

The Renegade Mage's Technomancer World of Wizardry, 4th Ed.

Created by Steven E. Ehrbar. Version 0.6.0, last revision July 21st, 2023.

Africa

Central Africa

The late 20th century saw central Africa wracked by wars sparked by the aftermath of the Rwandan genocide and its destabilization of Mobutu's Zaire. Humanitarian disasters in themselves, the wars also death-aspected the mana in a number of locations and undercut security around the Shinkolobwe mining complex, resulting in unprotected "artisanal" mining of uranium ore. The result was outbreaks of both toxic zombie syndrome and vampirism in a region where governments, freshly wracked by war, were too weak to fully support the public health efforts to stamp them out.

This would have been bad enough, if not for outside forces. When CIA scryers foretold and averted the planned Dead Brigade attack on the World Trade Center in September 2001, a number of members of the group fled for central Africa, hoping to exploit the local conditions to create a "kingdom of the dead" in the heart of the continent. The result was an American-led multinational military intervention, "Operation Eternal Rest", which spent twenty years not just fighting the undead and those subverted by them, but also trying to keep some sort of peace between the local armed factions.

Since the U.S. withdrawal in 2021, there have been relatively few reports of undead, but various armed factions control different areas across the region, with relatively little respect for the nominal borders or the claims of the factions that control the official national capitals.

East Africa

East Africa not only has its own problems (like the perpetual failure of central government in Somalia, and the regular wars involving Ethiopia, Eritrea, and domestic factions in Ethiopia), but a good deal of spillover from the Central African mess. Uganda, Kenya, and Tanzania have seen any number of refugees and armed militant groups (who are not always easy to distinguish) spill over their borders.

Djibouti, at the mouth of the Red Sea, is famous for hosting military bases of multiple powers, with bases from China, France, Japan, and the United States. Argentina, also seeking a base there, was frozen out by French and U.S. pressure; it responded by cutting a deal with the otherwise-unrecognized Republic of Somaliland. Argentina has a naval base and port development contract in Berbera, and it provides both military advisors and equipment to the Somaliland government. Saudi Arabia, India, Iran, and the Soviet Union are also seeking naval bases near the vital shipping lanes connecting the Indian Ocean to the Mediterranean Sea.

Southern Africa

West Africa

Central Asia

With the return of the Soviet Union (q.v), Central Asia has become a hotbed of influence of external powers. Argentina, China, Iran, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, and the United States are each giving backing to various local factions, in a chaotic mix of cooperation against Stalin and competition for local influence.

East Asia

China

Japan

Mongolia

North Korea

South Korea

Taiwan

ttt

Europe

European Union

Free Russia (Kaliningrad)

When the Soviet Union (q.v.) was restored, Admiral Viktor Mardusin (commander of the Baltic Fleet) led his forces in a mutiny, seized control of the Kaliningrad Oblast, and declared himself Chairman of the State Council of the Russian Federation in the Free Russian Territories. While there is an elected local government in the oblast, it is strictly subordinate to the unelected State Council, which claims to be the legitimate provisional government of all Russia.

To boost its claim to legitimacy, the State Council includes Boris Gryzlov (Chairman of the State Duma in 2008) and Sergey Mironov (Speaker of the Federation Council in 2008). Further, Vyacheslav Lebedev, who became Chairman of the Supreme Court of the Russian Federation in 1991, escaped to Free Russia in 2008, and serves as the chief justice in Kaliningrad.

Free Russia maintains its independence through a combination of geographic separation from the Soviet Union (by Poland and Lithuania), possession of the Baltic Fleet's neoronium bombs and delivery systems, and Argentine military advisors. Alone of the Russian/Soviet orbital facilities dating to before the Stalinist restoration, Space City Mir is under the control (such as it is) of Free Russia.

Free Russia has benefitted by a brain drain from the Soviet Union, as mages and other persons with high-valued skills and talents seek a freer life in a place with a familiar language and culture. This has combined with a deliberate low-tax low-regulation economic policy and a special economic and borders arrangement with the European Union to cause Kaliningrad to boom, particularly compared to a Soviet Union strangling under Stalin's latest Five-Year Plan. The boom has brought with it social dislocation and black-market activity, on top of Soviet espionage and sabotage efforts.

Soviet Union

In 1998, uprisings in favor of Josef Stalin controlled a fifth of Russia and half of Georgia. These were widespread but disorganized, which allowed government forces to make rapid progress in reclaiming the territory. After Yeltsin resigned in late 1999, forces under acting president Putin continued to make progress, and by 2001 Stalin's territory had been reduced to about two-thirds of Belarus and pockets in the Caucasus.

