amazonia for protection for the last decades. Nowadays, Paraguay is Amazonia’s client state. This means President Marcos Weiss, the winner of the ’63 elections, has to follow Amazonian foreign policy and keep the environmental restrictions tight. Sometimes Amazonia drops a few hints about things it wants done, like getting more environmentally-friendly corps in the envirotech market, and Paraguay follows along. The Genesis Consortium has been getting some cool tax breaks and hefty government contracts ever since.

Weiss’s most influential advisor is Teju Jagua, one of the best known dragons in this part of South America—check out his bestsellers on the Awakening. He’s the most outspoken defender of Paraguay’s environmental management system, and last month’s polls say he’d easily win the next presidential election if he ran for office.

- Teju Jagua has hired runners to find corps breaking Paraguay’s environmental laws and put them out of business. You can bet he’s made many enemies, especially inside Shiawase—which offers a substantial bounty for his head.
- Decker del Sur

The government’s only credible opposition comes from old-money families like the Morínigos and the much-reduced but still powerful Catholic Church. These groups hate Paraguay’s Awakened nature, and they’re working hard to sabotage it, usually by hiring runners. Marcos Morínigo and other conservative leaders have links with members of the *Legio* movement in Argentina and Uruguay Making contacts with them will get you jobs all over South America, especially if you look European.

- Well, for a racist, Morínigo is real friendly with Sato Ishira, Shiawase’s most famous troubleshooter in Asunción. Nuyen speaks louder than ideas, eh?
- Luisón

Paraguay’s environmental balance depends on envirotech – stuff like biological agriculture, renewable energy sources and waste-eating bioengineered bacteria. Shiawase dominates this market by selling cutting-edge solutions to environmental problems. They’re usually untested, but Paraguayans buy them anyway; if they work, Shiawase can sell them to more conservative “nature-loving” markets like Amazonia and the Tirs.

The corp’s problems started last year. The Genesis Consortium took over Shiawase Envirotech’s largest asset, the huge Itaipú dam, after a few “operational accidents” (read: sabotage) made Hualpa demand Amazonia’s largest energy source be given to a more responsible corp (read: Genesis). Shiawase still controls the Corpus Christi dam, and it’s unlikely the Argentinean government will agree with an Amazonian corp controlling their supply of cheap electricity.

- Hualpa’s still angry with Shiawase’s illegal telesma harvesting in the Chaco back in ’61, so this vendetta is personal. I bet Corpus Christi will also see a lot of sabotage in the next few months. The only problem with this plan is that he’s forcing Shiawase and Argentina to join up against him, and he might regret it later.
- Decker del Sur

The magical services industry is in the hands of Yamatetsu, thanks to the corp’s huge influence with the pajés of the Kai. It also owns world-class magical research labs in Asunción, and its subsidiary Atelier Soleri has some very interesting plans for fully organic buildings in Paraguay and Amazonia. The

labs have churned out some really unorthodox ideas ever since Yasy Yateré took over as lead researcher. But Yasy is a free spirit, so Yamatetsu has a tough time controlling her; sometimes she disappears for weeks with no real explanation.

- Yasy Yateré has some ties with Taracua and other pajés in Paraguay, many of which have top jobs in SEGAM, Shiawase and Genesis. Most envirotech projects in Paraguay have her mark, but I doubt that anyone but Moñai and Teju Jagua can understand what she's up to, or stop her for that matter.
- Kurupi
- She's too crazy to have a plan, chummer. Anything she's preparing has a high chance of blowing up on her face—Moñai has been hiring runners to follow her projects, probably so they can clean up any mess she makes.
- Chaco Warrior

RUNNING IN PARAGUAY

Now that you know what's going on, you might want to work in Paraguay. The mainstream arcologies are too weird for most runners' tastes, but the country's economy has attracted more than a million immigrants over the years, and their neighborhoods make a good place to hang out unnoticed and make contacts inside the local underworld.

- The local shadows are small and friendly so it's easy to set up a contact network. The downside is if you get a bad rep, it'll spread like wildfire and you'll be alone in no time.
- Xunga XL

Immigrants have a hard time fitting into Paraguay's mixed traditional/modern society. This makes them primitive in the eyes of Paraguayans so they're rarely accepted by the mainstream. They end up as outsiders, stuck in high-rise ghettos, working in the waste management industry, and too poor to pay for decent water and energy.

Their primary reaction to this is to hold on to their cultures. Most Paraguayan cities have little Brazils and Argentinas, which are great neighborhoods to find black market goods, from talismans smuggled in from Amazonia to SOTA firepower. Another reaction is a strong anti-Awakened bias, making immigrants easy prey for the Humanis Policlub and other racist outfits.

Immigrants usually blame the corps and the government for their poverty, and they've got a point. This makes the ghettos fertile ground for the Bolivian neo-communist *Velazquistas*; their anti-corp message is exactly what the people want to hear, and it's spreading fast. Most of it looks spontaneous enough, but Paco Hernandez and other Bolivian agitators have been spotted many times between Asunción and Ciudad del Este.

- There's an odd rumor about an alliance between Humanis and the Velazquistas. Humanis has targeted metahuman corp execs many times, and since many execs in Paraguay are not human,

both groups have something like a common cause. If this is true, the alliance is so shaky it could degenerate into a turf war pretty quickly.

- Luisón
- Hernandez has a gift for strange bedfellows. He's had no problem with dishing the dirt on Yamatetsu's illegal field tests to the SEGAM, or selling intel on Shiawase's assets to Genesis. Maybe his plan to take over Paraguay is to mess things up while his following grows.
- Kurupi

Underworld Connections

The immigrants need the black market to survive, so they end up in the hands of the crime bosses. Local gangs dominate small-time smuggling and protection rackets, but their specialty is the talismonger black market: smugglers bring *telesma* and Awakened critters from Amazonia and sell them to pajés from all over Paraguay. Watch out for Jacinto Hovy, rumored to be a top researcher in astral summoning before he took over this entire operation.

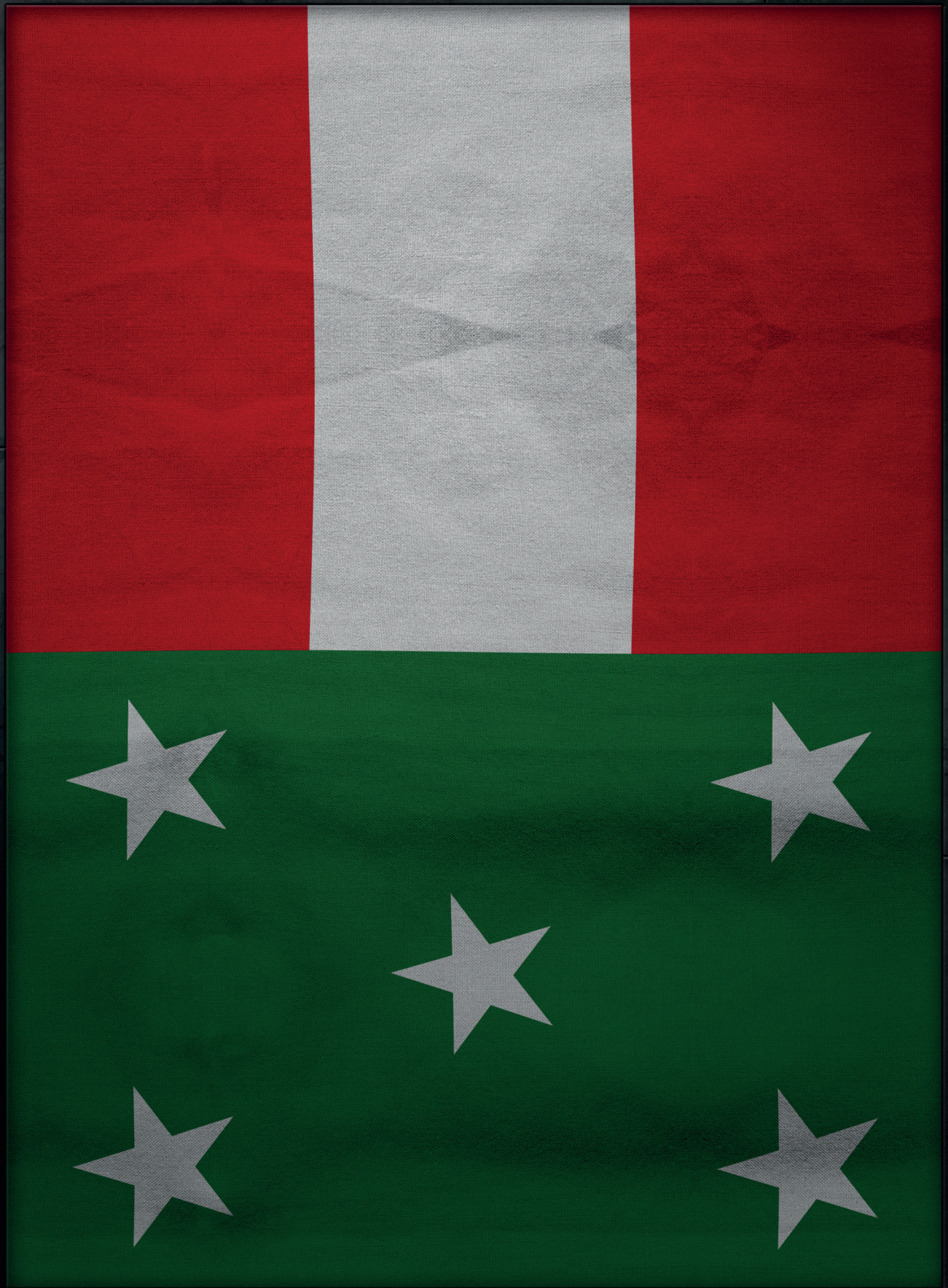
The real nuyen is in drug trafficking; Paraguayans prefer the "natural thing" to BTLs, and the pajés pay good money for all kinds of exotic drugs. The Cachoeira Ghost Cartel dominates most drug smuggling routes; from their stronghold in Ciudad del Este, they can easily cross the border to Argentina and Amazonia using boats or aircraft operating from hidden airstrips. The local boss is an Amazonian known as Zeca Diabo. The word on the street is that he made a deal with someone in the Argentinean government, keeping the border open as long as he can keep Paraguay well supplied with drugs.

- Newsflash: Amazonia placed a bounty of 100,000 nuyen on any hard intel about Zeca's contacts in Argentina. They need to know who he's working for, and get enough evidence to prove it.
- Mulecão

- Not easy; if the Amazonians could get this info on their own they'd have done it by now. My advice: check out Marcos Morínigo and his conservative friends. Zeca started his career as Morínigo's strongman and he got all his contacts in Argentina through Legio.
- Kurupi

- Perhaps Amazonia is baiting someone with insider knowledge. Imagine if Hualpa gets proof that, say, a certain Argentinean official with links to Aztechnology is behind the deal with the Cachoeira cartel. He could use this to dirty Aztlán's name even more, which helps him say that that Amazonia is occupying Colombia and Venezuela to save them from the evil Aztláners...
- Zander

- Imagine if Hualpa gets no proof. He can't have the Argentines meddling in his client state and he'll do something about it. Something tells me this Zeca Diabo situation will boil over into something larger in the next few months. Looks like a prime business opportunity, chummers!
- Chaco Warrior



YUCATÁN AUTONOMOUS STATE

• I've asked Aguilar (again) to bring us up to speed on what's going on with this former frontline, since for the life of me I can't figure out what to make of it. We haven't been able to make heads or tails of what really went down at the peace talks, let alone figure out how the peace settlement went through.

• Captain Chaos

Hoi, compãneros. I checked with the Good Captain and the last report to hit Shadowland was on the *Llama de la Libertad* ("Flame of Freedom") coalition and its leadership, particularly Yucatán's new governor: the feathered serpent Pobre. So I'd better bring you up to speed on the considerable drek that's gone down since.

Facing mounting losses and an increasingly unstable environment, the Azzies withdrew in early January. The rebels were hard pressed to take advantage with the Spirit War still raging in the jungles; when they tried, the Azzies returned in force. Even *comandante* Pobre's return only slowed the offensive. Then came the Campeche outbreaks (sweeping the countryside and claiming hundreds of lives on both sides),—the Azzie blockades and the quarantine.

• Loads of theories doing the rounds. The Azzie losses suggest that it wasn't one of their bioweapons. Some think the rebels were developing something for a terror strike and it got out of control; most believe it was the toxics. Nobody knows for sure.

• Colonel Cobra

• Buildrek. Aztech needed an excuse to justify the pullout and initiate the peace talks without further loss of face. The epidemic's timing is too perfect and losing a few grunts to make it convincing is SOP.

• Zapatero

• Nobody finds it suspect that the first cases were detected a couple of days after Pobre returned? And in one of the first cities he visited?

• Dragonslayer

• Omae, keep it up and I'll start believing what I've been hearing. You and *your friends* are on the Azzie payroll.

• Kid Code

• Sorry to debunk 'slayer, but I was in-country with a team of DIMR mediators, and the feeling on the ground is definitely that the toxics are somehow behind it, though who'd give them a tweaked-viral strain beats me.

• Brujo

• I keep telling people, but do they listen?

• Lone Gunman

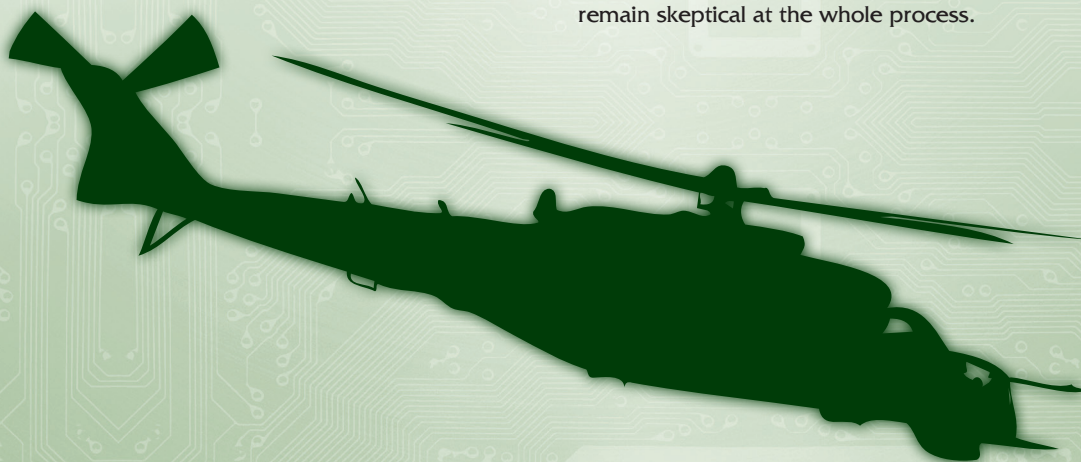
Bickering over international relief efforts took a twist when Aztlan surprised everyone by announcing it would lift the blockade if the rebels agreed to bilateral peace talks under UN auspices. The Azzies' unexpected change of heart proved fruitful in bringing everybody to the table. Even more surprisingly,

the talks took only a couple of weeks and a deal was struck—Yucatán would get limited autonomy and self-government for three years, to be followed by a referendum on independence. In exchange, Aztlan would retain nominal control of the territory through a local governor, the rebels would ensure Amazonian "military consultants" abandoned the Yucatán, and Aztechnology and its subsidiaries would get preferential status in any and all local reconstruction and public service contracts for five years following the deal. Both sides would also commit to bringing the Spirit War between rampaging toxics and free nature spirits under control.

