

REBUS SIC STANTIBUS

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SHIH HUANG-TI

REBUS SIC STANTIBUS

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This Month's cover was taken from The Bedside Book of Bastards, see infra page 3.

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sion of the publisher. Diplomacy is a board game invented by Alan B. Calhammer, and is now manufactured by the Avalon-Hill Company of Baltimore, Maryland.

SHIH HUANG-TI

a REBUS biography by
D.M. Johnson and R.T. Turner

Any ruler who goes around burning books and burying scholars alive is not apt to be popular with the literary crowd. And so it has been for over two millennia with China's great unifier and first emperor - Ch'in Shih Huang-ti. China's confucian scholars have always hated Shih, although some western historians list him among history's greats. In a sense, both are right. Shih was as outstanding in his villainies as he was in his achievements.

At China's birth in 259 B.C., China was nothing but scads of small, independent, and constantly warring states. What was needed was a strong-minded, dictatorial, brutal, and consequences-be-damned leader who could unify the country. The mandate of heaven of Heaven fell on Cheng, a boy of twelve, probably a bastard son of the ruler of Ch'in.

One of China's smaller states, Ch'in was located where the present day provinces of Kansu and Shensi are. Its neighbors considered it uncultured, crude, and dangerous. Even worse was Ch'in's penchant for making war a national sport - and a grim one at that. The other Chinese states conducted war in a civilized fashion, their soldiers obeying a complicated and rigorous code of knightly conduct on the battlefield. But not the soldiers of Ch'in. War was too serious to abide by the rules. And so they invented a kind of total war all their own. They prized efficiency and slaughter above all.

Ch'in's officers held their commands by virtue of how well they killed. Promotions and pay depended on the number of heads the soldiers brought to their commanders at the end of the battle. It was fun to kill, of course, but the real thing about war was to win. Often in captured towns every man, woman and child was slaughtered, and every now and then - in actions that was strangely near cannibalism - the bodies were tossed into a boiling cauldron. The victors would then drink this "human soup."

It was in this milieu of ruthless barbarism that young Cheng was born. He was an apt pupil and learned quickly. He ascended his father's throne at the age of twelve or thirteen and within a short time became the master of Ch'in in fact as well as in name. Without so much as a backward look, he set out to conquer everybody in sight. As one contemporary remarked, he "ate up his neighbors as a silkworm devours a leaf." Today, this would be termed a "Great Leap Forward."

It is not clear from contemporary records whether the brilliance of strategy and tactics were Cheng's alone. We do know he was lucky in having a number of gifted generals under him. It took Cheng twenty years and a frightful cost in human life to achieve unification of the huge China land mass - the figure has been placed at 1,200,000 to 1,500,000 killed.

In the process he managed to make his capital, Hsien Yang, the center of China's political, economic, and cultural life. As

soon as he conquered another state, he deported any nobles left alive to Hsien Yang. He also built in Hsien Yang a palace for every state he conquered, so things got a bit crowded after a while.

By 221 B.C., Cheng had conquered China. His first act was to order all his victims' weapons melted down and fashioned into bells and twelve huge statues of himself, each weighing about twenty tons, which, in typical modesty, he placed in front of his royal palace in Hsien Yang. Then he took a new name. He called all of his advisors to a big council and said; "Behold my empire. What name shall the sovereign of such a land bear?" After numerous fancy names had been advanced, Cheng decided on Huang-Ti of Great Emperor. "I will be called Shih Huang-Ti," the "First Great Emperor," he said. His son and successor was to be Great Emperor Number Two, and his grandson Great Emperor Number Three - and so on for 10,000 generations.

He was being too optimistic. The Ch'in dynasty (from which comes the word China) lasted just fifteen years and two generations, from 221 to 207 B.C.

