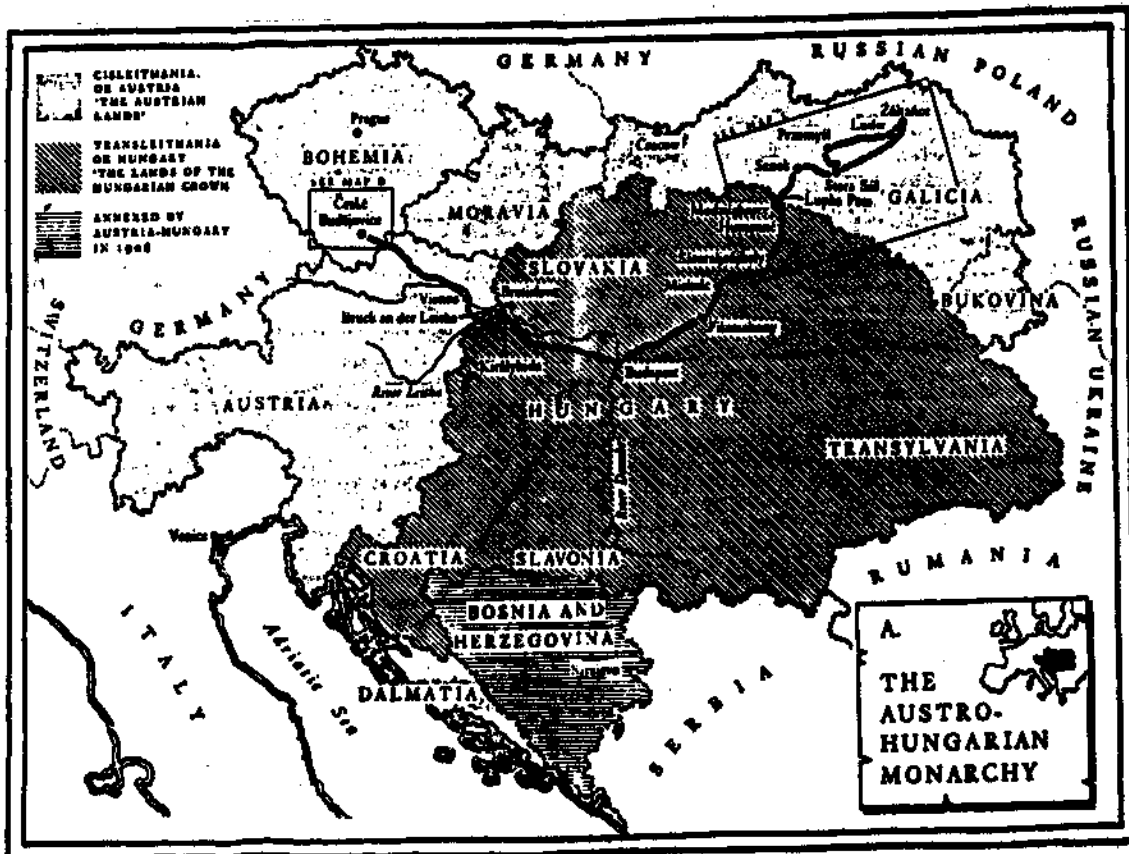


GRAUSTARK

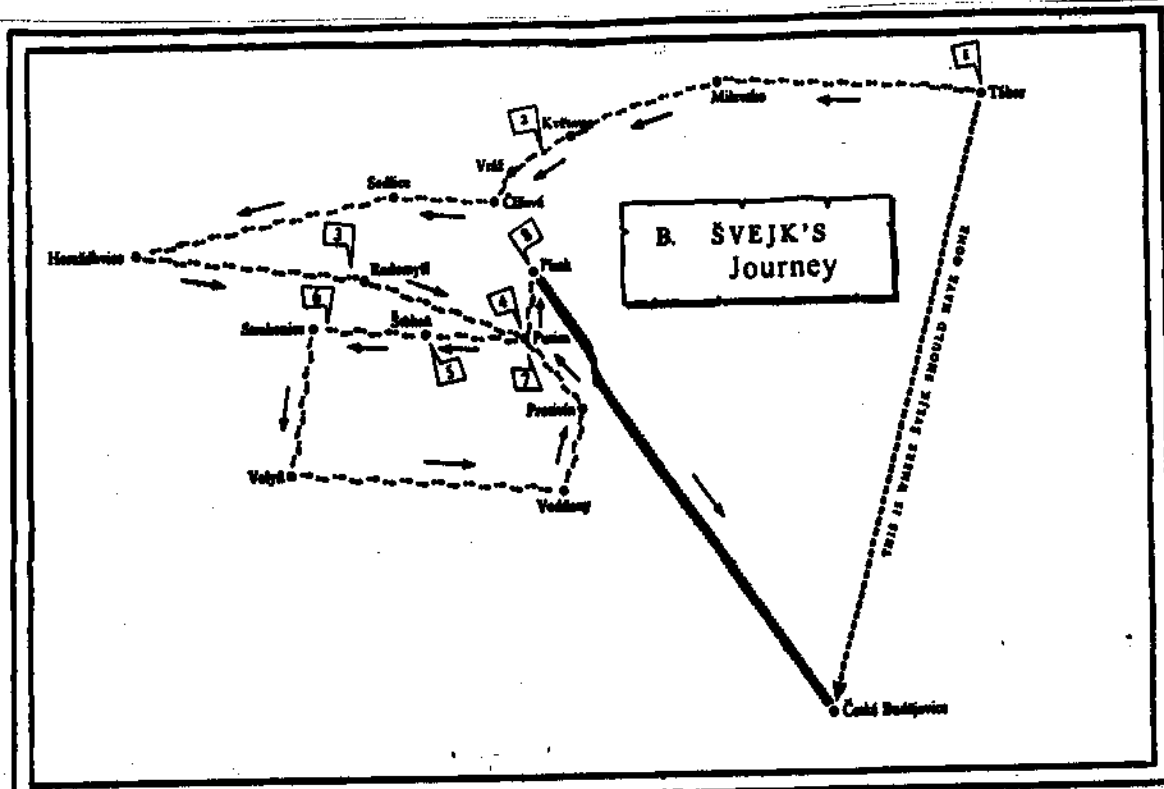
#762

2002A, "Winter 1910"; 2002D, "Fall 1906"; 2004C, "Fall 1902"

5 February 2005



———— SVEJK'S JOURNEY WITH HIS REGIMENT TO THE FRONT



US Election 2004

Results listed by average IQ

LIST	STATE	AVERAGE POPULATION IQ	PRESIDENT ELECT
1	Connecticut	113	John Kerry
2	Massachusetts	111	John Kerry
3	Hawaii	111	John Kerry
4	New York	109	John Kerry
5	Rhode Island	107	John Kerry
6	Hawa	106	John Kerry
7	Maryland	105	John Kerry
8	New Hampshire	105	John Kerry
9	Illinois	104	John Kerry
10	Delaware	103	John Kerry
11	Maine	102	John Kerry
12	Vermont	102	John Kerry
13	Washington	102	John Kerry
14	California	101	John Kerry
15	Puerto Rico	101	John Kerry
16	Monte	100	John Kerry
17	Virginia	100	George Bush
18	West Virginia	100	John Kerry
19	Colorado	99	George Bush
20	Iowa	99	George Bush
21	Michigan	99	John Kerry
22	Nebraska	99	George Bush
23	Utah	99	George Bush
24	Oregon	99	John Kerry
25	Alaska	98	George Bush
26	Florida	98	George Bush
27	Massach	98	George Bush
28	Florida	98	George Bush
29	Delaware	98	George Bush
30	Arizona	98	George Bush
31	Indiana	98	George Bush
32	Idaho	98	George Bush
33	North Carolina	97	George Bush
34	West Virginia	97	George Bush
35	Arkansas	97	George Bush
36	Georgia	97	George Bush
37	Kentucky	97	George Bush
38	New Mexico	97	George Bush
39	North Dakota	97	George Bush
40	Iowa	97	George Bush
41	Alabama	96	George Bush
42	Tennessee	96	George Bush
43	Minnesota	96	George Bush
44	Ohio	96	George Bush
45	South Dakota	96	George Bush
46	South Carolina	96	George Bush
47	Wyoming	96	George Bush
48	Idaho	97	George Bush
49	Utah	97	George Bush
50	Mississippi	85	George Bush

The IQ numbers were originally attributed to the book 'IQ and the Wealth of Nations', though they do not appear in the current edition. The tests and data were administered via the Raven's APT, and the Test Agency, one of the UK's leading publishers and distributors of psychometric tests. This data has been published in the Economist and the St. Petersburg Times, though this does not mean it should be taken as fact.

THE MINISTRY OF MISCELLANY

Today's terror alert color code is Ribbon Yellow, profitable to its manufacturers and indicative of complete uncritical brainless support for anything Bush the Son chooses to do.

*

Graustark is the Very First bulletin for the postal play of Diplomacy. It is published every fourth Saturday by John Boardman, 234 East 19th Street, Brooklyn, NY 11226-5302. Diplomacy is a board game of negotiation and conflict for the period of World War I. It was designed by Allan B. Calhmer and is now published by Hasbro. Another new postal Diplomacy game is now being organized in Graustark, at a game fee of \$35. (For Canadian and Mexican addresses the game fee is \$50, and for other foreign addresses it is \$100 or 75 euros in cash.) This game fee includes a subscription to Graustark for as long as the game lasts, whether or not you are eliminated. With your game fee send in a list of the countries you'd like to play, in your order of preference, and I'll try to put you as close to the top of that list as I can. If you do not already have the postal rules for Diplomacy, which were last published in Graustark #749, let me know when you send in your game fee, and I'll send you a copy.