• No luck on that front so far. The jungles are still a free-for-all. One day you're stepping into a toxic hotspot, and the next you're being chased by territorial nature spirits. It's wreaking havoc on attempts to rebuild the region's agricultural and industrial base and is making autonomous Yucatán ever more dependent on Aztlan. Funny how that turned out...

• Picador

On the rebel front, Pobre's Yucatán Freedom Movement championed the deal—contingent on a rebel leader being named governor, of course. However, enough of the desperate population was behind the peace settlement to push it through. Horse-trading between the Flame factions made Pobre the leading candidate for governor—causing more than a little consternation among some of the other Flame members, who remain skeptical at the whole process.



- Skeptical is understating it. Orgullo and the Catholic Action Front adamantly refused to sign the settlement, and La Venta went as far as accusing the Movement and Pobre himself of getting in bed with Aztlan. Many of their forces remain at large and active in the area, though even they're losing steam as things stabilize and soldiers just want to go home.

- Roberto

- Not so surprising. La Venta is one of the better-connected factions in Aztlan, and more than one report placed Pobre in Tecnoctitlan during his 6-month "sabbatical."

- Pyramid Watcher

- Reports never confirmed. Azzie propaganda to discredit him!

- Zapatista

- They did get me wondering about the rumors around camp concerning Pobre's state of mind after his return. Suggestions that his erratic behavior had given way to something darker: that he was snacking on Azzie prisoners, that he'd gone "toxic" or "tainted" or whatever. Never took them seriously, but I know some rebel commanders did.

- Puma

- Don't know about striking deals with Aztech itself, but my crew was tailing a suspected Gesalt bloodmage in Tecnoctitlan for the bounty almost a year ago now, and he met with a guy who looked suspiciously like pics I've seen of governor Pobre's human form. The weird thing is the mage and a few of his acquaintances we were circling pulled a vanishing act a couple of weeks later.

- Coronado

Aztlan even wheeled out Juan Atzcapotzalco (yep, the real deal) to sign the treaty, and brought in the armistice's chief independent advocate, Quauhtlatoa. Unfortunately, things took a turn for the tragic when one of the rebel delegates jumped on the podium and detonated explosives he had somehow smuggled in – instantly killing himself and 12 others, including old Juan and Quauhtlatoa.

- The old Quauhtlatoa had made quite a few enemies over the years trying to resolve the Yucatán situation. Recently the old priest had been in the field trying to pacify the raging spirits. He survived the front lines of the spirit war to be killed by such vile treason.

- Sangre Prometido

How the explosives got through the security sweeps was a mystery until—despite flaring tensions—Pobre himself used magic to identify the culprit. Apparently the suicide bomber had been magically controlled; according to Pobre, the magical signature was that of another feathered serpent, one known as Dzitbalchén, leader of an Azzie-renegade faction with plans of its own for the Yucatán. Aztechnology brought in a thaumo-forensics team that later confirmed Pobre's findings. The settlement was signed the day after Atzcapotzalco's state funeral, and the new government made it a priority to track down the terrorist.

- This reeks.

- Puma

- Better believe it. Lends some credence to a backroom deal between Pobre and Aztech, if not worse.

- Rubik

- Wait a minute... wasn't Dzitbalchén in bed with the Big A?

- Denver Mole

- Been under a rock for a while? After the Denver debacle, Aztech went looking for heads to chop and the siblings drew snake eyes. I've heard Zacuallipán was offed discreetly a few months back by an Azzie black ops squad. Whether Dzit was really involved in this is hard to tell, but it does give him a motive.

- Pyramid Watcher

So while Pobre bargained with the various Flame factions who signed for cabinet positions in Mérida, a joint Yucatán-Aztlaner task force rolled out a massive dragon hunt. Amazingly, it took them all of a week to track Dzitbalchén to the remote village of Sencilla. He escaped that time, and the next, and the next, but the task force unerringly tracked him down again and again.

Whether it was weird magic or the high-tech surveillance Aztech brought in, they somehow ran him down every time, until he was finally cornered in Puerto Arturo. Pobre himself assisted in the capture after a massive firefight that leveled part of the township. Wounded, Dzitbalchén was extradited to Aztlan, where he's rotting in a Tenochtitlán cell awaiting trial next month. My money's on Aztech making it the media circus of the century.

- Bet some of the other dragons out there are not too happy about this.

- Son of Siegfried

- Who wants to bet the Azzies'll perform the execution traditional style at a teocalli? Ever wonder what kind of magic the lifeblood of a dracoform could power?

- Tom-Tom

There was a time when words like "Aztlan withdrawal," "armistice", "recognized autonomy" and "self-government" would have been synonymous with "victory" to the Yucatán rebellion. However, any but the most casual glance around the new Yucatán Autonomous State will tell you quite a different tale. If this is victory, it's a hollow one indeed. The Spirit War rages on, and while life in Mérida, Progreso and Cancun is settling down, the situation in the countryside is desperate and the ongoing attacks by the remaining rebels continue to increase Yucatán's dependence on Aztlan. War might be hell, but in this crazy, fragged-up world, peace isn't all its cracked up to be.



GAME INFORMATION

Shadows of Latin America (SOLA) visits all the countries of the Sixth World's South America, many for the first time. From Aztlan to the Tierra del Fuego and everything in between, this book focuses primarily on the aspects that would be interesting to shadowrunners: political intrigues, corporate machinations, organized crime, magical oddities and the Asian shadows themselves. This chapter provides an overview of plot hooks, some basic rules information and suggestions for incorporating this material into your Shadowrun campaign.

In addition to the *Shadowrun, Third Edition*, rulebook (SR3), gamemasters will find the *Matrix* and *Magic in the Shadows* (MITS) rulebooks, as well as the *Critters* sourcebook (included with *SR3 Gamemaster Screen*) helpful when using some of the material presented here. Complementary information on some of the corporations and many of the principal players in this book can also be found in the *Corporate Download* (CD), *Aztlan*, *Underworld* and *Dragons of the Sixth World* (DSW) sourcebooks. Finally, several plots and elements visited in *Year of the Comet* (YOTC) and *Target: Awakened Lands* (TAL) also tie-in with the events, critters and locations detailed in this book.

PAN-LATIN AMERICAN PLOT HOOKS

A few of the elements and plotlines introduced and explored in this book encompass most or all of Latin America in scope and so deserve special mention here.

LATIN AMERICAN CRIME

The fall of the Latin American drug lords and their rebirth as the Ghost Cartels has previously been detailed in *Aztlan* and *Underworld* sourcebooks, *Shadows of Latin America* updates some of the information therein and addresses the status quo in 2064.

Criminals stripped of their homeland by Aztechnology, the Ghost Cartels have evolved into a continental network of drug syndicates, mastering the game of survival, cutting deals with governments and corporations to ensure their continued existence and prosperity. Now that they feel on safer ground and have new goods on the market, the drug lords are planning a spectacular comeback. It might take years of meticulous planning, but one day they hope the Great Colombia will arise from Aztlan's corpse. Colombia for the Colombians, that's what the Cartels want people to believe.

The Ghost Cartels have a deadly foe in Aztechnology and Domingo Ramos' David Cartel (see *Aztlan* chapter, p. 51f), but if knowledge is power then the druglords have an ace ready to trump their opponents. While not as powerful as Amazonia or a megacorp, the Cartels know what makes Aztechnology tick—after all, they used to be partners in crime.

Internal conflicts, like the brewing struggle between the Morales and Cachoeira Cartels, are another challenge. Many envy the fortunes Jaime Salazar and Henry Uribe have amassed and the clout they wield. Others resent that the fight with Aztechnology is mostly paid for with the blood of the Andes Cartel. All these cracks could be what Aztechnology needs to take down the Cartels once and for all, or allow smaller local upstarts to extend their grasp.

Spread as they are throughout Latin America, the Ghost Cartels could be an integral part of any run set in the region. Their interests are insidious and pervasive; whether it's a street dealer hooking an unsuspecting runner on the latest BAD, or a plan to rescue a top member of the Great Colombia policlub

from the dreaded Gorgon Island, there are plenty of ways for creative gamemasters to generate Cartel-themed games or even campaigns.

The Cartels activities and interests need not to be limited to Latin America though, as they have ties with several underworld powers all over the globe. Even these allies might prove to be less than reliable, as they might try to obtain the Cartels' secrets. The following are only a fraction of the possible hooks to get runners involved with the Cartels:

The Good Doctor

Zeta-ImpChem is trying to produce its own brand of BADs, but the Eurocorp's efforts have failed so far. Having learned the identity of a genetech in the Cartels' employ, Z-IC hires the runners to extract him while he is visiting Metrôpole for medical treatment. Things get complicated when their target is carjacked by a local gang, who take him to the *favelas*. The runners must find their mark in Metrôpole's slums before either the gangers tire of terrorizing the old man and kill him, the Cartels catch up with them or other corps and syndicates hear about the situation.

Hooked

Intrigued by rumors surrounding Overdrive, especially its alleged Dissonance effects, the Chilean cell of Ex Pacis hire the runners' team for a little mission. They want the runners to steal a crate of the drug that the Cartels are smuggling in Kond-Orchid LTAs over the Andean Highway (see game information for Bolivia, p. 145). The brats pose as a tribe of Resonance Otaku from Argentina, who've been interfering with the rogue otaku's plans lately. Once the runners deliver the goods, Pax's followers intend to rat them out to the Cartels, hoping to remove both witnesses and opponents.

Blood for Blood

Manuel Tamayo is no friend of Aztechnology, but he's ready to make a deal with the devil, if that's what it takes to bring down Diego Chávez. He wants the runners to help him contact Oliver McClure to offer him the opportunity to get rid of another Chávez—Domingo Chávez to be precise. Domingo

is one of McClure's biggest foes on the Aztech Board and his removal would significantly ease McClure's situation. All McClure has to do is use his position to give Tamayo and his runners a window of opportunity against Diego, and Tamayo will order his FARC rebels to take down Domingo while visiting Panama City. Of course, Diego Chávez isn't Chief Operating Officer for nothing, and if the runners aren't careful he'll get a whiff of Tamayo's plan.

BIOENGINEERED AWAKENED DRUGS (BADs)

Genetically modified Awakened drugs are a specialized but extremely lucrative market. Though the Ghost Cartels were the first to create them, competition is rife. Many individuals and organizations are trying to reproduce the Cartels' feat, but most opt to target their R&D facilities in Latin America's rainforests. Of course, the drug lords protect their secrets with extreme security measures, making this a risky proposition at best.

Gamemasters are encouraged to create their own BADs, using the rules and guidelines in *Man & Machine* within certain limits. Awakened drugs are both rare and expensive; the Cartels have successfully genetically tweaked Awakened plants to produce enhanced compounds, but without proper harvesting and preparation (perhaps involving magical rituals in some instances), many grant no effect. Mass-produced Awakened drugs are still a *narcotraficante's* wet dream.

Overdrive: A nova-hot stimulant hitting the market, Overdrive is especially prized by foolhardy otaku and deckers. The drug enhances the brain areas where ASIST processing occurs, giving users +2 Hacking Pool for its duration (10 – Body hours, minimum 1 hour). Long-term use of Overdrive dangerously unbalances the brain's electrochemistry, eventually leading to psychotic breaks (and possible Dissonance in the case of otaku).

Trance: This is a highly addictive opiate, popular with partygoers who can afford it. It puts the user in a blissful trance for 1d6 hours, during which he is also aware of metahuman auras in close proximity. Once Trance wears off, though, users must make an Essence (6) Test or permanently lose 1 point of a Knowledge skill (gamemaster's choice). If the character rolls all ones or suffers an overdose, she gains a Mental Flaw like Amnesia or Oblivious (see pp. 22–23, *Shadowrun Companion*).

Ecuadorian Gold: A highly addictive narcotic in gel form. While it's origin is unknown, this BAD is believed to be produced from the honey of gene-modified bees fed on a specific type of orchid whose pollen causes hallucinogenic effects. It infuses the user with an overwhelming sense of euphoria and quasi-sexual pleasure for 10d6 minutes. Ecuadorian Gold is popular because it has particularly mellow aftereffects, but it is both highly addictive and makes users inexplicably susceptible to mind control magic and even mundane commands if authoritative and forceful. Consider an addict to have Willpower -1 for every month of use when resisting thought control or probing spells and social adept powers, or when resisting the urge to obey mundane commands while under the effect of a dose.

LATIN AMERICAN CRITTERS

A number of critters described in the *Critters* and *Target: Awakened Lands* sourcebooks can be found in parts of Latin America. Besides these numerous SURGE variants (such as *Sangre del Diablos*) have manifested during 2061 many of which remain unidentified and uncatalogued. Gamemasters are encouraged to be creative in populating the vast and unique biospheres of Latin American jungles and grasslands with both normal and Awakened critters.

Aardwolf: The wolf lives predominantly in northern Aztlan.

Bandit: An urban animal, the bandit is found in every major sprawl of Latin America.

Basilisk: These reptiles live in arid parts of Aztlan and South America.

Behemoth: Originally appearing in Florida, the Behemoth and a South American variant, the Macaréu (which is derived from the caiman) can also be found in the Amazonian jungle.

Birdman: These creatures are known in all parts of Latin America, as well as in the Caribbean League.

Black Annis: Appears in all jungle parts of Latin America.

Chimera: Encountered in desert regions of Aztlan and Argentina.