What manner of man was the new Shih Huan-Ti? Only one description (by one of his court officials) has come down to us. Shih was "a man with a very prominent nose, with large eyes, with a chest of a bird of prey, with the voice of a jackal, with beneficence, and with the heart of a tiger or a wolf." Not an altogether flattering portrait.

But as great as his villainies were, Shih was not without virtues. Although he administered his empire with a heavy hand, he was tireless in his efficiency - he is said to have handled 120 pounds of reports every day. He also traveled constantly, possibly because of his pathological fear of assassination, but he kept a stern eye on his officials no matter where they were and he was. Everybody got to know personally who was boss.

He was as competent and avid an administrator as Napoleon. He standardized weights and measures, wagon wheels, and agricultural implements. Every where he built "royal roads," also called the "straight" or "racing" roads, so that "all the scenery of the rivers, lakes and the sea might unroll before his eyes." These roads were 250 feet wide and lined with shade trees.

His mania to standardize things extended to the language itself, and Shih is credited with the system of writing on which modern Chinese script is based.

Shih tried to change the nature of things as he tamed the Chinese. He didn't always succeed, although he should have an "A" for effort. Once while ascending a mountain, his progress was blocked by a strong wind. Enraged, he ordered 3000 slaves to cut down all the trees on the mountain, then paint it red - the color worn by criminals. What effect this had on the wind is not recorded.

(Continued next month)

The above is taken from the book published by the authors, The Bedside Book of Bastards, McGraw-Hill.

FIRST REGULAR GAME

1976 BE

Spring 1913

WESTERN POWERS SMASH THROUGH IN WARSAW AREA

<u>France</u>	F Tun-H
<u>B. Normand</u>	F Spa(sc)-Lyo
	F Wes (S) F Tun
	<u>A Boh-Gal</u>
	<u>F Pie (S) F Spa-Lyo</u>
	A Sil-War
	A Mar (S) F Pie
<u>Italy</u>	A Ven (S) Austrian A Tyo
<u>J. Rogowski</u>	<u>F Tyr-Tun</u>
	<u>F Tus-Lyo</u>
	<u>F Ion (S) F Tyr-Tun</u>
	<u>A War (S) Austrian A Mos (surrender)</u>
	<u>F Rom-Tus</u>
<u>England</u>	A Edi-Nwy
<u>R. Kelly</u>	A Mun (S) A Ber-Sil
	A Ber-Sil
	<u>A Stp-Mos</u>
	<u>A Liv (S) French A Sil-War</u>
	<u>A Pru (S) French A Sil-War</u>
	<u>F Bar (S) A Stp-Mos (impossible)</u>
	<u>F Bal (S) A Pru</u>
	F Bot (S) A Liv
	F Nwg (C) A Edi-Nwy
	A Kie-Ber
<u>Austria</u>	A Vie (S) A Gal
<u>D. Malmquist</u>	A Tyo-H
	A Gal (S) Italian A War
	A Ukr (S) Italian A War
	A Sev (S) A Mos
	<u>F Nap-Tyr</u>
	<u>A Mos (S) Italian A War</u>
	<u>F Aeg-Gre</u>

Note: There has been another call for a four way draw. All players must approve or disapprove with the Fall season.

Press: (England to Italy) Banzai, bung-holer! Here come our units right up your old poop-chute, for a good old fashioned ream job

Commentary: The break through in Warsaw is a disaster for the eastern powers. The loss of Warsaw very seriously threatens Moscow. Worse than that, it means that the West will now very clearly have more centers than will the East. Realistically, the only hope that Jerry and Dave have in the game is to find some way to break up the Western alliance.

NOTA BENE

1. Deadline. The dedline for the game is May 13, 1979.
2. GTD Rules revision. The rules for Grand Tournament Diplomacy are now being revised. Your comments are very much appreciated.
3. NEW GTD Game. A new Section of GTD is now being formed. Please invite other players to join in.
4. Orders. I appreciate the players who list the orders for their units in the order in which such units are listed in REBUS.

5.

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