This is
O At
P Great
E Intervals
R This
A Appears
T To
I Inflamm
O Optic
N Nerves

Graustark subscriptions for non-players are 10 issues for \$15 for U. S. addresses, and \$40 or 30 euros for others. Back issues as available are 10 issues for \$5 for U. S. addresses. To foreign addresses, back issues have the same price as for foreign subscriptions. # 2104

Players who phone in their moves should call me at 718-693-1579 or 718-951-5808, extension 2. There are answering machines which can take your moves if I'm out. I do not have an e-mail address.

I want to again remind players that the U. S. Postal "Service" is not capable of reliably getting mail here in less than a week. Please take this into account in sending in your moves. If, a few times, your moves have arrived here by mail in less than a week, do not assume that this will always be the case.

Graustark readers who are interested in postal games which don't run here, are invited to write to the publishers of 'zines with which I trade, and ask what game openings they have. For their addresses, see all the readers indicated by "(T)" for "trade" in the Graustark Directory on pp. 10-11. Several of these publishers run a wide variety of postal games.

*

The front cover of this issue of Graustark shows two maps which come from Sir Cecil Parrott's translation of Jaroslav Hašek's novel *The Good Soldier Švejk and His Fortunes in the Great War*. They were reprinted in the program book of a recent Broadway production of Colin Teevan's *Švejk*, which I reviewed in Graustark #760.

In addition to being one of the seven powers of the Diplomacy board, the Austro-Hungarian Empire was the most fantastic polity ever turned loose in the world by human ingenuity, compromise, and inertia. It seems to have been an empire that was created by fits and starts over several centuries, mainly for the purpose of undergoing a spectacular collapse the first time it was subjected to the strain of a major war and at least a dozen mutually hostile nationalistic movements among its people. Its former territories are now divided among no fewer than twelve nations. As two of Hašek's characters, Czech soldiers in the Austro-Hungarian army during World War I, agreed, "A monarchy as idiotic as this ought not to exist at all."

*

Also in this issue as p. 2 are the data I cited in #761, about average IQs in the fifty states correlated with which ones voted for Kerry and which ones for Bush. They are reprinted from Jim Burgess's *The Abyssinian Prince* #286. And pp. 15-16 carry information about the revival of the military draft, which was vigorously denied by President Bush during the campaign but without which he will be unable to carry out his military policies against the so-called "Axis of Evil": Iraq, Iran, and North Korea. (Since he has already invaded and conquered one of them, what do you suppose he intends to do to the other two?)

In addition, beginning on p. 6 are reviews of the latest books in each of the three series of murder mysteries set in ancient Rome, which I have been reviewing in these pages over the past several years.

*

During World War II, a popular radio drama was *Alias John Freedom*. Its hero was an American agent who traveled through Axis-occupied Europe, helping and working with resistance movements against the occupying powers. In those years, Americans were taught that collaborating with an enemy army of occupation was a monstrously evil thing, that resistance movements against foreign troops were good, and that collaborationists thoroughly deserved the unpleasant things that happened to them during and after the war.

The resistance movements, or "partisans" or "guerrillas" as they were often called, sometimes made major kills against their countries' enemies. Best known was the 1942 assassination of Reinhard Heydrich in Czechoslovakia. French partisans assassinated Philippe Henroit, a member of the cabinet of the collaborationist "Vichy" government, and a retired Dutch general who supported the Nazis was also assassinated by partisans. Accounts could not be settled with some of them until after the war. Chief among these was Vidkun Qvisling, a Norwegian who gave his name to the whole class of collaborationists. Others were Knut Hamsun (a Nobel Laureate in literature) in Norway, Pierre Laval and Henri-Philippe Pétain in France, Konrad Henlein and Father Josef Tiso in Czechoslovakia, Anton Mussert in the Netherlands, Bishop Nicolae Malaxa in Romania, Andrei Vlasov and several other generals from the Soviet Union, and Ante Pavelić, Andrija Artuković, and Draža Mihajlović in Yugoslavia. After the war they were all executed except for Henlein, who committed suicide, Pétain and Hamsun (who were regarded as too old and senile to be responsible), Pavelić (who fled to Argentina and was hunted down and mortally wounded in 1959), Malaxa and Artuković (who fled to safety in the United States and were able to pass themselves off as persecuted anti-Communists), and Mussert, who was sentenced to a long prison term.

Now once again a nation is struggling against a powerful foreign army of occupation, and local collaborationists have surfaced to do the will of that army. But right and wrong have not changed. It is inconceivable that such Iraqi collaborationists as Ahmed Chalabi and Iyad Allawi will, or should, die natural deaths.

(continued on p. 12)

PLEASE STAND BY

I am willing to take over games that have been abandoned by their game masters. So if you are a postal game master who is no longer able to publish, or if you are a player in a postal game of regular Diplomacy that has gone for two or three months without a move being published, please get in touch with the Orphan Games Director, Michael Lowrey. (See p. 11 for his address.) If the game is to continue in Graustark, I would need the addresses of all active players, the current position, and a list of who owns which supply centers. If subscription money can be passed along to me, fine. Otherwise I will ask players to join a new game in Graustark, or to subscribe to Graustark if they do not already do so. Players who resign or drop out can be replaced by Graustark stand-by players.

Stand-by players are always needed for postal Diplomacy games in Graustark. If you volunteer as a stand-by, you may be called upon whenever a current player misses a move. If you send in moves for that country for the next turn, and the present player does not, you will take over play of that position. No game fee will be asked, though you should keep your subscription current, or enroll in a new Graustark game. No stand-by will be called upon in a game in which he or she has already played.

Stand-by volunteers who are willing to take on additional games of postal Diplomacy are listed below. A stand-by player who is already playing in a Graustark game are indicated by "*". If you wish your name added to or removed from this list, please let me know.

Hank Alme
John R. Biehl
Michael Neal

Michael Quirk*
Eric Verheiden*
Fred Wiedemeyer*

PATRIOTISM - XXXVI

- PATRIOTISM is the principal cause of war.
- PATRIOTISM is the unprincipled cause of war.
- PATRIOTISM is a new "security" program that treats foreign visitors like criminal suspects, requiring them to be fingerprinted and photographed.
- PATRIOTISM is Arnold Ahlert's vigorous defense of the use of torture in interrogating "terrorism" suspects, in a signed editorial in the *New York Post*.
- PATRIOTISM is canceling the visas of four Yemenis so they cannot come to America and testify in the defense of a Yemeni sheikh accused of terrorism.
- PATRIOTISM is a study by Pennsylvania State University for the U. S. Marine Corps, which recommends spiking water supplies with Ecstasy or firing rubber bullets filled with Zoloft at enemies. (What's Farsi for "Just say no!"?)
- PATRIOTISM is the refusal of the superior officers of Corporal Charles Graner to testify whether they had, as he claimed, given him orders to maltreat prisoners in Iraq.
- PATRIOTISM is the explanation made by Guy Womack, Corporal Graner's attorney, of those photographs which showed naked prisoners stacked in a pyramid in Abu Ghraib Prison. It seems that this was no worse than pyramids of cheerleaders. (How odd. My grandson, who was a cheerleader in high school, never told me that they performed in the nude or on leashes?)
- PATRIOTISM is Corporal Graner handing out bibles to Iraqis, a fact mentioned in his defense.
- PATRIOTISM is Corporal Graner's refusal to apologize for, or to regret, his treatment of his prisoners, even as he sat at his trial with, in effect, a presidential pardon in his pocket.
- PATRIOTISM is the many phone calls received by Corporal Graner's wife, calling him a hero.
- PATRIOTISM is bugging an Iraqi prisoner with a wooden stick at Adhamiya Palace, in Baghdad. (Neil A. Lewis, *New York Times*, 25 January 2005)
- PATRIOTISM is applying electric shocks to the genitals of prisoners at Adhamiya Palace. (*Ibid.*)
- PATRIOTISM is the refusal of Army spokeshing Lt. Col. Pamela Hart to discuss any of numerous specific reports of torture at Adhamiya Palace. (*Ibid.*)
- PATRIOTISM is the insistence of federal prosecutor Patrick J. Fitzgerald on access to the telephone records of two *New York Times* reporters on the actions of Islamic charities. (Adam Liptak, *New York Times*, 20 January 2005)
- PATRIOTISM is the decision by a federal judge that police may attach Global Positioning System devices to cars without a warrant. (*New York Daily News*, 20 January 2005)
- PATRIOTISM is arresting a 17-year-old boy, and ordering his family off a flight, because in his luggage inspectors found a note which, in very strong language, correctly asserted that there were no bombs in it. He was nevertheless arrested for making a "bomb threat". (*Playboy*, January 2004, with thanks to Mark Blackman)
- PATRIOTISM is the refusal of Alexander Bulay, a theater owner in New Paltz, NY, to show *Fahrenheit 9/11* in his theaters.
- PATRIOTISM is the objection Ray Bradbury to the title of *Fahrenheit 9/11*, claiming that it infringes the title of his book *Fahrenheit 451*. *Fahrenheit 451* is an eloquent plea against censorship, a fact whose irony Bradbury obviously did not appreciate.
- PATRIOTISM is the widespread belief that "terrorists" were going to try to disrupt the 2004 presidential election.
- PATRIOTISM is the widespread belief that "terrorists" were going to try to disrupt the 2005 inauguration of President Bush.
- PATRIOTISM is the continued belief that "terrorists" are a menace to America despite the complete failure of these alleged menaces to materialize.
- PATRIOTISM is "U. S. commandos...hunting for secret nuclear and chemical weapons sites and other targets in Iran, and have a plan to turn the hard-line Islamic country into the next front in the war on terrorism." (James Gordon Meek, *New York Daily News*, 17 January 2005)
- PATRIOTISM is the attitude of the Pentagon adviser who called Iran "a global free fire zone". (*Ibid.*)
- PATRIOTISM is the principal cause of war.