Chupacabras: Predominantly found in the Caribbean League as well as in Aztlan and northern Amazonia.

Devilfish: Found in the Gulf of Aztlan, the Caribbean Sea and the Pacific Ocean.

Compound	Availability (per dose)	Cost	Street Index	Legality
BADs				
Overdrive	6/3 days	750¥	4	4-X
Trance	5/2 days	300¥	2	5-X
Ecuadorian Gold	5/3 days	450¥	2	4-X

Compound	Vector	Speed	Addict.	Tolerance	Edge	Fix Factor
Overdrive	Inhalation	1 Turn	6M/5P	2	3/50	3 days
Trance	Inhalation, injection	2D6 Turns	5M/4P	2	5/50	3 days
Ecuadorian Gold	Injection	2D6 Turns	5M/6P	2	3/50	5 days

Note: Availability and Street Index are for Latin America. A character might have to wait longer and pay much more to get a dose elsewhere.

Devil Rat: There is probably no sprawl on earth without them, so they can be found in all urban areas here.

Dour: The dour lives throughout Aztlan and in the Caribbean Islands.

Embracer: Inhabiting mountainous and volcanic areas, embracers can be found in western Aztlan and, allegedly, also in the Andes.

Firedrake: Similar to the embracer, the firedrake inhabits parts of western Aztlan and South America.

Gabriel Hound: Known to all urban areas of Latin America.

Ghede fly: Originally native to South Europe, the ghede fly (or a similar insect) has also been sighted in the Caribbean League and nearby territories.

Ghoul: Ghouls are also found in every major urban district of Latin America.

Juggernaut: Found in Aztlan and further south, the juggernaut can live in almost any type of landscape.

Mermaid: The mermaid is fairly common in the coastal waters of the Caribbean Sea as well as the Atlantic and Pacific Ocean.

Naga: Nagas are rumored to live in the jungles of Aztlan and Amazonia, but possibly they are confused with similar-looking giant anacondas. In Amazonia many mix freely with the meta-human population.

New Leatherback: Appears in the Gulf of Aztlan and the adjacent shores.

Piasma: A typical North American critter, the piasma can also be found in forested parts of Aztlan.

Spider-Beast: Amazonia is home of the spider-beast that incubates inside the Brazilian kiwi fruit. Several subspecies are known, and they may differ in appearance, size and abilities.

Troglodyte: Found in arid regions of Aztlan and, presumably, Argentina.

Wodewose: Feeding upon birds and other small animals, the wodewose can be found throughout Latin America.

Wyrd Mantis: Otherwise only found in southern and eastern Europe, the mantis seems to have found a second home in the jungles of Aztlan and Amazonia. Connections to insect spirits are nothing but rumors.

Wyvern: Since the Amazonian jungle is home to several types of dragons and snakes, the wyvern can also be found there.

Shapeshifters

The jungles and pampas of South America boast the greatest number of known species of shapeshifters in existence. The most commonly encountered are jaguar, ocelot, snake, anaconda, alligator and dolphin shifters although several other major species exist. In Amazonia and among several native people's shapeshifters are not only treated with respect but recognized as equals. In Amazonia, many walk amongst metahumans freely and even hold regular jobs (some even in military and law-enforcement). Among the native tribes, shifters are often treated with singular respect and, while remaining outsiders to the tribe, they hold high status as pajés and are treated as honorary members.

NORMAL CRITTERS

The following table offers statistics for a selection of non-paranormal critters living in the Latin American jungle. Game-masters should adjust these statistics as needed.

LOWLAND RAINFOREST

This type of landscape consists of ordinary jungle, and can be found in most parts of Amazonia and southern Aztlan. Life concentrates in the treetops, where you can find orchids and most animal wildlife, while the ground holds only mosses and ferns. Since the ground lacks nutrients, a hard struggle for life takes place among the plants and animals. The temperature of the region depends more on the time of day than on the time of year, and would be bearable if not for the high humidity (which frequently reaches 100 percent). There is a greenish gleam of light all the time, making orientation more difficult, so characters must apply an additional +2 target modifier to all non-tech assisted Navigation Tests (p. 108, *Target: Wastelands*) made in this type of landscape.

Botfly

Treat a botfly bite as a disease (p. 249, *SR3*) with a Damage of 5M and a Speed of 60 to 120 hours (48 + [2D6 x 6] hours). A Cure Disease spell reducing the Infestation power to 0 eliminates it entirely. Proper medical treatment before the eggs hatch can do the same.

NORMAL CRITTERS TABLE

Name	B	Q	S	C	I	W	E	R	INIT	Attacks
Anaconda	6/1	6(x3 water)	10	-	2/4	3	6	6	5+2D6	10S constriction
Black caiman	6/2	5(x3)	7	-	1/3	2	6	5	5+1D6	6T
Fer-de-lance	2	6(x1)	2	-	1/4	2	6	6	6+2D6	2L + venom
Jaguar/Ocelot	4	6(x4)	5	-	2/4	2	6	6	6+3D6	7S
Piranha (school)	1	3(x2)	1	-	1/2	2	6	6	4+1D6	6M (p/turn)
Red-bellied piranha	1	5(x3)	1	-	1/2	1	6	6	6+2D6	4L
River dolphin	4	6(x4)	3	-	2/5	3	6	6	6+2D6	6L

Cascade Butterfly

Cascade butterflies live in flights of 6D6 individuals surrounding choking fig plants. They use the critter power of Compulsion on every target in a range of 5 meters, causing it to approach the choking fig's roots. The effective Essence attribute for their power is calculated from the number of individual butterflies divided by 3 and rounded down.

Choking Fig

Choking figs exist in different categories of size that are equal to a rating ranging from 1 (very small) to 10 (large) and even higher. The roots of the fig react to the touch of human beings or bigger animals. If a character touches the fig's roots, the gamemaster makes a Rating (4) Test. The plant must achieve a number of successes equal to the character's Quickness, divided by 2 (round down) to get a grip. Then the fig makes an Open Test with its rating; the highest result determines the target number of the victim's Strength Test to escape from its grip. Once the plant captures a victim, it inflicts 5M Stun damage. Stage the damage up for every two successes on the plant's initial test to grab the target.

Crystal Orchid

This plant generates a mana ebb with a Rating of 1, though every three months the effect reverses into a mana flare with an equal rating. To determine the reach of the effect, divide the number of orchids growing in the same place by 2. The result is the radius (in meters). Crystal orchids grow in populations of 5D6 x 10 flowers.

Goliath Ant

Awakened goliath ants are the largest known species of ants; soldiers and workers are about 20 cm long, while queens are up to 30 cm in length. Like their smaller relatives, South American fire ants, goliath ants have a bright red abdomen and a set of razor-sharp mandibles; they also have the ability to carry many times their own weight, meaning a goliath ant can carry a load as heavy as 25 kilograms.

Goliath ants usually don't build nests but are instead nomadic. Once a month, they stop traveling, allowing the ant queen to lay her eggs. One ant may not be a serious danger, but ten or twenty of them, let alone hundreds, are a considerable hazard. Some swarms of goliath ants are ruled by insect spirit ant queens, using the swarm as servants and messengers.

B	Q	S	C	I	W	E	R
2/3	5	6	–	1/3	3	5	5

INIT: 5 + 2D6

Attacks: 6L, –1 Reach

Powers: Enhanced Senses (Smell), Corrosive Saliva, Hardened Armor

Mudu

The mudu is an enormous black snake living in the tree-tops of the lowland rainforest. Averaging 6 meters in length, it's infamous for its unusual hunting technique; it uses a Levitate spell to dart down on its prey, get it into a chokehold and strangle it to death. Use the rules for overwhelming (*Cannon Companion*). The mudu possesses no venom but compensates with its size and strength.

B	Q	S	C	I	W	E	R
4	5x2	8	–	2/3	4	6	4

INIT: 4 + 2D6

Attacks: 8M Stun

Powers: Mimicry, Innate Spell (Levitate)

Night Jaguar

The night jaguar has a black coat with greenish highlights, stands 0.7 meters tall at the shoulder and weighs 150 kilograms. A nocturnal hunter, it uses its Desire Reflection power to lure prey and then attacks.

B	Q	S	C	I	W	E	R
5	5x4	5	–	3/4	4	6	5

INIT: 5 + 3D6

Attacks: 8S

Powers: Desire Reflection, Enhanced Senses (Low-light Vision, Thermographic Vision)

Weaknesses: Allergy (sunlight, mild)

Thunder Eel

The thunder eel is a SURGE variant of the normal electric eel, growing up to 5 meters in length. The voltage produced by this paranimal is accordingly high; it can stun birds, frogs, fish or even monkeys. The eel, however, seems to have developed an odd affinity toward boats with electrical engines or devices, which it loves to knock out as well. Until now, it has attacked few humans.

B	Q	S	C	I	W	E	R
4	6x3	4	–	1/3	2	6	4

INIT: 4 + 1D6

Attacks: 5M

Powers: Innate Spell (Lightning Bolt), Enhanced Senses (Electrical Field Detection, Motion Detection)

Weaknesses: Reduced Senses (Sight)

Notes: The eel's Lightning Bolt can only stun targets within a 6-meter range.

Trapper

The trapper developed from the ordinary tarantula but can reach a size of 2.5 meters. It constructs highly complicated systems of webs connected to each other so it can sense the prey's struggle from a far distance. Some trappers even build paths free of webbing leading directly to the spider itself.

which is often hiding in subterranean caves and dense groves. Trappers have strong venom as well as special hairs on their legs that are thrown off for defense and cause serious chemical burns.

B	Q	S	C	I	W	E	R
5	5x3	4	–	2/4	3	6	5

INIT: 5 + 2D6

Attacks: 6M

Powers: Venom (roll Body dice to resist 8S Stun Damage; each box of damage is not marked off the Condition Monitor, but instead results in a +1 modifier to all target numbers due to cramps), Corrosive Hair (make a Ranged Combat Test against a target number of 4; the target rolls Body dice to resist 8M Damage, impact armor counts twice).

White Back Tapir

Unlike the mostly domesticated mundane tapir, this wild version reacts extremely aggressively to humans. The white back stands 1.4 meters tall at the shoulder and weighs about 500 kilograms. Though it cannot fall back on special powers, it can inflict serious wounds with its powerful jaws.

B	Q	S	C	I	W	E	R
7	3	5	–	2/3	2	6	3

INIT: 3 + 1D6

Attacks: 6S

FOGGY WOODS

The foggy woods begin at a height of 2,000 meters (which includes much of the land in the northern half of South America) and are defined by constant ground-hugging thick fog. The temperature is a bit lower than in the lowland rainforest, while ferns and mosses dominate the vegetation.

Fiery Mushroom

This shiny red mushroom, prepared by a capable shaman, provides the Edge of “Friendly Spirits” for 1D6 hours to any user. The edge is limited to spirits of forest (jungle), though some shamans may have developed variants of the compound for dealing with other types of spirits. After the effect is gone, the user must resist 8S Stun damage.

Foggy Fern

Since the plant itself is not dangerous, it doesn’t have game stats. It has the critter power of Mist Form, able to dissolve and travel as mist to another place, preferably a spot where the ground contains more nutrients.

Stone Mistletoe

Stone mistletoes have an Attack Rating equivalent to their height and age, a rating from 1 to 6, chosen by the game-master. If someone comes into contact with the plant, make an Attack Rating Test against a target number equal to the subject’s Body (including body-enhancing cyber- and bioware like orthoskin, dermal plating and dermal sheath). The basic

Damage Code is (Attack Rating)L, every 2 successes increase the Damage Level by one. The victim makes a Damage Resistance Test; for every 2 boxes of damage, the victim receives an additional +1 target modifier on all tests involving the infested limb. This effect is caused by the paralysis inflicted on the victim. Healing an injured character involves removing the roots under the skin, which adds a +2 target modifier to the Biotech Test. If this modifier is not applied, the damage is temporarily cured, but after 1D6 hours, the mistletoe strikes again (repeat the procedure described above).

Cloud Bear

The cloud bear is an Awakened variant of the spectacled bear. It stands up to 2 meters tall at the shoulder and may weigh as much as 800 kilograms. The cloud bear attacks and feeds mainly upon sheep in the mountain regions. It only attacks humans if it is particularly hungry or threatened. Once on the hunt, the bear uses its Shadow Cloak ability to creep up to its prey. It uses this power for defense as well—when badly hurt, it will disappear and hope to escape into the darkness.

B	Q	S	C	I	W	E	R
8	4x3	8	–	2/4	3	6	5

INIT: 5 + 1D6

Attacks: 5S, +1 Reach

Powers: Enhanced Senses (Smell, Hearing), Enhanced Physical Attributes (Quickness and Strength, once per day for [Essence]D6 combat turns), Shadow Cloak

SWAMP WOODS

Swamp woods are found along the floodplains of the Amazon and other rivers. The swamps are overgrown with mangroves, and most animals of this area also found in the Pantanal, situated in the southeast of Amazonia and showing a similar landscape.

Minhocão

This black scaly worm (the name translates as “big worm”) averages 20 meters in length, while the longest specimen ever sighted was about 30 meters long. Minhocões grow up to 1.5 meters in diameter, which makes them some of the most feared creatures of the Amazon Basin. The Minhocão’s appearance is similar to that of the rockworm, including sharp grinding teeth, but the Minhocão has a few tentacles sprouting from its head. It mainly feeds upon fish, crocodiles and bigger animals careless enough to stray by the riverside. The worms are magically attracted to sounds and vibrations in the water, yet they usually do not surface for long since they are sensitive to sunlight.

B	Q	S	C	I	W	E	R
15/6	3	30	–	1/4	4	6	4

INIT: 4 + 1D6

Attacks: 8D

Powers: Enhanced Senses (Sonar, Hearing), Hardened Armor
Weaknesses: Allergy (sunlight, moderate), Reduced Senses (nearly blind)

Siguanaba

A self-declared guardian of the rainforest, Siguanaba is a unique spirit appearing as either a girl or a man in a white dress with an ugly, deformed face and long dark hair reaching the ground. It hides in lakes and rivers, waiting for humans to approach, then dragging them into the water and drowning them.

Use the game stats of Man-of-the-Woods for Siguanaba, but substitute Psychokinesis for the Weather Control power. See *Critters*, p. 13, for details.