ROMAN LAW

John Maddox Roberts, *SPQR VIII: The River God's Vengeance* (2004, St. Martin's Press, NY; \$24) For reviews of the seven previous books in this series, see Graustarks ##600, 614, 708, 740 and 758.

Steven Saylor, *The Judgment of Caesar* (2004, St. Martin's, NY; \$25) For reviews of the nine previous books in this series, see Graustarks ##605, 628, 634, 655, 663, 671, 701, 714 and 747.

Lindsey Davis, *The Accusers* (2004, Mysterious Press, NY; \$25) For reviews of the fourteen previous books in this series, see Graustarks ##606, 608, 639, 641, 654, 671, 683, 706, 717, 731, 745, and 759.

Before you start *SPQR VIII: The River God's Vengeance*, turn to pp. 159-160 for a brief explanation by its hero, Senator Decius Caecilius Metellus Junior, of the early history of Rome. It will differ greatly from the tidy patriotic myths of Titus Livius, which I once studied in the original Augustan Age Latin, and it will be far closer to the reality as disclosed by less famous historians and the archaeological evidence.

There is another cogent observation on pp. 122-123, when Decius and his wife Julia, the (fictitious) niece of Julius Caesar, are discussing the possibility that his large and influential family, the Caecilii Metelli, might transfer their allegiance in Rome's factional struggles from Caesar to Pompey. But Decius fears that Julius Caesar, now absent conquering Gaul, might take exception to Pompey's plans, and bring his army back to Rome to do something about it. Julia protests: "Caesar will never take up arms against Rome." Decius sagely replies, "Nobody ever takes up arms against Rome. Every would-be Alexander claims to be the savior of the Republic. The other man is the one with ambitions to be tyrant..." The current American obsession with "homeland security" at the expense of our civil liberties is an excellent illustration of this principle. A conflict is now shaping up, between people who believe that civil liberties are why we have this country, and people who believe that civil liberties are 18th-century notions that make it difficult to govern a nation efficiently.

The River God's Vengeance begins with Decius hard at work as an aedile, one of Rome's city managers, in charge of keeping the city's infrastructure in order. Aediles also had to sponsor the gladiatorial games and other theatrical performances which kept the populace happy, and since the official outlay for this purpose was far too small, the aediles had to pay for these games. This was often ruinously expensive, which put all but the richest aediles deeply into debt, but it was necessary if they hoped to have the public support that would eventually get them elected to higher offices. Decius's plans for an entertainment at the new Aemilian Theater are interrupted when he has to examine the sudden collapse of an apartment block, which kills many people including the very unpleasant newly-rich couple who owned the building.

Decius's investigation, pursued with the indispensable help and the dispensable wise-ass remarks of his slave Hermes, uncovers a pattern of corruption in the building trades, involving the use of green or rotten lumber and the bribery of the officials responsible for supervising the construction and demolition of buildings. And as if this weren't enough, a warning that Decius received from observant Tiber River boatmen in the previous book becomes critical. The subsidiary sewers that empty into the famous *Cloaca Maxima* have not been properly cleaned for years, they have become badly clogged, and the next year of heavy rains will cause them to back up and flood the low-lying parts of the city with indescribably filthy flood waters.

This gives Decius major problems with his games. Careful inspection shows that the Aemilian Theater was built with no foundations and shoddy materials, under the direction of Marcus Aemilius Scaurus, a corrupt and shifty ex-consul. Since it is situated on the bank of the Tiber, the potential exists that a major disaster could occur during Decius's games.

As if this weren't enough, a family council of the Caecilii Metelli is called; Decius finds them waiting for him when he comes home from these investigations. The deterioration of the Roman Republic has reached the point where the year's elections had been called into dispute with no one installed as head of the government, a situation which we seem to be rapidly approaching here. Instead of two elected consuls, Rome is governed as a temporary expedient by an appointed official called an *interrex*. (This

and other Roman offices and customs are thoroughly explained in a detailed glossary at the end of the book.) Street brawls among the bully boys of the political factions have become so bad that the aristocracy thinks it has to put a strong man in power, with extensive authority to preserve law and order. This is a deceptively simple solution that frequently occurs to aristocracies during troubled times, and it almost always leads to disaster. (Look at what happened when Germany tried it in 1933.) Caesar is commanding an army in Gaul, and Crassus is commanding an army against Parthia, and military disaster may remove either or both of them, so Pompey is the "logical" choice. Apparently the news of Crassus's disastrous defeat and death in Parthia has not yet reached Rome. (Many years later, some of the surviving Roman soldiers were found in central Asia, unsuccessfully defending Hunnish cities against a Chinese army under a Korean general. Those who survived that war were settled in Gansu province, where the people still show ruddy complexions uncharacteristic of the Chinese.)

It helps that the *interrex*, who is burdened with the name Quintus Caecilius Metellus Pius Scipio Nasica, is a member of the family by adoption. Pompey's man Marcus Valerius Messala Niger explains to the Metelli the advantages of lining up with Pompey, who is to be named *sole* consul in the following year, and who will allegedly straighten out everything, and then will appoint Nasica as his colleague. Part of the proposal is that Decius should spend an additional year in the arduous job of aedile. He has objections to this, but figures that *anything* is better than another year campaigning in Gaul with Caesar. For a Roman aristocrat, Decius has a most untypical aversion to military service.

After this conference, Decius discusses the medical evidence in the building collapse with Asklepiodes, a Greek physician whose expertise he has consulted in many of his previous investigations. Visits to lumber yards and contractors then confirm his suspicion that widespread corruption is responsible for a great deal of shoddy construction including the Aemilian Theater, and also for the aggravated neglect of the sewer system. Furthermore, all these corrupt builders and wreckers are front men for some very high ranking aristocrats, despite a widespread belief that the senatorial aristocracy should not engage in vulgar trade.

The investigation, which includes a very informative visit to the proprietress of a luxurious whorehouse just across the Tiber, comes to a wild climax in the Theater as the Tiber rises, scouring out all the clogged drains and turning the Forum into a lake of sewage. (This is the vengeance of the river god Tiberinus for Rome's corruption.) So much happens that we are surprised to see Decius observe, at the end of his report, that everything took place in a mere four days.

I have discovered that Roberts has stretched history a bit by executing Gaius Ateius Capito, the principal villain of the previous book in this series, at the end of *The Tribune's Curse*. Those events were supposed to take place in 55 BCE, but Capito is mentioned by his contemporaries as being alive and active twelve years later. History is stretched again in *The River God's Vengeance*, as one of the culprits is drowned in the flood, who was in reality alive enough in the following year to be successfully prosecuted for a political offense.

In the next Decius book, *In the Name of Caesar*, history will get exciting enough without stretching it. The year 702 AVC (52 BCE) will see, on 20 January, the murder of Publius Clodius Pulcher, the aristocratic leader of a gang of Caesarian street thugs, by the rival gang leader Titus Annius Milo, a supporter of Pompey and good friend of Decius. This will lead to widespread rioting, the burning of the Senate house, and a prosecution of Milo by Cicero, which will result in Milo's exile. And, since the usual annual elections cannot be held amidst such violence, the plan to appoint Pompey sole consul will go into effect. These events have already been the subject of two of Steven Saylor's books about the detective adventures of Gordianus the Finder, *A Murder on the Appian Way* (reviewed in Graustark #663) and *Last Seen in Massilia* (reviewed in #714).

*

The Judgment of Caesar is set in 48 BCE, by which time a great deal has happened in Rome's civil war. Crassus has lost his army, his son's life and his own, in a disastrous battle with the Parthians. (His son's widow Cornelia then marries Pompey.) King Ptolemy XIII of Egypt has drunk himself to death, to be succeeded by the allegedly joint rule of his teen-aged elder son as Pompey XIV, and of the boy's older sister as Cleopatra VI or VII. (The opinions of historians differ on this point of enumeration.)

Caesar has crossed the Rubicon and marched on Rome, whereupon Pompey with his army and fleet fled to Greece. Caesar followed him there, and won a crushing victory at Pharsalus, from which Pompey barely escaped. Pompey is off to the nominally independent kingdom of Egypt, the only remaining place from which further supplies of men, munitions, and money might be obtained.

As it happens, his fleet arrives at Alexandria at the same time as the ship on which Gordianus the Finder, now 62, has taken passage with his ailing wife Bethesda, his mute Egyptian bodyguard and adopted son Rupa, and two of the rascally slave boys who populate historical novels set in this period. His eldest adopted son Eco remains in Rome to look after the family's detective practice, and Gordianus's and Bethesda's daughter Diana and her family are keeping his household going. Gordianus had disowned his other adopted son Meto for Meto's involvement in the civil war, since Gordianus finds each side to be a pack of greedy and murderous gangsters. The faction leaders return this dislike. Caesar, to whom Meto has given his allegiance, is mildly annoyed at Gordianus, but Pompey wants him dead, in some painful and lingering fashion.

At one point in this book, Gordianus eloquently expresses to Meto, whom he meets again in Caesar's entourage in Egypt, his opinion of the contenders in the Roman Republic's ongoing civil wars:

"I've spent my life stepping through the mess made by these so-called great men and women. They're no better than criminals and madmen, but because they perpetrate their crimes on such a grand scale, the rest of us are expected to bow before them in awe. 'The gods love me,' they say, to excuse their crimes and draw men to their cause; but if the gods love them, then why do they die so horribly? Look at what happened to Pompey, gutted like a fish on the shores of Egypt. Look at the horrible ends that awaited Milo, Clodius, Marcus Caelius, Catilina, Domitius Ahenobarbus, Curio - the list goes on and on. Mark my words, the same fate will befall Cleopatra, and yes, even your beloved Caesar."

It was this attitude that caused Gordianus to repudiate Meto, two books ago, since Meto had become the secretary and devoted supporter of Caesar. Upon meeting him again in Egypt, Gordianus is torn by conflicting emotions about that decision.

To tell how Gordianus falls into the hands of Pompey, and then escapes him, would give away too much of the plot. Moreover, it appears that Bethesda's intent was to enter the holy waters of the Nile to seek not a cure but death. So Gordianus and the rest of his household are stuck in Alexandria as the guests of none other than young King Ptolemy, as Caesar's fleet sails into the harbor.

Their father's will had made Ptolemy XIV and Cleopatra joint sovereigns of Egypt, and they had been married according to an Egyptian custom already ancient in the time of the Ptolemys. But they strongly dislike each other, a thing easy to understand between a 21-year-old woman and a 15-year-old boy even if they are unrelated. (Actually, even 15 may be too old for Ptolemy; Will Cuppy, who meticulously researched his humorous

essays, claimed that he was only 13. Saylor explains his choice of 15 in an afterword.) And it is young Ptolemy who controls the Egyptian army, an only nominally Roman force under the command of a thuggish Greek named Achilles. Ptolemy is in turn controlled by his prime minister Pothinus. And all of them have their knives out for Cleopatra.

(Will Cuppy, in *The Decline and Fall of Practically Everybody*, explains matters this way: "Cleopatra and Ptolemy XIV were always quarreling, and she didn't seem to click with the right politicians. The boss of Egypt, Pothinus, was a eunuch.")



This, then, is why Cleopatra had to be smuggled into the palace in a rug, in order to appeal to Caesar - which she did successfully in both senses of the word. And Gordianus finds himself up to his neck in the deadly serious, and just plain deadly, lies, intrigues, and betrayals which he had hoped to avoid by just ignoring them.

In his afterword, Saylor examines the mystique that has gathered around Cleopatra and her

lovers over the centuries. Of the larger-than-life figures who contended in the civil wars of the Roman Republic, he makes this comparison, quoting the words of the erudite L. Sprague de Camp about the heroes and villains of the fantasy novels of E. R. Eddison:

"In short, Eddison's 'great men', even the best of them, are cruel, arrogant bullies. One may admire, in the abstract, the indomitable courage, energy, and ability of such rampant egotists. In the concrete, however, they are like the larger carnivora, best admired with a set of stout bars between them and the viewer."

Yet, for all that has been written about Cleopatra, we still lack important information about her. Her father had been an illegitimate member of the House of Ptolemy, since the legitimate members had all been murdered by one another, or in revolutions, by 80 BCE. No one knows the identity of the mother of Ptolemy XIII, or the mother of any of his five children. Cuppy dismisses the question: "The name of her mother is unknown and it doesn't matter, as nobody with a grain of sense would have bothered with Ptolemy XIII." In his lush 1896 novel *Aphrodite*, in which a twelve-year-old Cleopatra has a bit part during the brief reign of her elder sister Berenice, Pierre Louÿs makes her mother a Nubian, but this is Louÿs's own literary invention.

(Ptolemy XIII had squeezed so much money out of the Egyptians in order to bribe his Roman friends that they overthrew him in 58 BCE and enthroned his eldest child Berenice. He bribed a Roman general to put him back on the throne in 55, and executed Berenice and her husband. Just about every historical novelist who has written of Berenice, from Louÿs to Roberts, describes her as an airhead.)

The book ends with the Alexandrian War, between the forces of Caesar and Cleopatra on the one hand, and of Ptolemy XIV and his handlers on the other. This was one of the first wars to be fought entirely in an urban setting, and it included some fire damage to the famous Alexandrian library, though not as much as is commonly believed. (That can be attributed to the conquest of Egypt by Khalifa Umar I in 639 CE.) The author includes a very useful map of Alexandria, while noting that some of it is supposition based on the fact that much urban archaeology still needs to be done there.

Once he is rid of the complications of the Alexandrian War, and reconciled with Meto, Gordianus can return to the complications of his private life, in which an almost miraculous surprise awaits him. The book ends with the return of Gordianus and his family to Rome.

*

From the detective adventures of Senator Metellus and Gordianus the Finder to those of Marcus Didius Falco is about 130 years, about as much time as separates the well-known scandals of the administration of Ulysses S. Grant from the developing scandals of the administration of Bush the Son. In the interim, the self-destruction of the Roman Republic had been accomplished, and a peace of exhaustion under Augustus Caesar has been succeeded by the scandalous life-styles of his four psychopathic successors culminating with Nero, and then by a civil war which saw four emperors in one year (69 CE). (See the appropriate chapters of Archibald Robertson's *How to Read*

CAESAR WON... WENT TO EGYPT... WHERE SOMEBODY BROUGHT HIM POMPEY'S PICKLED HEAD...



CAESAR CONSOLED HIMSELF BY CONQUERING EGYPT-- AND ITS PRINCESS CLEOPATRA.

WHAT WOULD YOU SAY IF I TOLD YOU THAT SOMEDAY AFROCENTRIC HISTORIANS WOULD CLAIM YOU AS AFRICAN, EVEN THOUGH YOU'RE THE PRODUCT OF EIGHT GENERATIONS OF MACEDONIAN INBREEDING?

I'D SAY YOU SURE TALK A LOT FOR A GUY WITH YOUR REPUTATION.



(continued on p. 14)

THE GRAUSTARK DIRECTORY

Players in a current postal Diplomacy games are indicated by its Boardman Number, with the initial of the country being played, and with "S" indicating an active stand-by player. (E. g., "2002A-G" or "2002D-FS".) Paying subscribers will be indicated by the number of the issue with which the subscription expires. Other designations are:

N: entrant in a new postal Diplomacy game now being organized in Graustark. (See p. 3 for details.)

T: trade copy

C: complimentary copy for a gamer

R: complimentary copy for a non-gamer interested in the mystery novel reviews

U: uncomplimentary copy

This directory is accurate to the date of 29 January 2005. Please let me know of any corrections or additions that need to be made, particularly if you want your nine-digit ZIP code, phone number, fax number, or e-mail address added to your listing. This is particularly important for electronic addresses, which seem to change more frequently than do postal addresses.

If you are already a Graustark subscriber when you decide to send in a game fee, then when the game begins, the number of issues you had coming when you joined will be added to your subscription once the game ends. After your name in the Directory will appear some such notation as "2004C-T+6".

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 W. Andrew York (767), P. O. Box 201117, Austin, TX 78720-1117; <wandrew@compuserve.com>

THE BATTLE OF THE BOOKS - II

"Civilian deaths in the war were more than double those of military personnel. In total, over 50 million people (civilian and military) died." - Timothy B. Benford, *The World War II Quiz & Fact Book* (1982), p. 170

"In World War I, the ratio of deaths among military personnel to those among civilians was about 20:1, a ratio that fell to 1:1 during World War II..." - James F. Dunnigan and Albert A. Nofi, *Dirty Little Secrets: Military Information You're Not Supposed to Know* (1990), p. 381

"The war killed a lot more people than is commonly thought. We estimate the total death toll to be near a 100 million." - James F. Dunnigan and Albert A. Nofi, *Dirty Little Secrets of World War II* (1994), p. 48

WHEN DO YOU EXPIRE?

The subscriptions of the following readers expire with the indicated issue of Graustark. This information is valid to the date of 4 February 2005. For information on joining a new game, or extending your subscription, see p. 3.

765 - Mike Fisher
766 - Jim Dapkus
767 - Jim Grose
Paul Milewski

767 - Eric Verheiden
W. Andrew York
770 - Michael Neal
799 - Brenton Verploeg

THE MINISTRY OF MISCELLANY (continued from p. 4)

The Crimean War, in which Great Britain, France, and Italy made a "pre-emptive strike" against the Russian Empire, suspecting it of a scheme to conquer the Ottoman Empire, was not fought solely in the Crimea, although the fighting there generated two great anti-war poems, "The Charge of the Light Brigade" and "The Kerry Recruit". Great Britain and Russia both had ambitions to dominate the Pacific Ocean, and in the waters north of neutral Japan their ships clashed. The outgunned Russian warships fled north, into what British charts called "the Bay of Tartary". The British blockaded the outlet to the bay, certain that eventually the Russians would have to come out.