Water Tiger

This great cat looks quite similar to a leopard but has a yellow coat spotted or striped with black. The water tiger is known by many names in Latin America, such as *maipolina* (French Guiana) or *yaquaru* (Patagonia). It hunts by hiding in shallow waters and jumping out of the water to catch its prey.

B	Q	S	C	I	W	E	R
5	6x4	5	–	2/4	3	6	5

INIT: 5 + 3D6

Attacks: 9S

Powers: Enhanced Senses (Improved Sight), Enhanced Physical Attributes (Quickness, once per day for [Essence]D6 combat turns)

AMAZONIA

Amazonia is a land of opportunity just waiting for someone with the right combination of guts and knowledge to take advantage. Hualpa and his Awakened supporters keep the place dancing to their tune while trying to expand their territory and their influence over the continent. Vast jungles surround the coastal cities and the few settlements remaining in the interior. Inside the sprawls runners will find that corporate and political intrigue is alive and well, while in the jungles adventure and the unknown await.

GETTING IN/OUT

Getting into Amazonia can be a hassle if runners are not careful. Air travel is closely monitored. The Metrôpole international airport (the only able to handle suborbital flights) is not as secure as Manaus' (regional air links only) where security is extra tight, but runners won't be able to carry any weapons, and cyberware is closely scrutinized.

Runners will find it easier to arrive on ships, in particular cruise ships. Rio de Janeiro, Salvador and Fortaleza are major tourist hot spots and cruise ships arrive almost hourly. Runners can stow away on these ships or get a job on one and work their way into Amazonia. Not all cruise lines enforce strict background checks and runners should find it a relatively easy way to get into Amazonia undetected.

Brave runners might try crossing one of the land borders, but, with the exception of the Paraguayan and Ecuadorian borders, runners won't find this method to be a picnic. Awakened critters patrol the jungles, while regular troops patrol the tense border with Argentina. The most difficult entry point is across the border with Aztlan, as both sides keep active border

patrols at all times, and the constantly shifting jungle is near impossible to navigate without an experienced guide (even GPS and inertial tracking function erratically). The border with Bolivia is a bit more forgiving as runners can cross the Pantanal, but the wetlands too have hidden dangers.

RUNNING IN AMAZONIA

Runners can pick up a variety of work in Amazonia, and everyone from mercs to cat burglars will find plenty to keep them occupied. The locals are friendly enough (until you cut into their profits), and Johnsons are more chatty here than in other locales, often preferring to sit and talk for a while before getting down to business. The major obstacle to any successful run is the ever-present DISA.

Awakened Masters

While in Amazonia, runners will quickly realize that the Awakened and paranormals are a class apart. Top ranking officials are invariably Awakened, and the whole country treats magic with reverence and respect. At the top of the foodchain coils Hualpa, guiding the country from behind the scenes, pulling the strings of the elected government with the help of his translator, Maria Locasin. However, Hualpa only interferes with government when he deems necessary, giving elected officials somewhat more leeway than their equivalents in Aztlan. Since politicians are allied with Hualpa or under his watch, runners shifting through political muck in Amazonia could easily draw Hualpa's attention.

Another power player in the shadows besides Hualpa, is the Great Anaconda by the name of M'Boi. A mysterious and elusive being, it is widely suspected M'Boi moves among the highest circles of power in unassuming human form. Not that anyone would say so but many suspect his human persona to be Francisco de Assis despite there being no evidence to the fact. If this were the case, M'Boi would control DISA, which in turn has its fingers in every facet of Amazonian life.

DISA can be used as an effective plot twist, as runners may encounter them and their operations at any time anywhere in Amazonia. Though corruption is still a problem, runners should be reminded that any official they attempt to bribe could be a DISA agent. DISA agents are much harder to bribe, and most demonstrate a near-fanatical allegiance to Amazonia and its government.

Religion and a Critical Mass

Amazonia has inherited an incredibly diverse religious heritage from Brazil. Though Catholicism continues to be the main religion, others such as Umbanda and Candomble have gained mainstream appeal since the Awakening, along with other more questionable sects such as the Awakened Rebirth. The Awakened Rebirth was an aborted population control experiment by Hualpa, but the religion has spiraled into a path too radical to be of use. Still, it gathers followers, some of whom are rumored to be unwillingly press-ganged.

The biggest news to hit Amazonia recently is pope John XXV's visit and his plans to hold a holy mass in the Novo Maracanã. What is not public knowledge is that there is more

at stake than meets the eye. Amazonia has been working hard to co-opt the Ghost Cartels into working for them. The sudden end of the Yucatan war and the strengthening of Aztlan's forces on other borders could spell trouble for both the Cartels and Amazonia. The two sides are holding some preemptive meetings in Rio around the time of the mass.

Adding to the complications is the fact that the pope plans to discreetly announce his preference as to his successor. Though Villalobos is sure he will get the nod, the pope wants a candidate that will be able to balance the divided interests of the Church and the Catholic flock and has picked Monetti. Runners from all over Amazonia and the world will be pulling bodyguard duty for various VIPs, and some of those VIPs will be quite interested in getting advance word of the pope's decision.

Corporate Hijinks

Amazonia is one of the few remaining holdouts against the Business Recognition Accords, but despite what people might think many megas still regularly do business in Amazonia. Most corporate business is regulated by the DMAIC, which in turn answers directly to Hualpa. Corporations doing business in Amazonia have learned to work with this system, usually by covering things up that DMAIC and Hualpa may not like. Runners are hired to help protect valuable information, spy on the competition and plant dirt on competitors for DMAIC to uncover.

The most corporation showing the greatest growth in South America is the Genesis Consortium. Headquartered in Ecuador, the Genesis Consortium has had a run of luck of late. Their biggest landfall came when the Amazonian government allowed their scientists to use the Alcântara Research facility. The Consortium is also actively researching the rainforest, another exclusive. M'Boi in particular is interested in increasing the Genesis Consortium's influence in South America in a long-term effort to create a mega with close ties to Amazonia. Along the way the Consortium has made a lot of enemies, from Aztechnology to United Oil. Unbeknownst to most, the Consortium's holdings in Amazonia are protected by DISA agents as well as the corporation's own security.

In Guiana and Suriname, large industrial complexes have been set up using the most state-of-the-art industrial biotech and environmental techniques available to Amazonia; becoming a prime target for foreign operations looking for a peak behind Amazonia's verdant curtain. The region is also a tad more unregulated than most and infiltration here is not as difficult as Manaus or Bogotá.

Cultural Chaos

Cultural diversity is the name of the game in Amazonia. Because of its high tolerance of all forms of Awakened individuals as well as paracritters, the country has seen a large flow of immigrants into the country, causing both unique problems and opportunities. As soon as runners step into a sprawl they should be astounded by the diversity of ethnicities, cultures and species, especially in Manaus.

Though Brazilians are easy-going and accepting of newcomers, some of these immigrants are not so friendly. Runners should avoid the very outskirts of the Metrôpole; the outskirts of the Campinas sector, for example, are home to foreign shapeshifters that were persecuted in their home countries and don't like to be disturbed.

Throughout any major Amazonian sprawl (with the exception of Manaus), runners will find large run down areas called *favelas*. *Favelas* are areas where the poorest of the poor build makeshift homes and settle down. These areas are crime-filled, squalid, desperate and depressive areas where runners may find precarious refuge in a pinch—for a fee. Criminal outfits such as the Sindicato Quiumbandista and the Codigo Verde use *favelas* as their powerbases, and runners involved with such organizations will find that they spend a lot of time roaming the *favelas* doing the syndicate's dirty work. Some *favelas* are more developed than others; some have running water and electricity as well as paved streets while others have no sewage or utilities. Each *favelas* could be considered a small town in its own right, with its own culture, pecking order and atmosphere.

Wild Lands, Tough Neighbors

The incredible biodiversity found in the Amazon rainforest is without equal, and runners that are not equipped for the challenge will find the jungle unforgiving. Besides the regular patrols made by Amazonian special forces, free forest spirits, paracritters and natives all protect the jungle. Any one of these might be able to call for reinforcements in the form of tough Army backup, a feathered serpent or Great Anaconda. Because of the threat of an Aztlan incursion and full-blown war, Amazonian forces take incursion across their northern borders very seriously.

Besides the rain forest, another area of interest for runners is the Pantanal. The dry season lasts from July to November, and this is a prime time for anyone to transverse the terrain or gathering *telesma*. The area boasts a rich biosphere, and the wildlife is unique. Runners should watch for the regular Army patrols and the Great Anacondas that make their home in the Pantanal.

The Chapada dos Guimarães is an area of conflict between the Awakened Rebirth cult and FUNAI. Awakened Rebirth has taken up residence at a power site that the natives want back. Runners can be hired to protect the Awakened Rebirth followers or to sabotage their settlement.

Rescue Me!

The runners arrive in the Metrôpole after being contacted by a wealthy entertainer. His daughter has joined the Awakened Rebirth and has gone to the Chapada dos Guimarães to become one with nature. The runners have to find their way to the Chapada through the Cerrado from the Metrôpole. At the gamemaster's discretion the entertainer could provide a guide to help the team.

Once the team reaches the Chapada dos Guimarães they find the area in turmoil as the Awakened Rebirth is trying to keep their land from the natives. As a result, they are in a

heightened state of security. Runners can become further involved with the turmoil by siding with the natives and helping their cause. After all, they are already going in to take back the daughter, why not make some extra cash on the side?

To further convolute the runners' mission, gamemasters can throw in DISA agents that are in the area trying to fix the mess, or an external party interested in researching the power site illegally. As the runners make their way in or out, they might bump into any of these factions, who would not be very pleased to see them.

Great Anacondas

Great Anacondas are found in the rain forests of the Amazon Basin all the way down to the Pantanal. Reclusive and secretive beings, Great Anacondas are about as powerful as a Feathered Serpent. The most famous Great Anaconda is M'Boi, who is a close ally to Hualpa and leads all Great Anacondas. They help with border patrols and usually prefer to just turn intruders away rather than outright kill them, much like a cat playing with a mouse. Great Anacondas usually use their magic from concealed positions to preserve their secrecy.

B	Q	S	C	I	W	E	R
11/7	8(x4)	24	8	8	8	(6+1d6)	8

INIT: 8 + 1d6 Astral Initiative: 28 + 2d6

Pools: Astral 12, Combat 12, Spell 6-9

Attacks: 10S, + 2 Reach

Powers: Astral Armor, Enhanced Senses (wide-band hearing, thermographic and lowlight vision), Magical Skills, Hardened Armor, Venom, Animal Control (snakes), Concealment.

ARGENTINA

Ever wonder why the megas bother with the illusion of democracy and let elected officials handle the work of running everyday government? The answer is that governing is dirty work and bad business. The state of Argentina in the Sixth World is an example of what happens if the illusion crumbles away and the masses realize they've been had. The veneer of stability and nationalist fervor of the Arrojo regime has shattered, and his puppetmasters are uncomfortably exposed. The situation is rife with opportunities and runners are needed in a variety of roles. Not every job will be easy on the runner's consciences, though, as a lot of what is going on will have dire consequences for the little man. But in running, a conscience is often little more than an expensive luxury.

GETTING IN/OUT

Entering and exiting Argentina can be quite a challenge. Having to uphold the illusion of an imminent Amazonian threat means making border and customs controls exceptionally strict and showy.

Buenos Aires has international air links to most major sprawls in North Am and Europe, but security for passengers not vouched for by corporations is tight. The land borders with Paraguay and Amazonia are closed and safeguarded by military forces supplemented by the best corporate technology. That

being said, the border is long, and the lush river vegetation makes quick insertions possible under the right conditions.

On the other hand, security along the Chilean border is almost non-existent, and several smuggling routes follow the Andes range into Chile before turning east. The terrain is difficult and weather makes it notoriously dangerous, but security is lax. The other big chink in Argentina's armor is the heavy maritime traffic through Buenos Aires. Port authorities are understaffed and customs infamously easygoing (especially since they're Ángel's Civil Defense division).

RUNNING IN ARGENTINA

Given its turbulent situation, Argentina is the sort of place that makes runners face some hard decisions when they're confronted with the consequences of their actions and when there are a lot more grays than usual. The situation is becoming so polarized that just about any work runners perform for the corps is going to make the lives of the people in the *villas miseria* worse in some way. With the local shadow community increasingly polarized, corporations are reluctant to depend on local free agents and risk conflicting agendas and skewed loyalties. Foreign operatives are in high demand for all sorts of work (particularly security and black ops), but such runners will find it tough to hook up (for information, gear or contacts) with many local fixers who are starting to see foreigners as intruders.

The oppressive regime, strict controls on unlicensed weapons and security checkpoints around interesting locations pose additional difficulties. On the other hand, having a megacorporate patron or even a well-connected local significantly eases some difficulties, while also putting you in the sights of the anti-establishment factions.

Backroom Politics

Intrigue in Argentina is quintessentially South American in atmosphere and tone; after all, this is a fascist regime undergoing a political and social shakeup as desperation and discontent reach fever pitch among the disenfranchised. Regardless of Presidente Arrojo's ability to control matters, myriad factions are trying to profit from the current instability and maneuver to improve their lot. This opens numerous opportunities for talent for hire, including character assassination, blackmail, corruption, evidence planting, political sabotage or outright elimination.

The regime and its corporate patrons have done an exceptional job of isolating the upper-middle and working classes from the true extent of the misery and poverty that afflicts the country, and even by 2064 many people are either blind to the true depth of the crisis or are willing to accept that it is the price of keeping things stable. Figure in SIDE's nefarious influence and connections to the underworld along with the beginnings of a wide-scale uprising, and there exists a unique backdrop for runners desiring a change of pace. Even Democracia Siempre, through its international backers like I-Spotlight and Equity (see *Loose Alliances* for more details on these groups), can afford to hire international talent, though it prefers to fall back on local runners whenever possible.

Corporate Affairs

Though the main focus of strife is political on the surface, much of what is really at stake are the interests and privileges of the megacorps and their cronies. Argentina is central to many megas' interests in South America and they cannot afford to let the situation degenerate further.

Figure in the usual underhanded competition and shadowplays, whether it involves helping the Japanacorps' upstart candidate outmaneuver Aztechnology's entrenched cabinet interests, facilitating Novatech's overtures towards the Democracia Siempre insurgents, or performing weapons and data-thefts on remote *pampas* facilities, Argentina allows for both shadow intrigue as well as political-oriented scheming—perfect for a change of scenery without having to veer from traditional shadow ops.