They never did. What those charts called "the Bay of Tartary" was actually the south end of the narrow strait between Siberia and the island of Sakhalin. The Russians simply sailed north and escaped.

This bit of historical trivia came to mind after the nuclear attack submarine *USS San Francisco* ran aground in the Pacific Ocean on 8 January 2005, killing one sailor and injuring 23 others. (*New York Times*, 11 January 2005) An inquiry established that the sub, cruising at 30 knots at a depth of 400 feet,* struck an underwater mountain that was not on the U. S. Navy charts.

Recently, at Recording for the Blind and Dyslexic, I have been reading on DVD Peter D. Lax's advanced mathematics textbook *Functional Analysis* (2002, Wiley-Interscience). The references cited by Lax included papers by mathematicians named Sukhomlinov and Nagumo. As it happened, Sukhomlinov was also the name of an incompetent Russian general during World War I, and Nagumo was also the name of an incompetent Japanese admiral during World War II. Perhaps the members of those families may have been better suited to mathematics than to war.

I have just received a trade copy of *Who Do You Trust?* #4, a postal gaming 'zine published by Timothy R. Haffey Sr., 810 53rd Ave., Oakland, CA 94601; 510-536-3513; <trhaffey@yahoo.com>. Haffey had been a postal Diplomacy gamesmaster in the 1970s with a 'zine called *The Diplomat*, which somehow escaped mention by Jim Meinel in Meinel's *Encyclopedia*, a 1992 history of the postal Diplomacy hobby. Haffey came back into the hobby in 2000 with three issues of *Who Do You Trust?*, but then decided that so many Diplomacy players had gone over from postal to e-mail play that there was no point in opening postal games.

Apparently he has reconsidered this, because in *Who Do You Trust?* #4 he announces openings in postal games of Diplomacy, Colonial Diplomacy, Youngstown Diplomacy, Dollar Dot Diplomacy, Nuclear Holocaust World War III, and maybe Kingmaker. He also has available an apparently new variation, Creation Diplomacy, which he explains. Dollar Dot Diplomacy is an attempt to discourage drop-outs. Subscriptions are \$36 a year (12 issues) for domestic subscribers, and \$48 a year overseas.

In a subzine, he cites a postal Diplomacy game which ended in a seven-way draw after "Fall 1901". It was 1978BS, and the gamesmaster was Lee Bardwell. There are

(continued on p. 17)

* - In a measuring system that makes sense, the sub was cruising at about 55 kilometers per hour at a depth of about 125 meters.

"Fall 1906"

2002D

DARING CONVOY DODGES BALKAN TRAFFIC JAM

ENGLAND (Wiedemeyer): A St. P-Mos; F Nrg-Nwy; F Nwy-St. P(n.c.); F Bar S F Nwy-St. P(n.c.);
F Lon holds.

FRANCE (Lischett): F Tus & F Tun hold; A Pie S A Tyr; F Lyo S F Tus; F Wes S A Tun;
A Ven-Tri; A Tyr S GERMAN A Boh-Vie. F

GERMANY (Quirk): A Gal-Bud; A Boh-Vie; A Pru S A Sil-War; A Sil-War; F Bot-Liv;
F Swe-Bal. B-10
A Mar

ITALY (Verheiden): F Tyr-Tus; F Ion C RUSSIAN A Con-Apu; F Nap S RUSSIAN A Con-Apu;
F Rom S F Tyr-Tus; A Ser-Tri; A Tri-Ven.

RUSSIA (Grose): A Liv-War; A Mos S A Liv-War; F Aeg C A Con-Apu; A Ukr S A Liv-War;
A Vie S A Rum-Gal; A Bud S A Vie; A Rum-Gal; A Con-Apu; A Sev holds; F Bla-Con.

Underlined moves are not possible. The Russian A Vie is dislodged and annihilated. The High Combatant Powers now control the following supply centers:

ENGLAND: Edi, Liv, Lon, Nwy, St.P. (5)

FRANCE: Bel, Bre, Mar, Par, Por, Spa, Tun, Ven. (8) + Rom

GERMANY: Ber, Den, Hol, Kie, Mun, Swe, Vie. (7) + WAR + BUD?

ITALY: Gre, Nap, Rom, Ser, Tri. (5)

RUSSIA: Ank, ~~Bud~~, Bul, Con, Mos, Rum, Sev, Smy, War. (9) Italy

France and Germany may each build one unit, and Russia must remove one. The deadline for these "Winter 1906" orders is NOON, FRIDAY 11 MARCH 2005.

2004C

"Fall 1902"

"THE HAND THAT HELD THE DAGGER..."

ENGLAND (Koch): A Ion-Bal; F Nth C A Ion-Bal; F NAT-Mid; F Iri S F NAT-Mid.

FRANCE (Wiedemeyer): F Mid S F Bre; F Bre S F Mid; A Bur-Bal; A Spa-Gas;
F Lyo-Spa(s.c.).

GERMANY (Mathias): F Bal-Swe; F Den S F Bal-Swe; A Bel-Hol; A Ruh-Mun; A Sil S AUSTRO-HUNGARIAN A Vie-Gal.

ITALY (Mooney): A Ven-Tri; A Alb-Gre; F Ion S A Alb-Gre; F Apu S F Ion.

AUSTRIA-HUNGARY (Alme): A Tri-Alb; F Gre-Ion; A Bud-Rum; A Ser S A Bud-Rum; A Vie-Gal.

RUSSIA (Biehl): F Bot-Bal; F Bla-Con; A Rum-Ser; A Ukr-Rum; A War holds.

TURKEY (Bruce): F Aeg & F Eas S AUSTRO-HUNGARIAN F Gre-Ion; A Ank-Con; A Bul S AUSTRO-HUNGARIAN A Bud-Rum.

Underlined moves are not possible. Russia retreats A Rum-Sev and Italy retreats F Ion-Adr, -Apu, -Tyr, or -Tun. (A dislodged unit may instead be removed.) The High Combatant Powers now control the following supply centers:

ENGLAND: Edi, Liv, Lon, Nwy. (4)

AUSTRIA-HUNGARY: Bud, Rum, Ser, Vie. (4)

FRANCE: Bre, Mar, Par, Por, Spa. (5)

RUSSIA: Mos, St.P, Sev, War. (4)

GERMANY: Ber, Den, Hol, Kie, Mun, Swe. (6)

TURKEY: Ank, Bul, Con, Smy. (4)

ITALY: Gre, Nap, Rom, Tri, Tun, Ven. (6)

Italy may build two new units, or three if the dislodged F Ion is removed. Germany may build one unit, and Russia and Austria-Hungary must each remove one. The deadline for these "Winter 1902" orders is NOON, FRIDAY 11 MARCH 2005.

ST. PETERSBURG (Oct. 31, 1902): Czar Ivan VII summoned the English, French and German Ambassadors for an audience. Ivan peered at each, in turn, and with an intensity that was unsettling. Finally he screamed, "You think I'm insane!? I see through your

lies! Your phony English declaration of war on France! The German lies of friendship! And what about that French move on Italy? You are all a pack of scoundrels!" The three Ambassadors all began to object, the French Ambassador saying, "Your imperial majesty, Our fleet simply moves to the Gulf of Lyons." The German replied, "Our great German empire requires Sweden (for now). The English Ambassador reproved Ivan, "How can you say this, your imperial majesty? We English are open in all our declarations and we leave Norway vacant to reassure you." "Well, I admit what you say is true and for that we thank England," Ivan responded. Ivan VII slumped on his throne and then suddenly leapt to his feet again, "There is still a great subterfuge going on here and I shall ensure everyone knows about it. Now get out!"

ROMAN LAW (continued from p. 9)

History for how and why this happened.) It is now 75, and some degree of peace and quiet has developed under Falco's occasional employer, the Emperor Flavius Vespasianus. This might be attributed to popular rejection of the continuous combat of the Year of the Four Emperors (69 CE), but was mainly due to the military expertise shown by Vespasianus and his troops in slaughtering "insurgents", as it is lately fashionable to call them, from Britannia to Judaea.

Home from Britannia, and restarting his practice in Rome as an informer (*delator*) and private detective, Falco gets involved in fetching a deposition for Silius Italicus, a historical informer, attorney and ex-consul who is involved in prosecuting a crooked senator, Gnaeus Rubirius Metellus. The senator's defense attorney, Paccius Africanus, is also an informer and an ex-consul, and may be a creation of the author, since I searched out this name in the usual reference books and came up empty. Moreover, Silius and Paccius seem to be working in collusion despite their nominal opposition to each other.

The jury finds Senator Metellus guilty, which means that he has to pay an enormous fine with a nice rake-off for Silius. But then Metellus turns up dead. Under Roman law, if he had committed suicide the fine would be canceled and his fortune would be inherited by his widow, their son, and their two daughters. But if he had died by any other cause, the fine would stand and be enforced.