Having the government and military in their pockets means several AAAs have some of their most secure (and hence most interesting) South American facilities and research programs in country—the cybertech, biotech and genetics installations might even field-test their creations as security measures.

The Other Side of the Tracks

The *villas miseria*, like the *favelas* in Amazonia, boast a metahuman ecology and lifestyle quite different from what players will be used to in first-world barrens and provide a unique backdrop. Dealing with the local powerbrokers and the barter economies should provide an interesting change of pace to those used to a decidedly different barrens culture.

Not only are the *villas* teeming hives of humanity with their individual subcultures, barter economies, smuggled necessities and chaotic color, but they can also harbor all types of surprises, including insurgent groups of all stripes, Amazonian spy rings, government snitches, secret police raids and hidden bug hives. Gamemasters using the *villas* should always underline the rampant fear and poverty underlying everyday lives, the simple desperation that makes up people's lives—an oft-forgotten peak at the realities and injustices the Sixth World spawns.

Border Games

Though not as dangerous as the Arrojo cabinet would have people believe, the Amazonian-Argentine border is nonetheless a hotbed of intelligence and mercenary activity that occasionally boils over into minor military clashes. Hualpa and M'boi have long decided to take the long-range view in their plans for Argentina and are slowly undermining the power structure (or better yet, letting corporate greed do it for them), so to the Amazonians this area is very much a secondary priority compared to its northern borders. To the secretive Legjo and their Aztlaner backers, however, the Plata and Paraná river border is a vital frontline in halting Amazonian imperialism and dividing the forces of their enemy, resulting in intense espionage action and infiltration operations into Amazonia-controlled territories. All of which makes the heavy smuggling scene more interesting. Gamemasters may find the material on espionage and counterespionage activities and groups in *State of the Art: 2064* particularly useful.

While the Argentine authorities turn a blind eye to much of the stuff crossing into Amazonia, fear of infiltration keeps them on the lookout for what might come out—making life difficult for all those interested in the high-turnaround talislegging and paracritter smuggling businesses.

AZTLAN

Aztlan is a nation of stark contradictions: old gods and high-tech industry, wealthy corporate executives and destitute subsistence farmers, beautiful *castillos* and smog-filled sprawls. It is a dangerous nation for those who aren't on Aztechnology's side and even more dangerous for those who learn of its hidden secrets.

GETTING IN/OUT

Legally, there are two ways for non-citizens to enter Aztlan: with a travel visa or by receiving resident alien status. Getting either of those requires intense background checks before acceptance, and even those that are accepted are subject to extreme amounts of surveillance while they are in the nation. Travel visas can be issued for up to 60 days, while resident alien status is indefinite as long as the corporation employing the non-citizen retains the individual's services. Both of these approvals can be revoked at any time by Aztlan government without stated reason, appeal or advanced notification.

As far as the physical details of entry, Aztlan has four major international airports (Monterrey, San Antonio, San Diego and Tenochtitlán) which handle both suborbital and semiballistic flights, as well as countless other airports which handle shorter flights.

Illegal entry over the nation's borders is the preferred method for shadowrunners who wish to avoid Aztechnology surveillance. Aztlan's northern border with Pueblo and the CAS is a demilitarized buffer zone and the most difficult to cross secretly. The southern border with Amazonia is more sparsely patrolled and easier to sneak across due to the geography, but has its own dangers in the local flora, fauna and Amazonian government. The most successful method of illegal entry is via the coasts, especially through cargo shipments. Aztlan doesn't possess enough manpower to fully cover every square inch of coastline nor is it able to scan every cargo crate that enters the nation, though it makes a show of trying.

RUNNING IN AZTLAN

Shadowrunning in Aztlan comes down to working for or working against Aztechnology (sometimes both at the same time). The corporation is so tightly woven into the fabric of the nation that no matter the job, you are either favoring or hurting Aztechnology interests in some way and it is highly likely the corporation will get involved in some aspect.

The Nicaragua Canal

Aztlan has already broken ground on this ambitious project, but the Corporate Court would prefer to see that it never reaches completion. Aside from Wuxing (which has worked out preferential usage deals with Aztlan), the other corporations are working through shadow assets to sabotage the canal's

construction in various ways, either through overt physical destruction or through quieter intimidation of key personnel. Aztlan, of course, has much to gain from the canal and Aztechnology is working overtime to protect its development.

Border Skirmishes

Activity on Aztlan's northern borders with Pueblo and the CAS is heating up, and work for shadowrunners on either side of the border is increasing. The tense military situation makes the nations involved loath to use military assets that could be traced back to them, so they turn to deniable assets for missions across the border. In Austin, the Sons of the Alamo are trying to force a war between the CAS and Aztlan, a situation neither nation really wants. Meanwhile, Aztlan has been sending agents into Pueblo to search for ancient magical artifacts or evidence of the mythical "Seven Caves of Origin" which they believe might be somewhere in the southern Rocky Mountains.

In With the Locals

Aztlan's local "Mexican" shadow community isn't particularly friendly with the import runners, and they have a near-monopoly on Aztechnology runs within the nation. Non-native runners looking for work in Aztlan are sure to butt heads with the locals at some point and will either face the trials of earning their respect or the dangers of earning their ire. Working in Aztlan is difficult, if not deadly, for runners who become the enemies of the Mexicans. But getting in good with the locals is a difficult process that includes proving yourself to a community built on principles of machismo.

The Cult of Tezcatlipoca

Some members take the religious emphasis of the Cult of Tezcatlipoca seriously while others see it as little more than a form of corporate culture, but the shadowy factions in the Cult run Aztechnology's board, the Path of the Sun, and the nation of Aztlan. Runners may find themselves caught up in the internal politics of the Cult as power shifts and conflict arises between its members. The recent fall of Oscuro and the weakening of his faction of blood mages opened up a power struggle that resulted in Chavez's magical nationalists taking the lead, but the internal struggles have not gone away. Each faction employs runners (many of them unaware of the true purpose and scope of their work) to increase their power in the Cult, and even various factions harbor internal rivalries. The work is ever-present, very profitable and exceptionally dangerous.

THE PATH OF THE SUN

On the surface, the Path of the Sun is a harmless belief system that conducts national religious ceremonies and contains dozens of smaller magical groups embracing similar themes. Hidden at the top of the Path's power structure, however, are a handful of secret and nefarious magical groups that utilize dark techniques to power their magic. The Blood Mage Gestalt (p. 70, *Threats*) is an example of one of these secret cults, but there are others, such as the unnamed groups to which

Domingo Chavez and Anna Villalobos belong and the rumored cult that counts feathered serpents as members. These secret groups often share in common their use of blood magic (p. 133, *MitS*) and the powerful members of these groups are also taught the secrets of Shared Potency metamagic (p. 45, *T2*).

Gamemasters are free to create rules for shamans who take Aztec gods as their idols, or they may adapt existing ones for this purpose (p. 152, *MitS*). As a rule of thumb, Quetzalcóatl usually corresponds to the Plumed Serpent totem, Huitzilopochtli to the Sun nature totem, Tlaloc to a male version of the Great Mother idol, Xuihtecuhtli to the Fire-Bringer idol, Xipe-Totec to the Dark King idol, and Tezcatlipoca to the Adversary idol.

Teocallis

It is increasingly common for Aztlan's larger teocallis to possess a background count, ranging from 3 to 5 at the larger teocallis (the temples to Quetzalcóatl and Tezcatlipoca in Tenochtitlán have a permanent background count of 5). Smaller teocallis may find themselves host to elaborate rituals that temporarily boost their background count only to have it fade later. This background count is aspected towards use of the Path of the Sun, and therefore the temples act as power sites for them while hindering the magic of others.

On rare occasions, magic rituals conducted by the most powerful members of the Path of the Sun have resulted in mana warps, or foveae. These tend to be temporary and fade back to standard background count, but at the gamemaster's discretion there may be a few standing mana warps at areas of significant past rituals. For more information on background count, aspected power and mana warps, see pages 83-86 of *Magic in the Shadows*.

Currently under the direction of Domingo Chavez, the Blood Mage Gestalt is continuing its effort to link the background counts of numerous teocallis into an astral network. The purpose behind this effort is unknown, with rumors ranging from using the combined power for a great summoning ritual to raising the ambient mana level of the nation to building a magical shield around Aztlan.

GUERREROS

The orders of *guerreros* are military magical orders within the Path of the Sun. Unlike most of the magical groups in the Path of the Sun, the *guerreros* are made up of a majority of adepts, though full magicians are also found in each one. Only four *guerreros* orders exist, each with a different military role, but they all share a similar religious belief system and employ the use of blood magic like the secret Path of the Sun orders.

Also like the secret Path of the Sun orders, the most powerful *guerreros* in each order are taught the Shared Potency metamagic technique. During an initiatory ritual they join in a spirit pact (p. 124, *MitS*) with a powerful entity they identify with the god Tezcatlipoca. This pact and the Shared Potency technique allow numerous powerful individuals to increase their Potency through their link with Tezcatlipoca (for more on Potency, see page 123 of *MitS*). The exact nature and power level of Tezcatlipoca are left up to the gamemaster.

Blood Tokens

Blood tokens are a special variant of Infusion Foci (p. 68, *SOTA64*) or Spell Category Foci currently believed to exist only in Aztlan. To use a blood token, the user must know the Sacrificing metamagic technique (p. 133, *MitS*) and must have been present at the first bonding of the blood token. Functionally, they work just like standard infusion foci or spell category foci, but their creation is very different.

Blood tokens are made from a body part taken from a sacrificial victim at the time of death, and the type of focus is usually related to both the victim and the body part (for instance, the ear of a meddling journalist who was snooping into Aztlan affairs might be used for a Detection spell category blood token, while the tongue of an anti-Aztlan activist might be used for a Commanding Voice infusion blood token). The victim must have been someone of some significance for the enchanting ritual to work; blood tokens are not made from Joe Aztlaner off the street, but usually from people specifically targeted by the *guerreros* orders for sacrifice.

The focus formula stage of the blood token artificing works like a standard focus, and an enchanter creates the formula while studying the victim in captivity. Unlike other focus formulas, the blood token formula is unique; the focus and the victim can never be sold or reused. The enchanting test is made at the sacrificial ritual, which, unlike the standard base time for enchanting, has a base time of only six hours, divided by the enchanter's successes. For purposes of the enchanting test and the first bonding karma cost, the focus is considered to be using virgin telesma, and both the test and karma cost are adjusted by the victim's Essence (or Magic Rating, if higher), as if alchemical radicals were being used. Divide the Essence or Magic Rating by two (rounding up) and subtract that number from the enchanting test target number and the first bonding karma cost.

In addition, the astral presence of a blood token is unusually strong; the Force of the blood token is considered at +2 for the purpose of astral combat or mana spell damage resistance tests.

THE BIG SMOKE

Tenochtitlán, due to its unique geography and high pollution, has different effects on visitors and residents. The high altitude of Tenochtitlán's geographical basin means thinner oxygen, and newcomers unaccustomed to it suffer penalties. They suffer a -1 to their Body attribute for all tests to resist diseases and toxins, and unaccustomed magicians suffer a -1 to Willpower for the purposes of drain resistance tests. Acclimating to the thin air takes 12+1d6 days (rule of six does apply); characters with extended volume bioware (p. 66, *Man and Machine*) do not suffer these penalties.

The intensity of Tenochtitlán's pollution, which is often trapped in the valley basin, is a separate problem. On any given day, the gamemaster rolls 1d6 to determine the Power of the excessive air pollution. Those without air filters that negate the Power of the pollution with their Ratings face a Toxin Resistance Test with the Power of air pollution that causes Moderate Stun

with a speed of 30 minutes. The Stun damage heals slowly, at the rate of Physical damage (see p. 126, *SR3*), and only when the character is breathing clean air.

In addition, the acid rain in Tenochtitlán is intense. All creatures not immune to toxins or corrosives are considered to have a Mild Allergy to acid rain (see p. 15, *Critters*). Normal acid rain can cause a +1 penalty to all target numbers while the character is exposed to it, and „hard“ acid rain can cause a +2 penalty and lead to permanent health damage after long-term exposure. Protective clothing eliminates this penalty.

BOLIVIA

Velasco's Bolivia is to the Sixth World what Castro's Cuba is to our own. Though many locals and foreigners still believe in El Comandante, the dream of the Revolution has turned into a nightmare. Sancho Collqui's movement shows that the oppressed masses are finally awakening to reality, but the regime isn't going down without a fight and has quite a few tricks in store.

GETTING IN/OUT

Cyberware and weapons are subject to standard regulations, but the Bolivian government maintains harsh laws regarding magic. All magical abilities must be declared when applying for a visa and even then the request might be denied. Anyone caught using unlicensed magic is treated as an enemy and usually sent to a re-education camp. Corporate employees in the Free Trade Zones are exempt from these requirements.

Bolivia has few international airports. The two most important ones are El Alto (La Paz) and Viru Viru (Santa Cruz), though the first one does not service semiballistic or suborbital flights. Santa Cruz's economic importance makes Viru Viru a popular airport with the corporations, but it also means it's a juicy target for the rebels. Airport security is handled by the Revolutionary Guard, which also runs the military airline *Transportes Aereos Militares* (TAM).

The country's railroad system has been upgraded to help the corps' mining operations. The railroads connect with Argentina's own at the Villazón-La Quiaca border and with Chile's at the Avaroa-Ollagüe border. On the other hand, the lines near Amazonia are all but abandoned. Only smugglers use them to move their goods or guide themselves.

The *Altiplano* region belongs to the so-called "Andean Highway," which goes from chilly Patagonia to Colombia's rainforests. The Ghost Cartels and independent smugglers use it to deliver their goods all over Latin America, daring harsh weather conditions and treacherous mountains in exchange of increased surreptitiousness. Use the rules for Sensor Dead Zones (p. 32, *Rigger 3 Revised*).

The Amazon rainforest and its rivers are another option for people wishing to illegally enter Bolivia from Perú and Amazonia. For a fee, the local cargo boats will carry anything, be it cattle or shadowrunners. This insertion method isn't without risks, however. In addition to Bolivian patrols, travelers must beware of the rainforest's dangers (see p. 137).

RUNNING IN BOLIVIA

Be it smuggling milspec weapons for them through the Andes or hunting down their fund-raisers in North America or Europe, runs in Bolivia are increasingly linked to the Neolnca insurrection. It is perfectly possible for a character to naively support the *Velazquistas*, only to find out the regime is just as rotten as any capitalist country.