Fearful for his fee, Silius hires Falco to get to the truth of the matter. Naturally, the late senator's family insists that it was indeed suicide. But then it turns out that the senator had cut Negrinus, his only son and probable co-conspirator, out of his will. And now Negrinus must be prosecuted for his role in his father's corruption case - if there are any fees to be obtained from him by either prosecution or defense, now that he is penniless. This time Paccius also needs to get Falco's help, and Falco discovers that collusion among the attorneys of both sides is much more important to them than are the interests of mere justice.

The description of the funeral of Senator Metellus and its consequences gives us information about ancient Roman funeral customs. Hired mourners are a custom strange to us; most of us believe that we should instead live our lives so that we will be sincerely mourned by our relatives and friends when we leave the scene. Even stranger is the concept of funeral clowns, who make fun of the quirks of the deceased, presumably to puncture undue family pride and thus avert the wrath of vengeful deities. But one of the senator's funeral clowns turns out to have information germane to Falco's investigation, except that he can't be found.

Suspicious of responsibility for the poisoning of Metellus fall on his widow, his son, his daughter-in-law, and her ex-husband. There is the usual murder-mystery mortality among these suspects before the matter is finally solved. In several of the historically set crime novels reviewed in these pages, the moments of discovery have included the revelation that someone's father isn't who everyone thinks he is. But here for the first time it is also revealed for certain that someone's *mother* isn't who everyone thinks she is.

The authors of novels set in ancient times resort to some interesting stratagems to acquaint readers with things that might not be familiar to us. Explaining the patriarchal laws of Rome, Falco says, "In case you are provincials from maternalist



People Against the Draft

www.nodraft.info



***"They are going to reintroduce the draft in the US.
But it's such a vote loser, no one wants to mention it."***

-The Guardian, May 31, 2004

THE DRAFT: QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

How do we know a new draft is in the works?

Nationwide, long-dormant draft boards – local committees that decide who must fight and who is exempted – have been quietly reactivated and restaffed (Lindorff, "Oiling Up the Draft Machine," *Salon.com*, Nov. 3, 2003).

A consensus behind conscription is building on Capitol Hill. Senators Chuck Hagel (R-Neb) and Joseph Biden (D-Del), chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, are among many prominent politicians suddenly calling for a "national debate" on the draft (*Washington Post*, Apr. 22, 2004). Open supporters of the draft range from Sen. Ernest Hollings (D-SC) to retired General Wesley Clark. (*The Hill*, July 2004)

HR 163 and S 89, Democrat-sponsored bills to restore conscription, were quietly working their way through committee when pre-election hype suddenly turned them into political footballs. In an extraordinary parliamentary maneuver, the bills were rushed to the floor and voted down on Oct. 5, 2004 – but not before drawing considerable sympathy from liberal opinionmakers like Sheryl McCarthy and E.J. Dionne.

Op-eds and columns openly arguing for the draft are beginning to appear in influential publications (see, e.g., "Why We Need the Draft Back," *Washington Post* (July 1, 2004), by former ass't sec'y of defense Noel Koch; "The U.S. Military Is In Bad Shape," U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings (July, 2004).

Why do powerful elites and politicians want to reinstate the draft?

The US military is bogged down in Iraq, fighting a brutal war of counterinsurgency that has stretched the 1.4-million strong, all-volunteer military to the limit. The Army has 10 active-duty divisions; nine of these are either in Iraq or Afghanistan, have just returned, or are about to be deployed there (AP, Apr. 29, 2004). Tours are being extended and enlistments prolonged. Thousands of retired and discharged military personnel are even being called back into service (*NY Times*, June 30, 2004). The Pentagon's Defense Policy Board has concluded that current troop strength is inadequate for current and future needs (*Fin. Times* Sept. 26, 2004).

While conceding that the Iraq war has been a military and political disaster, the US power elite – from George Bush, to the *New York Times* editorial board, to ex-Presidential candidate John Kerry – agree that we must "stay the course" in Iraq. In plain language, that means crushing resistance to the occupation. To subdue a population that wants us to leave and is willing to fight for independence, will require many more troops – as many as 500,000, say some Pentagon estimates (McGovern, "Calling for Backup," *TomPaine.com*, May 7, 2004).

Meanwhile, official US policy now calls for waging "pre-emptive war" and effecting "regime change" wherever threats to American power and security are perceived (*National Security Strategy of the U.S.A.*, Sept. 2002). Any new war – with or without an escalation of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan – would require many thousands of new soldiers. No President will tolerate an inability to wage war as and when he sits fit.

It's not hard to connect the dots. The logic of current US foreign policy requires more "boots on the ground." Enlistment is barely sufficient to maintain current troop levels. Only draftees can fill the gap.

Won't the Democrats fight against the draft?

Don't count on it. Most mainstream Democrats support escalating the war in Iraq and call for enhancing US military presence worldwide. It becomes clearer every day that this cannot be done without conscription. In addition, the Democratic Leadership Council (DLC) openly supports a universal "National Service" program (see Magee, *From Selective Service to National Service: A Blueprint for Citizenship and Security in the 21st Century*, 2003) that antidraft advocates see as a stealth plan for staged reintroduction of conscription.

Will women be drafted?

Almost certainly. Legislation recently before Congress called for drafting both genders, while internal Selective Service documents reflect extensive planning aimed at broadening the draft to women, including strategies for "marketing the concept" to Congress. (*Seattle Post-Intelligencer*, May 1, 2004)

Would a draft help prevent future wars?

The draft has *never* acted as a deterrent to war, as some believe and Rep. Rangel argues. While the draft was in effect, the U.S. began numerous wars. In fact, during World War I, the reason for the instatement of the draft was to ensure a steady flow of soldiers into the battlefield. (Center on Conscience & War, www.nisbco.org).

Would a draft be "fairer" to the poor and minorities?

Conscription has *never* made the Armed Services more equitable, racially or economically. During the Vietnam war, minority draftees disproportionately served on the front lines. The affluent had, and still have, the means to gain deferments, or to secure soft, safe positions. If Rep. Rangel and other pro-draft "progressives" really wanted to fix social and racial inequities, they'd be advocating for jobs, education, and opportunity, not equal-opportunity warmaking. More broadly, it's not "fair" to people of color and the poor to let the government draft the bodies it requires to wage endless wars — wars that steal money from the programs people need.

WHAT YOU CAN DO:

Join us:

People Against the Draft is a non-partisan, grassroots organization of concerned parents, students, educators, and others. Our purpose is to educate and lobby against the military draft. More broadly, we intend to help build a movement against reinstatement of the draft and in favor of a peaceful, rational foreign policy. We need your help to make this happen. If you're in the area, join us. If you're elsewhere, contact us about starting your own local branch. For more information, visit our website or email contact@nodraft.info.

Make noise:

Our silence and ignorance are the most effective allies of those who would draft our children. Sign up for our Internet newsletter. Stay informed on this issue and educate others. Discuss your concerns with friends and family. Write letters to the editor and op-eds for your local newspaper, and call local radio talk shows. If you're a student, talk to your parents. If you're a parent, talk to your kids.

Organize a teach-in or forum:

... at your college, church, school, or club, or in your living room. Download this flyer, together with the news articles linked on our site, as a basis for discussion. We held a Town Meeting in New York City and passed a resolution against the draft — you can do the same! See our web site for details.

Write, call, email, and confront your elected representatives:

Tell your Senators and Congressperson what you think. Don't let them minimize the issue or otherwise put you off; demand a firm commitment. Contact information is searchable by zipcode at www.congress.org. Speak your Congressperson face-to-face, in his/her office or at local forums, photo ops, and campaign events.

People Against the Draft
contact@nodraft.info ♦ www.nodraft.info

2002A

No Russian "Winter 1910" orders came in, so the dislodged Russian F Nwy is removed.
 FRANCE (Street): Builds A Par. AUSTRIA-HUNGARY (Watkins): Builds A Vie.
 GERMANY (Bourgeois): Removes A Ruh. TURKEY (Jordan): Build A Ank, F Con.
 The deadline for "Spring 1911" moves is NOON, FRIDAY 11 MARCH 2005. Stand-by "Spring
 1911" moves for Russia should be sent in by John R. Biehl, whose address is on p. 10.

THE MINISTRY OF MISCELLANY (continued from p. 12)

comments from five of the seven players.

*

Several paperback books have recently been published as commentaries on human stupidity, with anecdotal evidence. The best are Wendy Northcutt's "Darwin Awards" series, three books of which have thus far been published. They describe people who behaved so stupidly that they removed themselves from the gene pool, thus improving the survival abilities of the human average. But these books are rigorously checked out, so that old wives' tales, urban legends, and implausibilities do not get into them. Leland Gregory is much less trustworthy. Some of his stories about stupid laws, stupid lawbreakers, and stupid law enforcers stamp themselves as false or unverifiable. And I have also found a few such incidents in the latest entry into this field, Bob Fenster's *Duh: The Stupid History of the Human Race* and *Well, Duh! Our Stupid World and Welcome to It*. In the latter book, Fenster writes of what happened when "Selim I, sultan of Persia, was advised by his royal doctors to stop his drinking or he would ruin his health".

Well, duh! The title of Persian monarchs throughout history has been not "sultan" but "shah" or "shahinshah". Turkish monarchs were called "sultans". And we can identify the Turkish sultan to which Fenster was probably referring: Not the grim warrior-poet Selim I (reigned 1512-1520) but his incompetent grandson Selim II (reigned 1566-1574), called by the chroniclers "Selim Mest", "Selim the Drunkard".