The megacorps also have their own game in Bolivia, fighting to earn the collectives' favor and sabotaging their competitors' operations. Tanamyre Resources is circling its wagons to defend its assets from other corps, while Inti T'ika Bioengineering is trying to gain influence over the Neolncas.

Bugs in the System

As hinted in its chapter, Bolivia is deeply infested by a cabal of insect spirits who are transforming local society for their own purposes. Limberg Velazco himself is a "good merge" flesh form, though he could also be a corrupted *Yatiri* (Aymaran shaman). The bugs take advantage of Bolivia's prestige to expand their influence across the globe, turning many sympathizers into flesh-form agents. Even the Ghost Cartels are being subtly manipulated through the Morales Cartel.

The situation is probably known to several corporations, but they have chosen to deal with the devil as long as they can plunder Bolivia's natural resources. Aztechnology is coldly hostile toward the regime, but it hasn't taken any major actions against it except for their battles with the Morales Cartel, which threatens its own drug trade. On the other hand, Amazonia has had enough time to regret supporting Velazco's revolution and is secretly backing the Neolnca movement.

Shadowrunners could also become pawns for the bugs' internal intrigues. What the team thought was an honest hive-cleaning operation in a remote Bolivian village could well be an attempt to increase one faction's influence in the People's Council at the expense of another.

Bolivian Oddities

The home of pre-Columbine civilizations, Lake Titicaca and Tiahuanaco (also known as Tiwanaku) are known for astral shallows and power sites (pp. 99-100, *T:AL*), many of which are aspected toward Inca shamans. On the other hand, centuries of exploitation and suffering have given Potosí a negative background count of 5. At the gamemaster's discretion, some areas in Bolivia might have become Toxic Zones (pp. 155-156, *YOTC*), or aspected towards insect spirits

Characters arriving in the Altiplano may experience breathing difficulties. Use the High Altitude rules in p. 195 of *Shadows of North America*, except that problems last for 12 + 2d6 days and the character's effective Body and Athletics are also reduced by 1 when making tests involving physical efforts.

Yankee Go Home

Ron Sanders had it all: a rich family, good friends and a bright future in father's company. He also hated it all to no end, feeling trapped in a golden birdcage from birth. Finally, after several months of bitter discussions with his father, Ron suddenly vanished.

Feeling guilty, Mr. Sanders hires the runners to track him down. All they can find in his college dorm is a scrapped note about a meeting in the Friends of the Bolivian Revolution, a radical group that supports Velazco's regime. If pressed, the FoBoR's members will admit that Ron was a frequent, passionate visitor. An online search through Ron's credit record reveals that he bought a plane ticket to La Paz one week ago, shortly after his last clash with daddy.

If the runners inform Mr. Sanders about this, he panics about his son being abducted by "Bolivian commie pinkos." Mr. Sanders offers the team a substantial reward for the safe and quick return of his son. Should the runners hesitate, the gamemaster might decide that Mr. Sanders can use his business connections to ensure they can enter Bolivia without problems. All they have to do is to find the collective his son is in and convince him to return home. How tough could that be?

CARIBBEAN LEAGUE

The Caribbean League is a wild and diverse place that precariously balances itself on the line between unity and dissolution. On its thousands of islands and in the vast stretches of water between them, countless players engage in a complex game of reputation and power brokering, and if any one entity ever got the upper hand it could completely skew the balance of power in the Western Hemisphere.

GETTING IN/OUT

Due to the composition of the League, getting in or out of the Caribbean is relatively easy compared to most other places on the globe. The League maintains a network of sensors and patrol vehicles that keep an eye on its oceanic and aerial borders, and anyone who enters the League must present a destination plan. If the island government approves the destination plan, then responsibility for enforcing the visitor's status falls to that island. If no approval is given, the visitor is turned back at the borders by the patrols. Some islands, like Cuba, have an extremely strict immigration and visa system that attempts to account for anyone entering or leaving their island. Others, like Haiti, are notoriously easy to pass through as long as the visitor in question isn't averse to using bribery. And many of the thousands of private islands in the League either don't account at all for who visit their shores or maintain lethal levels of security to prevent unauthorized visitors.

The islands of the Caribbean League contain dozens of large seaports and airports. Each major island has at least one urban center with an international airport, and there are hundreds of small airstrips dotting the League, many of them under private ownership.

RUNNING IN THE CARIBBEAN LEAGUE

Reputation and self-initiative determine a non-native runner's ability to work in the Caribbean shadows. Particular exceptions like Haiti aside, non-native runners do not face prejudices based on origin, race, or metatype, but the pecking order of the shadows in the League comes down to those with the best reputations and the best ability to find the juiciest jobs.

Building a Reputation

Runners visiting the Caribbean League quickly discover that their street reputations back home don't mean squat here. Building a reputation in the League is key to one's influence in the shadows, and the system works differently than in most places in the world. Instead of being secretive, runners here earn their reputation by being flashy and generous, pulling off the primetime gigs and spreading the wealth around. However, at the same time, they need to carefully balance their public image with the mistake of making themselves too tempting a target for other Caribbean runners to resist.

Shadowrunning Entrepreneurs

Shadowrunning in the Caribbean is a self-starting business. Runners who wait for Johnsons and fixers to hand them jobs usually find themselves living on the street before long. Runners are expected to research valuable (and illegal) avenues and proactively do the job, then seek out fixers and Johnsons who will recognize the value of their work and help them turn a profit. Instead of being hired by Mr. Johnson through a fixer to extract a corporate scientist, here in the League a shadowrunning team finds out about the rising corporate scientist and extracts him themselves, then works through their network of contacts to find a fixer or Johnson willing to ransom the scientist. At the same time, the runners must watch out for other runners who see an easy route in leeching off another team's success, letting them do the hard work only to stab them in the back later.

A Cast of Thousands

The Caribbean League is full of countless influential characters representing hundreds of interests, from corporations to political parties to terrorist groups and pirate crews. Non-native shadowrunners can find lucrative work assisting one power player in their bids against others, and it is a quick way to increase one's reputation and network of friends (and enemies) in the League. Getting involved in this type of employment pulls the runners into a complex world of temporary allegiances, secret island hideaways, wild Havana nights and posh resorts, war-torn streets and battles at the high seas. Their success and survival is tied to the success and survival of their patron, which ties their lives to the politics of the League.

SMUGGLING AND PIRACY

The Caribbean League's porous borders and complex political landscape make it an ideal base of operations for smugglers and pirates. Smugglers can find lucrative work getting wanted rebels out of Aztlan, running guns up through the Orange Curtain from South Florida to the CAS, or bringing illegally-gathered *telesma* out of the Amazonian rain forest and into Jamaican markets. The popular sea-lanes that ply through Caribbean waters make it a tempting realm for piracy, whether the crew is hijacking an ocean liner traveling to Amazonian resorts or a corporate cargo ship making its way to the Panama Canal Zone. Both the smugglers and pirates utilize the thousands of unmappped and unnamed inlets and coves as hiding places for their loot and spots to lay low from pursuit.

Andros

The island of Andros, despite being the largest in the Bahamas, remains uncivilized and largely off-limits. Efforts to develop the island always suffer from terrible (and often fatal) bad luck, which can be attributed to the high population of free spirits and faerie creatures that visit or make their homes on the island. One reason for their presence are the blue holes, underwater cave systems that twist through the island and local waters, which in some cases are dotted with temporary astral rifts. More than one unfortunate visitor has gone from scuba diving in the blue holes to suddenly projecting into astral space, which is especially dangerous when you leave your body underwater in a confusing twist of tunnels.

Chickcharnies

The chickcharnies are awakened owls that cause no limit of mischief to those who would visit Andros. Chickcharnies appear similar to great horned owls but with very large eyes and a prehensile tail. They are capable of short distance flights and make their homes in the branches of jungle trees deep in the island's interior. Occasionally they find their way to nearby islands, but there is a standing bounty on chickcharnies on other Bahaman islands, which keeps their populations down in those locales. The reason for the bounty is the chickcharnies' fierce territoriality, enforced through its magical powers, which can make life very difficult for anything that lives near them.

B	Q	S	C	I	W	E	R
2	5x2	1	5	3/6	4	6Z	5

INIT: 5+3d6

Attacks: 5L

Powers: Accident, Confusion, Glamour

Notes: The quickness multiplier while the Chickcharnie is flying is 5.

The New Providence Virus

The island of New Providence's quarantine is quite justified since the population of the island has been host to a dangerous new magical virus. The New Providence Virus (NPV), as it is being called, causes an allergic reaction to develop in the victim's aura to the energies of astral space, which can translate to cell damage in the victim's body.

The virus is spread through physical contact, but its 48-hour incubation period makes it hard to notice in carriers before they spread it. After 48 hours, the victim must make an opposed Body Success Test versus the virus' Power, which is typically 5. Three or more successes from the victim means the victim's body defeats the virus and no further checks are necessary. A successful roll with fewer than three successes means the victim must make another roll in 24 hours, but no other effects manifest. If the disease achieves more successes than the victim, the victim begins to develop fatigue symptoms and headaches, and takes 1 box of Stun damage per success the diseased achieved every 12 hours. Once the victim's Stun Condition Monitor fills up, the unconscious victim starts to take Physical damage until death.

No vaccine yet exists for NPV, but aggressive drug treatments can allow the victim an additional roll after they begin to take damage from the virus, which, if successful, can halt further damage, either temporarily (if less than 3 successes) or permanently (if 3 successes or more). NPV is very easy to identify in a victim's aura if the perceiver knows what to look for, requiring only one success on an Astral Perception Test to notice and only 3 to successfully diagnose. However, because it integrates itself in the victim's aura, it is difficult to cure magically, doubling its Infection Power when spells like Cure Disease or Prophylaxis are used against it.

The Black Shallows

The land called the Black Shallows is a dire and desperate place. The debris of ruined villages pokes up through flooded plains, and disease and famine are rampant. But the effect this has had on the astral space in this region is perhaps even more dangerous. The background count in many sections of the Black Shallows reaches levels of 2 to 3, and some of it is aspected towards death magic and summoning of shedim or petro loa. In addition, on some occasions, the Black Shallows have even manifested alchera (*Target: Awakened Lands*, pg. 13) of destroyed villages or other unknown locales.

The Round Square

The Round Square is a popular data haven in the Caribbean League, infamous for its collection of pirate media, from uncensored news reports to the transcripts of speeches given by Yucatan rebels. Any character that has the Round Square data haven as a contact (*Matrix*, pg. 128) receives a -2 reduction to any target numbers in information searches for archived media clips and filings. However, recently the Round Square has come under attack from entities unknown and has suffered from periodic downtimes.

CHILE

The progressive nation of Chile isn't the most pleasant of places to visit, let alone live. Its ambitious attempt to drag itself out of the mire of underdevelopment and corruption have made it one of the fastest growing new economies in the Sixth World—albeit one where the Resource Rush ran its full course unchecked. The price for success has been environmental breakdown and an unstable job market. If that wasn't enough, certain forces are conspiring to avenge the damage done to the land.

GETTING IN/OUT

Chile's border controls on foreign visitors, which differ little from many other South American nations, and the dangerous nature of Chile's ravaged and toxic landscape, means that most travel into and out of the country is done by air and sea. Since the twisted wilderness is seen as deterrent enough for anyone crossing land borders, most of the forces out along the borders are there to keep the Awakened threats in check, so these patrols are appropriately armed to handle such problems.

Virtually anytime anyone is caught by a border patrol, however, they can probably bribe their way out of the situation. The size of the bribe depends on what they are doing, for whom they are working, and how bribe collections have gone that day. The exception to the rule is the country's single international airport in Nuevo Santiago, which sees significant corporate traffic and hence boasts high security levels.

RUNNING IN CHILE

Chile is a nation that is continually at work and is trying to remain so despite all the troubles that surround it. Doing the job is all that matters, whether or not that job is being done via outsourcing thousands of miles away or working after hours to complete an Opus upgrade. Raising one's head from work

NUEVO SANTIAGO AND CHILE POLLUTION TABLE

Every week a Body (4) Test is required for all non-natives regardless of whether they step into the streets or not (only continuous arcology habitat can negate this). GM should use own discretion towards regularity of such tests—as a guideline, exposure to non-urban areas or high levels of activity should adjust this test from weekly to daily.

Failures result in random penalties (2D6) as follows:

Roll Effect

- | | |
|-------|---|
| 2-4 | Mild headache for next 3 hours or until proper environment reached. No game effect. |
| 5-7 | Nausea and severe headache for next 3 hours until treated. Consider as Light Stun damage. |
| 8-9 | A rash and nausea for next 6 hours. Consider as Light Physical damage. |
| 10-11 | Uncontrolled vomiting and muscle pains next 3 hours. Rash develops for next 6 hours. Consider as Light Physical and Moderate Stun damage. Medical attention needed to rectify. |
| 12 | Character suffers Moderate Physical damage and cannot move without aid for next 6 hours. Medical attention required. Henceforth, character must constantly wear protective gear and/or take medication when outside or suffer automatic Light wound every 24 hours. |
| 13* | Anaphylactic shock. Character incapacitated and takes a Light wound every hour until treated. Medical attention needed to stabilize character. Possible long-term damage. Without constant protection, character runs risk of death with re-exposure. |

Body Test Modifiers: Dwarf/Ork (-2), Regular use of Cybernetic/external breathing equipment (-3), Entering scum districts (+2)

*Note: Effects are cumulative and further Body Test failures result in +1 modifier per failure to Effect rolls. Anaphylactic shock only results from continued exposure.

has historically led to bad results, so most people put in their nose filters, ignore the news about the Mapuche and Easter Island and get back to work. Shadowrunners who share that focus will find Chileans are more friendly and willing to help out than if the runners are indiscriminate and treat everything as obstacles rather than understanding the local climate. The rules and people still matter in Chile, and runners that demonstrate respect can get their jobs done a lot easier and more cheaply than those who do not hesitate to stomp on national customs.

Toxicity and Pollution

Neuvo Santiago looks like a toxic cauldron from the air, and if possible the rest of Chile is worse. Foreign runners need to perform Body Tests as outlined below.

Magophobia in Chile

Given the escalating Mapuche threat in the south, Chilean trids and other news media have spread the fear of magic. In Neuvo Santiago, visiting Hermetics and Shamans should take care to keep a very low profile. Public displays of magical power attract the attention of not only the local police, but also other shadowrunning teams hoping to cash in on bounties or simply gain respect. The actual morality of the magical act holds little interest to most people here.