Elsewhere in this book, Fenster refers to "The ancient Greek scholar Pliny". Whether he meant Pliny the Elder or his nephew Pliny the Younger, the Plinys were Romans, not Greeks.

And he mentions that Arabs had been enslaving Africans years before Arab salesmanship caused Europeans to take up the practice. This is true as far as it goes, but before their contacts with Africa, Europeans cheerfully enslaved one another. Bari and Bristol were major slave-trading centers. Five hundred years ago, my own ancestors were owned by a noble English family named Fiennes, two of whose members are today movie stars.

Fenster tells a tale of how the infamous Vlach prince Vlad Drakul (d. 1477), one of the sources for Bram Stoker's character Dracula, ended poverty in his realm by inviting all poor people to a feast, nailing the doors and windows shut, and burning the hall down. But this same atrocity is also supposed to have been committed several centuries earlier by Hatto, Archbishop of Mainz (d. 913). This makes it appear to be one of those movable legends that are told about several notorious tyrants, long after they are safely dead. And Fenster gives the author's name as "Brad" Stoker.

Fenster also claims that the French revolutionaries executed the brilliant chemist Antoine Lavoisier because he was a scientist. This is dead wrong. Lavoisier was executed because he was a member of the corporation that farmed the kingdom's taxes. Any economist will tell you that tax farming is the most inefficient, and most hated, method of financing a country. And if an economist isn't handy, check the Gospel According to Saint Matthew.

We are told that in 270 CE the Roman Emperor Claudius II banned marriage because he believed that married men would not be good soldiers. This story was really invented by Christian writers who were trying to sanitize the ancient Pagan sexual holiday of Lupercalia, celebrated on 14 February. So they invented a saint named Valentine, who allegedly solemnized several marriages in defiance of this alleged ban and was martyred.

Nor was George Washington being pompous when he suggested that the President of the United States should be styled "His High Mightiness". This was the title used by

(continued on p. 21)

REVIEWS OF POSTAL COLONIAL DIPLOMACY GAME 2001Bea04

JOHN R. BIEHL (Japan): Armies marching, guns firing
 Greatest Empire, glorious victory
 Chrysanthemum petals

I joined this game knowing nothing about it except that it is (?) the only commercially produced Diplomacy variant. I do not even know who designed it (tho this information is likely on the internet somewhere). I expect the designer was an early and avid player of Diplomacy (face to face and/or postal).

After playing this game, I make the following observations on the game board map;

1) Warren Ball (original Turkish player), I believe, made some comments about the many stalemate lines in this game. Myself, I question central Asian boundaries, specifically the Kra-Mon-Sik ones (three provinces only) yet immediately to the west are Omsk-Akm-Sem-Uru-Kag (five provinces), to the east are Irk-Mac-Pek-Lan-Chu (five provinces). It appears that this is a design flaw. The province of Sik is certainly unhistorical and ridiculously large.

2) The blank space in Africa south of Sud-Aby-Sim is a province asking to be included in the game. I suggest it be called British East Africa.

3) Another sea province could be added to the Indian Ocean where there is now the blank space adjoining the blank African space.

Overall, the idea and design of the game is an interesting simulation of pre-WWI Asia. Someone obviously thought this variant had commercial appeal.

With regard to our 2001Bea04 version, I agree with our GM that not having a Chinese player was probably more accurate historically. Personally, I had hoped for a full complement of players so my first choice was China (for the 'Austrian challenge', as it were). I was fortunate to draw Japan as it was a strong defensive position, although, initially, I was not aware of this. I was concerned about the threat of Russia and the possibility of a Dutch-French alliance. Warren Ball mentioned a defensive stalemate line position beneficial to Japan. Our GM also mentioned that Japan has an advantageous position. I am sure this is all true. However, I can assure you, at the start of this game, Japan was as 'paranoid' as any Diplomacy player is at the beginning of a game.

Upon my review of the game turns, I make the following comments;

1) There were five No Moves Received, one No Build Received and two No Response Received (players replaced). Trent failed to submit the first moves (1870) for Britain. This adversely affected the British position but was partially alleviated by Ball (Turkey) NMRing (1880). Then both Watkins (Britain) and Ball missed the build deadline (1881). Floyd (Holland) missed a move (1882) and, finally, both Mooney (Turkey) and Quirk (Russia) NMRed together (1888). All these missed deadlines had their effect.

2) Japan and Russia virtually maintained peace (1870-1877). However, it can be argued that, in this game, Japanese-Russian conflict is practically inevitable. This began in 1878 and continued (with greater or lesser intensity) to the end of the game.

3) A British-French-Japanese agreement was made (1884) to support Britain versus Turkey-Russia and to remove Holland. However, Neal (France) concluded this was, in reality, a British-Japanese plot directed at France so the French declared war (1892). As a result of this a British-Dutch-Japanese agreement was formed to, again, support Britain and now directed at removing France (1894).

4) What could be termed the end game began immediately afterward as Turkey invaded India in earnest (1896). From this time onward the British-Dutch-Japanese Alliance strove to halt the Turkish armies and fleets, to free Russian armies to retreat and to remove France. Our alliance was successful in all three endeavours. The final consideration was whether this game would end in the proposed five-player draw. Our alliance determined a Japanese win was more appropriate.

I thank Bill Watkins and Gary Floyd for agreeing to the Japanese win. It is a rare pleasure to have your great power expand more or less continually as Japan did in this game. It was very enjoyable playing with so many armies and fleets.

BILL WATKINS (Britain): Basically, I want to thank the other players for keeping

DUNGEONS & CHRISTIANS - CLXXX

For no intelligible reason, a few Christian fanatics have for the past 25 years or so been attacking Dungeons & Dragons (D&D) and other role-playing games (RPGs), video games, and even board games. The principal opposition to these bursts of religious fanaticism comes from the Game Manufacturers Association (GAMA) and from the Committee for the Advancement of Role-Playing Games (CAR-PGA). This column relies heavily on reports from both of these organizations. CAR-PGA Newsletter is published monthly by Paul Cardwell Jr., 1127 Cedar, Bonham, TX 75418 at \$12.00 a year for domestic, and \$13.50 a year for foreign, addresses. It keeps us posted on attacks on D&D and other RPGs, and provides us with arguments and strategies to be used against attempts to censor or ban games. It also lists upcoming gaming conventions.

*

Last month the A&E cable channel presented a one-hour show on the effects of bullying in schools, with particular emphasis on the victims who eventually turned violently against their tormentors. Several case studies were presented, including that of Luke Woodham, 16, of Pearl, MS, who began 1 October 1997 by cutting his mother's throat, and then took two guns to his high school. There he killed two girls, one of whom had just dumped him, and wounded seven other students before he was disarmed.

The A&E account did not even mention a whole mythology that had subsequently grown up about these murders. Elsewhere it has been asserted that Woodham played in a maverick D&D group which got started after its organizer, Grant Boyette, had been expelled from another group for disrupting play with a kill-'em-all attitude. Boyette and other members of this new group, whose name is variously reported to be "Koth", "Kroth", or "Krath", were arrested for complicity in Woodham's crimes, but these arrests were later voided, and were not even mentioned by A&E.

*

There was an error in my transcription of words from Andrew Wilson's translation into classical Greek of J. K. Rowling's *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone*. The label on the locomotive at Platform 9 3/4, "ΟΚΥΠΙΟΡΟΣ ΥΟΓΟΗΤΙΚΗ", is "Okuporos Hyogoetike", presumably "Hogwarts Express".

*

Another fashionable Christian target is popular music, so it is only natural that some rock group would try to hype its sales by taking advantage of these accusations. The outcome of such an attempt was described by George Smith in the *Village Voice* of 2 February 2005. It seems that "in 1988 Negativland and their label - SST - issued a press release implying trouble with the authorities because a piece of the act's music was connected with a real teenage ax murderer. As far as hoaxes go, the trick was lame. It neither took the physical labor of the Cardiff Giant nor had the power to inspire of the Protocols of the Elders of Zion." Nevertheless, "some media ninnyes, including rock critics, bit," and I have no doubt that this tale is still being told by horror-stricken preachers out in the red states. Smith quotes a comment made at the time of the well-known Cardiff Giant hoax by the then President of Cornell University, that is still valid: "There evidently was a 'joy in believing' in the marvel, and this was increased by the peculiarly American superstition that the correctness of a belief is decided by the number of the people who can be induced to adopt it."

Anyone who doubts this, was simply not paying attention during the long decades of the Great Cold War Hoax.

*

The Iraqi elections were protested by a joint statement from the Ansar al-Sunnah Army, the Islamic Army in Iraq, and the Mujahideen Army. "The statement...called democracy un-Islamic. Democracy could lead to passing un-Islamic laws, such as permitting homosexual marriage, if the majority of the people agreed to it, the statement said." (Nick Wadhams, *Newsday*, 31 December 2004)

In the actual words of this proclamation:

"Democracy is a Greek word meaning the rule of the people, which means that the people do what they see fit. This concept is considered apostasy and defies the belief in one God, Muslims' doctrine."

Of course, these objections are also applicable to Christianity, and some Christians have said so. Marriage among homosexuals is also opposed by Christians, on these same grounds. And the U. S. Constitution's First Amendment directly contradicts the First Commandment. The First Commandment says "Thou shalt have no other gods before me." The First Amendment says, in effect, "Go ahead and worship whatever you want. The government doesn't care." Bush the Father was obviously aware of this contradiction when he claimed that an Atheist cannot be a good American.

The next step has already been taken by the Roman Catholic monthly magazine *First Things*, which has opened the question of whether the U. S. government is one to which, in good conscience, a Christian can give allegiance. Nor is this merely a Catholic concern. And on the Protestant side, Randall Terry, a sometime Conservative Party candidate for Congress, put it this way:

"Our goal is a Christian nation." We have a biblical duty, we are called by God to conquer this country. We don't want equal time. We don't want pluralism."

We cannot say that we have not been warned by either Christians or Muslims.

REVIEWS OF POSTAL COLONIAL DIPLOMACY GAME 2001Bea04 (continued from p. 18)

me in the game. As we quickly discovered, failure of the British to move on Turn 1 is a total disaster.

John and Brendan played very well. John proved a good ally. Brendan did an excellent job taking India away from me. Richard and Gary played well, but were stuck in a pattern because of the game flow.

I have to agree with John Boardman. I don't think the game is worth doing again. The best part was John and Gary and I having some great political arguments. Tough to do anything else when the game is so patterned.

MICHAEL NEAL (France): Congratulations goes to John R. Biehl for a well-played game. I think that Japan's beginning position in Colonial Diplomacy holds great potential, and in the hand's of John Biehl...well, this game might have been a foregone conclusion from the first turn.

Colonial France was a challenge! I think that the design of the game requires a close association between China's armies and France's fleets similar to the symbiosis often seen in regular Diplomacy between Austria-Hungary and Italy. I wonder how things might have shaped up with an active China and me as staunch allies.

As for allies, I didn't really have any. I briefly coordinated with Britain and Japan, until it seemed that they thought of me more as a source of dots than as an ally. They kept sending their fleets in any direction rather than at the enemy (they probably considered me the enemy, so I guess that activity made sense).

I attempted an alliance with Russia, but his responses to my entreaties dried up after he saw that I wanted a share of China. Strangely, Russia was angrier with me because I attacked a neutral China than with Japan who attacked and occupied Russian soil. I also tried to work with Turkey, but that never materialized into anything substantial. So, there was not much to do in this game besides waiting for Japan to hand me my head.

I would like to thank John Boardman for offering and moderating the game, and I've learned a lot about that part of the world during the colonial era by playing Colonial Diplomacy, and inspired by this game, I've done some supplemental reading concerning the colonization.

No wonder those people are leery of the West. How could they not be?

JOHN BOARDMAN: The concluding moves of this game, with a roster, a supply center chart, and some of my observations, may be found in Graustark #760.

There is a much better game set in this period, which I would prefer to run postally if it ever comes back into print. It is Pax Britannica, originally published by West End Games, which was acquired last year by Purgatory Publishing. This game covers the period from 1880 to World War I. A full board is Great Britain, France, Germany, the U. S. A., Japan, Russia, and Italy, although it can be played with as few as the first four of these.

THE MINISTRY OF MISCELLANY (continued from p. 17)

the rulers of the Netherlands, which in Washington's time was the world's most successful republic. At one time it was even suggested that our chief executive should, like that of the Netherlands, be called "Stateholder".

Fenster's earlier book also contains numerous errors. At one point in it, he wrote about a "riot that started 1,400 years ago over an unpopular call in a Constantinople chariot race. That riot claimed 30,000 lives." From the death toll, he is obviously referring to the "Nike Riots" of 532. (This had nothing to do with fashionable sneakers; *nike* is Greek for "victory" and was the war-cry of the rioters.) You will find the facts in Fletcher Pratt's *The Battles that Changed History*. It was really an attempted *coup d'etat* against the Roman Emperor Justinianus I, set in motion by a conspiracy of noblemen, supported by their strong-arm men and the members of wildly enthusiastic clubs of sports fans. They burned down much of the city, including a hospital with all its patients, and seized the stadium and there crowned the nephew of a previous emperor. Justinianus was on the point of fleeing the city, but the empress, a retired hooker named Theodora, made a fiery speech that changed his mind. So instead he called out his troops; they sealed the stadium and killed all 30,000 rioters. Justinianus reigned for another 33 years.

There is an implausibility, if not an error, in the account of the death of King Charles II of Great Britain in 1685 at the age of 54. He is alleged to have died of the effects of a rubdown with powdered mummy. While this improbable substance was used in primitive medicine, the account given by Macaulay suggests accidental poisoning. The king was an enthusiastic amateur scientist who maintained his own laboratory. The liquid metal mercury, now known to be a dangerous poison, was handled carelessly in those days, particularly by alchemists who thought that distilling it would produce a still more wondrous substance. The official report seems to indicate acute uremia, which results from the presence in the body of more poisons than the kidneys can deal with. I would suggest that it resulted from poisoning by mercury vapor.

George Washington's first victory, at the Battle of Trenton, is repeatedly said to have been won against British troops. While they were recruited and paid by Great Britain, they were actually German mercenaries, right up to the colonel whose stupid decisions caused him to lose the battle and his life.

There is a long account of the Spanish-American War, that four-month imperialistic spree which gave both sides the reputation of being military incompetents. But in describing the greatly overrated "charge up San Juan Hill", Fenster writes of the loss of "a vast number of American lives". Actually, the American death toll at this battle was only 124. (A. A. Nofi, *The Spanish-American War, 1898*.) The total of American combat deaths in that war is a figure variously reported as 301, 345, and 385. This is only about one fourth of the number reported so far in Bush War II, which with some 400 more will exceed the toll of the Mexican-American War and be on its way to matching the War of 1812.

Several of Fenster's errors have to do with tobacco, otherwise known as "the native Americans' revenge". In both books he writes about the use of cigarettes in 16th-century Europe. Cigarettes were actually invented in the 19th century. Before that, tobacco was taken in pipes or as cigars or snuff. And he retells the well-known tale of how Sir Walter Raleigh lit up a pipe-full of this new weed from the New World, only to have a servant throw a bucket of water on him because he thought he was on fire. However, Fenster transferred the anecdote to Sir Francis Drake and set it in the court of Queen Elizabeth the Great, as Drake was teaching her how to smoke.

On a cursory reading I spotted a few other errors as well. Anyone writing a book designed to display examples of human stupidity should check sources with great caution, in order not to add to the number of such examples.

However, he got one very important thing right, which we can understand better now that a high-ranking member of the administration of Bush the Son has told a reporter that the government has rejected the concept that "solutions emerge from your judicious study of discernible reality" because "that's not the way the world works anymore. We're an empire now, and when we act, we create our own reality." (Ron Suskind, *New York Times Magazine*, 17 October 2004) Fenster puts it this way:

"Let's start an empire. Say, this conquering stuff is fun; pass the wine. Oops, here come the barbarians."

ROMAN LAW (continued from p. 14)

societies, some sort of unfortunate Celt, for instance, let me explain."

Falco himself gets into trouble in this case. An informer, he himself is informed on with a claim of impiety, since he has allegedly been forsaking his duties as Curator of Poultry, raising chickens and geese for use by the government's official fortune tellers. A ruinous fine could be imposed for this, but he calls in a favor from the imperial family, applies a little genteel blackmail to Silius and Paccius, and clears himself. Moreover, his curator job is abolished in the next round of budgetary cutbacks, even though ancient Rome considered fortune telling with birds to be necessary for what we would call "homeland security".

In later years, Silius Italicus retired from public life and went in for, of all things, poetry. He apparently fancied himself another Virgil, because he wrote a long epic poem on Rome's wars with Carthage, which has been either harshly criticized or just ignored in the subsequent nineteen centuries.

People who have read other detective novels set in ancient Rome may wonder whether Davis is having a little joke with us in creating the Rubirius Metellus family, whose family tree lists an ancestress named Julia. * Are we to guess that they may be descended from the Caecilii Metelli, the family of Decius in Roberts's series set over a century earlier? While this would be a clever tribute to another author, close attention to the ancient Roman system of nomenclature rules it out. Although Davis has in the past had problems with this system, any Rubirii Metelli would be members of the Rubirian clan (*gens*) and not of the Caecilian clan.

However, Marcus Didius Falco may have an eminent descendant. Over a hundred years later, the Praetorian Guard would murder a reform-minded Emperor and put the Empire up for auction. The winning bid came in from an obscure but extremely wealthy senator, Didius Salvius Julianus. (By this time the originally rigid Roman system of nomenclature had deteriorated, so it is difficult to say whether he could conceivably have been related to someone named Marcus Didius Falco.) But this later Didius did not make good on the payments, and had already alienated someone with a large army, so he only lasted as Emperor for 66 days.

*

An important figure in the two previous books in this series, *A Body in the Bathhouse* (reviewed in #745) and *The Jupiter Myth* (reviewed in #759) is a British tributary king whose name is given as Togidubnus. The reference books call him "Tiberius Claudius Cogidubnus". The first two names (the *praenomen* and *nomen* in Roman usage) were probably given to him by the Emperor Claudius (r. 41-54), conqueror of Britannia, whose names they also were. The British king received the Roman citizenship for collaborating with the invaders, much as the father of King Herod I had, about a century earlier, in the subject Kingdom of Judaea.

GRAUSTARK #762

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