OUTSOURCING

Various software-related corps including NeuroTech Computing, MCT and Renraku have been using outsourced teams to work on what they have been internally calling a quantum leap in Matrix technology. Despite security measures such as breaking down the work into such small components that no one team has any idea precisely what they are working on and using outsourced teams in order to escape detection, each corporation is trying to find a way to grab the others' work. Thus, the outsourcing community has been especially active lately. Several projects have such high security that their systems are completely isolated, requiring a decker's physical presence in Chile in order to recover the paydata.

OPEN SOURCE CENTRAL FORUM

The Open Source movement has been under concerted PR attack, and the Forum pays handsomely in programming skill and custom programs for proof that the corps are bankrolling hostile actions against them. The Forum will occasionally bankroll bodyguard or rescue missions for programmers that are going to release modules that may cut into corporate profits. Usually these are short-term missions, since corporate interest fades once the program has been released and cannot be stopped.

Programming in Opus provides a bonus for some kinds of programs that require stability, such as Bod, but at the same time it raises the difficulty for programs that have high SOTA requirements, such as Attack and Defense utilities. GM discretion is necessary to determine when and if bonuses or minuses should apply. Opus programs have multiple redundancies and backups, along with code modules to interface with virtually

all other known programming languages, so while they may work as fast as other programs, they are on average 50 percent larger. Program base time for upgrading is a minimum of 10 percent of the original base time. However, considering the complexity of the language, multiply the modifier to increase the skill by 1.5.

Programming Language	Bug Test Modifier	Other Effect
Opus	+2	-2 to Glitch table

The Mapuche War Parties

Renraku and Yamatetsu are expending a lot of nuyen to use shadowrunners to keep the threat of Lautaro understated; Renraku hopes to defuse tensions in the Punta Arenas area, while Yamatetsu seeks to relieve pressure of the metahuman community. The reason for this is the Mapuche chief has recently issued an ultimatum that unless all corporate presence leaves soon, he and his tribe will commence a war chant—the implication being that the chant will be a Ghost Dance. Lautaro intended the message to be passed on to other corporations, but Yamatetsu and Renraku kept it to themselves rather than risk panic. Now, as the pressure intensifies, the two mega-corporations are paying top shadowrunners to eradicate the toxic shamans. Unknown is the fact that Lautaro has been trying to initiate a war chant for decades, but the irreparable damage to the land and the inherent madness of his fellow shamans have been too great to overcome, and he has not been able to organize the chant. Shadowrunners wishing to collect the bounty on the Mapuche chief should be well warned that Lautaro could be as dangerous as a toxic Howling Coyote.

Secrets of Easter Island

Easter Island is a nexus of dozens of trapped spirits. The Moai heads generate a powerful astral construct that prevents the spirits from escaping and the newly sprouted Moai along the Chilean coast and neighboring Polynesian islands act to reinforce this barrier. During the Awakening, the Moai activated, but did nothing to prevent the spirits from slaying the island's inhabitants.

The great dragon Lung is interested in finding out more about Moai construction and their possible relation to dragon lines. His interest stems from the fact that Rapa Nui, unlike other volcanic islands in the Pacific, remained untouched by the mana surges of 2061-62. Johnsons working for Lung are setting up research expeditions to study the Moai and their effects on the trapped spirits, as well as seeking to further explore the island. Shadowrunners willing to undertake such a dangerous task will probably have to contact some of the Pacific freebooters that know the safest routes to the island and can pass the leviathan (the sea dragon sometimes accepts powerful foci, not virgins, as toll).



Las Piratas

Riggers wishing to participate should keep in mind the few official rules. They include:

- Vehicle must be able to cross the finish line of under its own power.
- Only one racer to a car (this specific rule makes the race more deadly than others since lone drivers are more vulnerable and subject to fatigue; most race fatalities occur after 36 hours of continuous driving).
- Vehicle wheels must not leave ground for a cumulative total of 10km or more.
- No direct attack is allowed against another vehicle, although any and all weapons are permitted.
- No help is allowed other than in the designated pit stops.
- Racers can yield at any time for immediate evacuation (sponsored by DocWagon, who pick up anyone regardless of contract status, though their service may not be as speedy as it is for those who have it current).

Other than those restrictions, everything is fair game. Entry fees range between seven hundred to a thousand nuyen and racers must usually pass a small qualifying exam in the Atacama beforehand. The race itself usually takes 4 to 5 days to complete. The most physically arduous stretch of the race is the final leg between the city of Valdivia and Purto Montt, while the path past Mount Osorno holds the greatest Awakened hazards. Winners are sailed back to Antofagasta in luxury to be awarded their prize by Mayor Don Francisco. Last race's winner was a little known German elf rigger, Elsa Bugenhagen, who completed the race in a record-setting 3 days, 9 hours and 27 seconds. Elsa has said she will participate again to beat her own record.

ECUADOR

Ecuador is the Ghost Cartels' last stronghold, the country where their power is greatest and, until recently, unquestioned as they ruled both the underworld and the world of politics. With the arrival of a president outside of the Cartels' control, though, things are changing.

GETTING IN/OUT

Tourists mainly arrive through Guayaquil's and Quito's airports. Alternative modes of entry include the Esmeraldas and Guayaquil ports. Getting in legally can be easy if you have some bribe money handy. The ports have less security than the airports, and if you are in town doing business for either the Ghost Cartels or the Syndicate your entry is a lot easier.

Getting in over land is difficult, as the border with Amazonia is patrolled by that country's forces. To the south, recent Shuar incursions into Peruvian territory have created a hornet's nest. Runners can sneak in with a small boat and land on the coast away from major ports. Though the Ecuador navy patrols the coast on a regular basis, they are unable to keep watch on the whole area at once.

RUNNING IN ECUADOR

Currently, there are a lot of runners coming in from outside Ecuador to help with the sudden increase in demand. The current political struggle has meant that the local pool of runners is insufficient, and runners will find that they will be well paid and informed while in Ecuador. Even though there are plenty of politically related runs in Ecuador, security detail, bodyguard duty and smuggling are also in high demand. Runners shouldn't have a problem finding work.

Political Matters

The new president, Fernando Monasterios, and his party are trying to consolidate their victory in the elections of 2062. With elections coming next year, Monasterios has tried to keep his allies out of the spotlight while at the same time bringing to light or fabricating information that casts the Popular Democratic Party of Ecuador in a bad light.

Both sides are working hard to make sure they come out on top during the next election, and shadowrunners seem to be on everybody's shopping list. New businesses are also looking for security against possible attacks from the Cartels. Meanwhile the Cartels are trying to figure out just how much Monasterios has on them and how to best counterattack.

The Shuar have begun incursions into Peruvian territory that could destabilize the region. So far, major conflicts have been avoided, but the natives are increasingly pressuring the government and the military to become involved. If Monasterios throws in military support for the Shuar and begins a full-scale invasion of Peru, things could get ugly fast.

Cultural Diversity

Ecuador is a culturally diverse country, including a variety of native cultures. Runners should see this in the dress that people wear and the general attitude of the people. Ecuadorians are warm, friendly people, and even during business they prefer fun, happy places to conduct their affairs.

Runners shouldn't use this warmth as an excuse to let their guards down. Ecuadorians mean business just as much as any one else. The Shuar and Huaorani Indians are more reserved, and the Huaorani are downright hostile. Most of the country is composed of Mestizos, which are Spanish and Native mix. Ecuadorians are very tolerant of outside cultures and have adapted well to the realities of life after the Awakening.

Island Research

The Galapagos Islands have seen some serious changes since the Comet's passing. The Genesis Consortium might have gotten first crack at researching what the island has to offer, but others are waiting to take a peek. Interested parties include Universal Omnitech and Yamatetsu, but other corporations with biotech interests are not far behind.

Getting on the island is not easy, as there are regular Ecuadorian military patrols. If a runner can get past the patrols, once inside the island he might find giant amphibians, reptiles and cunning birds. The island is going through evolution and de-evolution at the same time, with interesting effects.

Adventure Seeds

The runners are contacted by a Gaspar Velacruz, an appointee to the Supreme Court. He has received several threats on his life from an unknown organization. Gaspar has contacted the runner team to bolster his security and investigate who is threatening him. Velacruz distrusts everyone, and the team had to be hired outside of Ecuador so as to find runners with no ties to the Cartels.

Velacruz already has a security detail provided by the government, which he thinks is working for the Cartels. The security detail is not all on the Cartel's payroll, but there is a mole. There are from three to six total security officers, including the mole. Velacruz has one week till his inauguration—which is also the date for the assassination.

Gamemasters should feel free to throw more twists into the story as the runners dig up information. What could Velacruz be afraid of? What secrets does he have? And more importantly: is it just the Cartels that want him dead?

PERU

Peru is another nation on the verge of collapse due to internal strife among the various power groups. If the precarious balance is upset, without any doubt a war will break out. This will open opportunities, even for parties that have tried to stay one step away from Peru, like Aztlan. Whatever the outcome, it is sure to leave a deep scar on the face of South America.

GETTING IN/OUT

The retreat of the armed forces to protect the cities and Japanese interests has left much of the international border unprotected while at the same time creating virtual borders of government enclaves within the country. International border crossing is quite easy, and this has spawned some major smuggling routes that cross the continent from north to south. Though entering the country might be easy, crossing it is not: insurgents groups and the Shining Path rebels and other raiders are ready to milk hard-working smugglers who run in the area.

The security along the virtual borders is much tighter in order to prevent rebel or terrorist infiltration, though it's nothing that a bribe or a well-doctored SIN will not overcome. The main official entry points (besides a few border checkpoints) are the Jorge Chavez International Airport and the Callao Maritime Terminal. Shadowrunners' preferred entry points are through the Amazonian or Bolivian borders, followed by a cross over the virtual borders by land to reach the cities.

RUNNING IN PERU

The power vacuum left by the retreat of the Japanese Marines has left various restless power groups both eager to fill it and in need of shadowrunners to tilt the scales.

Japanacorps

The Japanacorps, though not completely trustful of their current allies in Peru (the government and the powerful local trade families), are suspicious of the intentions of other rising groups such as the Andes Ahora and are adamant in supporting anyone who opposes the Shining Path or TAF terrorists.

The greatest immediate concern of the Japanacorps is the protection of their assets from internal and external foes. This involves mainly the hiring of runners and mercenaries for the protection of their key personnel and facilities. The volatile political situation has led to greater involvement of the Japanacorps in local politics, in order to ensure that no hostile party seizes power. The Japanacorps are conducting numerous intelligence operations in order to uncover the real motives of local politicians to influence them into supporting their interests; this involves spying, blackmailing and decking.

Besides keeping an eye on the political scene, the Japanacorps still compete with each other, and this involves the usual staple of shadowrunning activity against corporate targets. The rules and recommendations in *Corporate Download* are applicable when running for the Japanacorps.

Trade Families

The instability of the country has also broken the tacit understanding between the trade families regarding their respective interests and spheres of influence, as well as their internal hierarchies. The trade families are initiating runs against each other much more viciously than in previous years in order to undermine their rivals' standing with the Japanacorps. The newer opportunities have opened new ways of operating; an example of this is the Aparicio family, some of whose members have become involved with the Andes Ahora reformists.

Shining Path, TAF and Andes Ahora

Shadowrunners can contact these groups either by working for them or by obtaining their help or support if they can show that their current engagement furthers the organizations' respective goals.

Running for these groups usually involves operating in the countryside or the rainforest, raiding corporate and government facilities, as well as intelligence gathering. Working for or with these groups can be helpful in obtaining specialized Survival and Local knowledge skills.

However, working for these groups, especially the terrorist groups, can become dangerous because of the fanaticism of these organizations and the dim view that the government and the Japanacorps hold for those that work with them.

Aztlan and Amazonia

Aztlan and Amazonia have begun to consider an expansion into the Peruvian rainforest by courting the people of Iquitos into joining their respective countries. Not wishing to provoke an international incident with the Peruvian government nor draw the attention of the Japanacorps, they further their interests through covert operations or through proxies. These activities involve various courses of action, from terrain reconnaissance to counterintelligence. Most notable of the latter is the gathering of information for AmericaTrid, the Aztechology media outlet in Peru.

Biotech and Biopiracy

The frequency with which the scene changes encourages small and independent outfits to perform the illicit activities that spur the area. Bigger entities like the Ghost Cartels, different corps or Tamanous have noticed the economic potential of this area and seek to reap the benefits of the locals' work. Shadowrunners should find this environment very stimulating to perform activities on their own initiative, like smuggling pirate bioware to the first world and selling it at several times its value, or taking the latest stolen prototype to this safe haven to start commercializing it.

The lack of regulations has allowed for the development of a booming business in biotech bootlegging, cheap bioware and cyberware. This make wares and professional assistance in their installation readily available for shadowrunners, though, because of that, the quality of the products and services received are dubious.

Characters looking for a clinic through the appropriate channels receive a -2 modifier to Medical Search Tests (see p. 143, *Man & Machine*). These clinics have a Base Rating 2 points lower than those given in the Medical Ratings Table, and gamemasters should also subtract 2 points when determining the skill of the attending biotechnician. Any wares installed in this pirate haven are 30 percent cheaper than normal, including hospitalization costs. At the gamemaster's discretion, the installed wares can come with stress points or nastier surprises. New equipment can be affected also, given the unknown origin of the products.

CARACAS

Caracas is a Caribbean siren, luring people with promises of untold wealth and sordid vices but killing them before they see it for what it really is: a monument to human misery.

GETTING IN/OUT

Foreign visitors usually arrive through the Simon Bolivar International Airport or the port of La Guaira. Though tourists only have to show a few papers to enter Caracas and enjoy its many vices, runners can skip even those lax requirements by paying the *pacos* (cops) a small fee for their time.

Caracas' land borders are a much tougher option. The UNAF's Blue Helmets have patrolled them since 2049, watching for any sign of renewed Amazonian expansionism.

RUNNING IN CARACAS

This city is rotten to the core. Period. Most people who living in Caracas have an everyone-for-himself attitude, the result of enduring years of neglect and living on the wrong end of Amazonia's and Aztlan's struggle. Gamemasters should ensure that even the most jaded runners feel disturbed by Caracas' bleakness.



Up ...

The ruling elite has survived everyone and everything so far, with no sign of giving up. The old money families are infested with intrigues, petty feuds and decadent vices, but they still pull the strings in the city. Foreign powers know this and are more than eager to please the elite if it means maintaining a free hand in their operations.

... and down

Crime and barely legal activities keep Caracas' economy up and running, so it's a given that everyone wants a slice of these large pies. Though the Cartels lead the pack, the city's underworld is big enough to host several other players, like Tamanous organleggers and Caribbean pirates. Alliances and turf wars come and go, but it is entirely possible that there is a "gentlemen's agreement" among the organizations regarding Caracas, especially when it comes to the port of La Guaira.

Daddy's Little Girl

The runners are hired to find a VIP's missing daughter, who vanished while in Caracas' nightclubs. A deep investigation into Caracas' sordid underground reveals that the daughter was drugged and taken to a shadow clinic, where she was modified as a bunraku meat doll. To make things worse, the girl was sold to a member of one of Caracas' ruling families. The runner must discreetly find out who owns her and where she is before someone else hears about it and decides to use her as leverage against her father.

FRENCH GUIANA

A final outpost of European colonialism in a land grown strange, where every shadow holds a secret along with someone willing to sell it—or kill to keep it.

GETTING IN/OUT

Semi-ballistics from Europe and North America enter French Guiana through the Cayenne-Rochambeau International Airport, while intercontinental flights are handled by a half-dozen private corporate airports. Commercial passenger and cruise ships dock at Cayenne for supplies, sightseeing and bringing new crewmembers and passengers aboard. French Guiana's navigable rivers and twisted coastline make it a smuggler's paradise, provided boats stay away from the patrols around Kourou and Cayenne. Overland travel through the interior is nearly impossible without magical assistance.

Space travel is by far the costliest and most difficult transportation to obtain in French Guiana, but the frequency of passenger launches out of Kourou and Devil's Island is greater than anywhere else in Latin America. For the right price and with the right friends, you could go almost anywhere.

RUNNING IN FRENCH GUIANA

Spying. Smuggling. Time to play the game, chummers. French Guiana may be small, but there's more than enough wealth and goodies for those few who know how to get their hands it.

High Tech

From Proteus AG's latest aquatech to Novatech's latest matrixware, French Guiana is a hive of postmodern technology. Corporate scientists work on mainframes to reprogram nanite factories in low-earth orbit while security riggers monitor the Ares MP Laser III emplacements. Even the spies bring their best gear, afraid of being shown up.

Low Life

The space industry in Kourou consumes state-of-the-art materials in vast quantities, and all of it eventually trickles down to the street. Runners shouldn't be surprised to find shanties in Cayenne built around discarded lunar modules, or gangers sprouting cyberware that was delta-grade a few owners ago.

Star-Crossed Lovers

The runners are hired to track down and apprehend one of CrossCorp's Seraphim agents in Kourou. The agent, code-named Anael, was supposed to extract a female astronaut from rival Saeder-Krupp but has been out of touch for over a month. The runners, after a little old-fashioned legwork and Matrix searching, draw a bead on their quarry as he tries to quietly slip out of Kourou, along with the female astronaut, who's three months pregnant and beginning to show. As the star-crossed lovers are pinned down by a Saeder-Krupp security team, it's up to the runners to step in and save the day.

PARAGUAY

Paraguay uses magic and advanced envirotech to create an unstable balance between nature and economic growth. This theme should show up whenever possible: vegetation growing on every corner of Paraguay's cities, spirits doing mundane work and the occasional disaster to remind runners the ecological balance could easily collapse. The ecologically-minded Paraguayans can feel a bit alien to runners, but the immigrant neighborhoods in Asunción and Ciudad del Este can provide them with a more conventional setting to find contacts and base their operations.

GETTING IN/OUT

A tourist visa is enough for runners who want to enter Paraguay with legitimate business; a simple background ID check is required. Asunción has a large international airport, and there are rail connections with the surrounding countries. Border officials usually select suspicious-looking travelers for "random" contraband checks, and they're tough to bribe; clean-looking runners with little luggage will get through customs easily.

Illegal entry is harder. The borders of Paraguay are heavily guarded both by spirits and electronic surveillance. Rapid-reaction border patrols are heavily armed and have powerful magic backup, including at least one shaman and several nature spirits. This security setup also protects the natural reserves and green corridors inside Paraguay. A safer approach is to use one of the existing smuggling routes controlled by the Cachoeira Cartel, which takes advantage of their contact network around Ciudad del Este.

CHECKPOINT VERIFICATION TABLE

Nation	Verification System Rating
Argentina	4
Aztlan	5
Bolivia	2
Caracas	2
Caribbean League	1
Bahamas	1
Borinquen	1
Cuba	4
Dominican Territories	1
Haiti	2
Jamaica	1
Sovereign South Florida	2
Trinidad	3
Chile	5
French Guiana	2
Paraguay	3
Peru (International Ports)	6
Peru	3

RUNNING IN PARAGUAY

Runs in Paraguay can either involve the envirotech being developed by the corps or be part of the broader conflicts in South America. Quick plots can be based on Yamatetsu's weird (and dangerous) research projects sponsored by Yasy Yateré or the ongoing war between Genesis and Shiawase. The latter situation can be expanded into a longer campaign by exploring the links with the conflict between Argentina and Amazonia for a foothold in Paraguay. Shiawase has links with the Argentinean-backed Paraguayan conservatives and might support their attempts to turn Paraguay into introduce a proper capitalist nation.

Run Ideas

The runners are hired to smuggle a tanker with bioengineered bacteria into Paraguay. This is a plot by the conservative leader Marcos Morínigo: he plans to attack the tanker while it's deep inside a natural preserve, which would be a considerable blow to Paraguay's ecological balance. To survive, the runners must fight the ambush and discover the traitor in the tanker's crew. If they can't stop the attack, they'll have to avoid Paraguayan police and bounty hunters, perhaps while gathering enough info on Morínigo's plot to blackmail him into paying a compensation for the runner's troubles.

YUCATAN

One of the most ravaged and war-torn corners of the Sixth World, the newly autonomous state of Yucatán is wracked by birth pains: dark suspicions have followed in the wake of the unexpected peace; rebel commanders remain at large targeting Aztlaner assets and the "collaborator" government; the

UNAUTHORIZED BORDER CROSSING TABLE

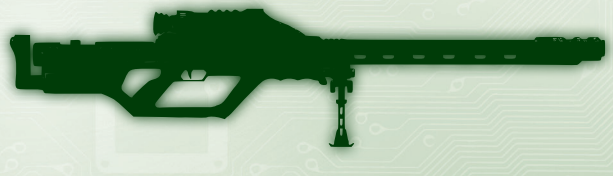
Nation	Sensor	Flux	ECCM	ECD	NPC/Pro. Rating
Amazonia	3	6	3	2	Inferior/2
Argentinian border	6	6	4	4	Equal/3
Aztlaner border	8	10	5	5	Superior/3
Argentina	6	8	3	2	Equal/2
Amazonian border	8	8	5	4	Equal/4
Amazonia/Uruguay border	9	6	5	4	Equal/3
Paraguayan border	7	8	5	4	Equal/2
Aztlan	7	9	6	4	Equal/3
Pueblo Border	8	10	6	6	Superior/4
CAS Border	8	10	6	6	Superior/4
Amazonian Border	8	10	6	6	Superior/4
Bolivia	5	7	3	—	Inferior/3
Caracas	6	7	5	3	Equal/3
Caribbean League (sea borders)	3	5	—	—	Inferior/2
Island of Cuba	7	8	5	3	Equal/3
Island of Haiti	5	6	—	—	Inferior/2
Sovereign South Florida	6	6	3	2	Equal/2
Trinidad	6	6	4	—	Equal/2
Chile	7	8	3	3	Equal/2
French Guiana	3	4	3	—	Inferior/2
Paraguay	7	9	5	5	Superior/3
Peru	6	8	4	3	Equal/2
Amazonian border	2	6	—	—	Equal/4
Bolivian border	3	6	—	—	Equal/3
Chilean border	5	8	3	2	Equal/2
Ecuadorean border	6	8	5	4	Equal
Pacific Ocean border	6	8	5	4	Equal

jungles remain an Awakened battleground for constant clashes between toxic and natural forces; and medical aid still needs to reach the inland townships besieged by disease.

The Yucatán offers an immense variety of potential opportunities for all campaign types. Whether it's mercenary ops on behalf of the new government, sinister political intrigue or magical investigations into the Spirit War, this troubled nation has something for everyone. Will it grow into its own or is it destined to become a mere client state of Aztlan?

Thanks to the peace settlement, access is significantly easier (or as easy as it gets in Aztlan) and Mérida airport has been rebuilt to accommodate international flights. Border security is lax (except land entry into Aztlan), but the Pobre government frowns on the potential mischief of foreigners bringing more miltech and weaponry into the country.

Gamemasters may wish to consult the *Year of the Comet*, *Target: Wastelands*, *Dragons of the Sixth World* and *Loose Alliances* sourcebooks for additional information on players and events leading up to the current Yucatán situation.



Grim Prospects

The most murky and possibly most important issue in Yucatán in 2064 is exactly where governor Pobre's true allegiance lies. While his place as public figurehead of *Llama de la Libertad* won him the governor's seat, the whole process is shrouded in suspicion and skepticism. Has he remained faithful to the Flame's cause and recovered from his difficulties? Has Aztechnology, or the forces behind it, preyed on his weakened state and swayed or corrupted him to their side? Has he fallen in with the now-out-of-favor blood mages of the Gesalt? Why did he turn on his fellow feathered serpent Dzitbalchen?

MATRIX RTGS

Nation	Security	Access	Control	Index	Files	Slave
Amazonia (SA/AM)	Green-4	7	10	8	7	5
Metropole	Green-5	8	10	8	9	5
Manaus	Orange-5	9	14	9	12	6
Argentina (SA/ARG)	Green-4	8	9	7	7	6
Buenos Aires	Orange-5	8	12	8	9	6
Aztlan (CA/AZ)						
Baja California (BA)	Orange-3	8	8	5	7	7
Central (CE)	Red-3	8	9	6	7	7
North (NO)	Red-5	9	9	7	8	8
South (SU)	Red-5	9	9	7	8	8
Yucatan (YU)	Red-4	9	8	7	7	7
Bolivia (SA/BO)	Blue-2	3	3	3	3	3
Caracas (SA/CR)	Green-4	6	8	6	6	5
Caribbean League (CA/CL)						
Bahamas (BAH)	Green-5	7	6	6	8	6
Borinquen (BO)	Green-3	6	7	6	6	6
Cuba (CU)	Orange-3	8	8	7	8	7
Haiti (HA)	Green-4	6	7	6	7	6
Jamaica (JAM)	Green-3	6	7	6	6	6
South Florida (FLA)	Green-3	6	7	6	6	6
Trinidad (TR)	Orange-3	7	8	6	7	6
Chile (SA/CH)	Green-5	8	10	8	8	5
Neuvo Santiago	Orange-5	9	12	9	9	7
French Guiana (EU/FR/FG)	Orange-4	7	8	9	8	8
Paraguay (SA/PG)	Green-5	5	6	5	6	6
Peru (SA/PE)	Orange-4	8	7	7	7	7
Lima	Orange-5	12	10	8	9	8
Iquitos (SA/IQ)	Red-4	10	8	7	9	7

The answers will inevitably shape the future of the Yucatán, and as such the questions represent riddles that a number of interest parties would pay handsomely to see solved. Whether running for conflicting political factions, megacorporate intelligence or magic think-tanks, players can easily get involved in the mysteries behind the new Yucatán ruler.

Spirit Conflict

Despite the changes to the human conflict, the Spirit War rages on in the jungle interior of Yucatán, indiscriminately savaging innocents and enemies and sometimes spilling into the edges of the sprawls. The belief that the toxic faction unleashed the mysterious disease which still ravages the human population as a desperate last-ditch offensive doesn't seem to have been borne out, as the land and tropical forest appears to continue to viciously shift hands, and although the re-growth has slowed, it continues.

While envoys from groups such as the DIMR, the Astral Preservation Society and even Mother Earth have tried to parley with elements of both factions, most contacts have proven fruitless if not deadly. Part of the problem has been outsiders lack an understanding of what both forces fundamentally want out of the conflict. Uncovering those motives is a dangerous and challenging mission for even the most hardened runners and mercs, but one with handsome rewards.

The Yucatán tropical jungles are in constant flux. The background is equally unstable, ranging from 1 to 4, becoming aspected towards either toxic magic or nature magic when in the proximity of the ever-changing toxic domains and natural power sites.



SLANG TERMS

Jamaican Slang

Alias — adj. Dangerous, violent.

Babylon — n. The corrupt establishment (usually the government, police, or megacorps).

Bwai — n. A bold man, usually one who has committed a crime.

A complimentary and friendly term among shadowrunners and pirates.

Bag-o-Wire — n. Mr. Johnson. Connotation denotes someone who you believe will betray you.

Balmy — n. A magician.

Bandulu — n. Shadowrunner. "Bandulu bizness" is shadowrunning.

Bobo — n. A fool. Derogatory term among shadowrunners and pirates.

Coil — n. Money.

Cris — adj. State of the art or brand new.

General — n. Someone who knows everyone and can get anything.

Usually used for fixers.

Manners — n. Serious discipline. Example:

"Aztechnology brings out da heavy manners."

Salt — adj. Broke or low on funds.

Teeth — n. Bullets

Teif — n. Thief, adj. To steal

Uptown — adj. To be corporate affiliated.

Creole Slang

Coozan/Coozine (masculine/feminine) — n. Literally means "cousin."

Friendly term, usually used among shadowrunners.

Laid Out — adj. Dead or marked for death.

Rag Picker — n. The poor or SINless.

Shack Bully — n. A person in charge. Often used for a fixer or Mr. Johnson.

Mexican Slang

Cabrón — n. A person with power.

Cholo/Chola (masculine/feminine) — n. A Mexican criminal, often used to describe Mexican shadowrunners or gang members.

Ese — n. Mexican form of "chummer." Sometimes used as a greeting.

Indios — n. Slang term for Aztlan Amerindians.

Jefe — n. "Boss." Often used to address Mr. Johnsons.

La onda — n. Style or customary way of doing things

Ni Madres — "Yeah Right." (sarcastic)

Pocho — adj. Anything traditionally Mexican which has been commercialized or appropriated for use by Aztechnology corp-culture.

Rasquache — adj. Anything that is thrown together, cheap, or jury-rigged.

Rifa — adj. The best

Sofflon — n. Snitch, informant



SHADOWS OF LATIN AMERICA

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