However, this core was successfully held, in part because of Cuban advisor-mages and Venezuelan petrodollars flowing into Minsk. Stalinist partisans and guerillas still roamed relatively freely inside Russia, engaging in sabotage and assassinations. The security situation meant elections held in 2000 and 2004 had been incomplete, undermining the democratic legitimacy of President Putin. Intermittent peace talks began in 2002, and finally concluded in 2007, with Russia withdrawing entirely from Belarus.

The Russian presidential election was held as scheduled in on March 2nd, 2008, with OCSE, Cuban, Venezuelan, and Belarusian monitors in accordance with the peace agreement. Putin was unable to run, blocked by term limits. The election had many cases of irregularities and several violent incidents, but the clear winner with approximately two-thirds of the vote was Communist candidate Gennady Zyuganov.

Russia invaded and conquered Georgia in August 2008. When the surrender of Tbilisi was announced, Zyuganov sent military units to dissolve the opposition-controlled State Duma (elected in 2007). The next day the reborn Soviet Union was declared, consisting of Belarus, Georgia, and Russia, with Belarusian president Alexander Lukashenko becoming the Premier, Zyuganov the President, and Josef Stalin the General Secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union.

In 2014, the Soviet Union seized and annexed the Crimea, while supporting rebellions in eastern Ukraine. In 2022, the Soviets invaded Ukraine, initially nearly seizing Kiev; the initial gains have since been largely reversed, and Ukraine and the Soviet Union are slogging it out in eastern Ukraine.

Ukraine

Yadda

United Kingdom

Yadda

Middle East and North Africa

Iraq

After the Desert Saber campaign reached Baghdad almost by accident in its hundred-hour ground assault in February 1991 (the advance a demonstration of the immense logistical advantage of mechanized forces using mana engines), Saddam Hussein was overthrown by a military coup. The resulting junta allowed the Kurds in the north extensive autonomy in order to concentrate on holding the Arab portion of the country together in the face of sectarian tensions fanned by neighboring Iran.

After twelve years, the ruling junta collapsed and a civil war began, which continued on a low level (with occasional flare-ups) until 2017. The conflict influenced and was influenced by the civil war in Syria. One effect of the war was the formal creation of and an enhanced level of autonomy for the Kurdistan Regional Government.

Iran

Israel

Libya

Saudi Arabia

Syria

Latin America

Latin America today is locked into a regional “Little Cold War” (the *Guerrita Fría*). The magically-young Fidel Castro leads the local Communist Bloc (Bolivia, Cuba, Nicaragua, and Venezuela) through a mixture of reputation, charisma, and his country’s high number of mages. Mexico, a wealthy liberal democracy, is the natural leader of Free Iberoamerica, and so has seen all the old rhetoric about Yanqui imperialism redirected at it. Argentina happily backs every right-wing militant group in the region, hoping to use reaction the Communist threat to create a host of fascist regimes looking to it for leadership.

The United States is not indifferent to events in the region (in particular, it has re-leased a number of its old bases in Panama to secure the Canal) but has largely let the Mexicans take point. Stalin’s Soviet Union gives the Communists a lot of rhetorical support, but it is too busy with its struggles in its own Near Abroad and the threat of China to try to direct Castro. China maintains neutrality while pursuing trade with everyone in the region, with Party publications describing the Castro-led bloc as “left deviationist”.

Argentina

To the total surprise of anyone from a quarter-century ago, modern Argentina is one of the world-leading producers of non-magical technology. The CIA (and those members of the Five Eyes governments it has informed) knows that the reason is that it doesn’t produce the technology, it copies it from some other timeline. Even they don’t know that the source is a world where the Nazis won World War II, with the Condor Group trading Merlin’s magical knowledge to the Armanen Order for technology developed on Reich-5.

Argentina has profited quite a bit from this, but not quite as much as one might expect at first blush. There are tools-to-build-tools and production issues involved, and fascist Argentina isn’t blessed with a very large supply of technical and industrial experts compared to the rest of Merlin. The companies owned by the Condor Group that hold the patents mostly get decent royalties on Reich-5 tech that is made and sold by foreign firms, rather than monopolizing new developments. Still, the money is not negligible, and the revenue has allowed financing of interventions in the *Guerrita Fría* without cutting funds for other priorities (like Argentine internal security, or the personal comfort of Condor Group members).

That’s important because, so far, the Argentine efforts to convert Latin America to fascism are not bearing much fruit. Oh, there are allied paramilitaries galore and any number of friendly statements from local elected officials, but the hoped-for future of a continent of fascist regimes looking to Argentina for leadership is persistently staying a *future*.

Argentina actually has better luck outside its backyard. In the Central Asia, Argentine military advisors have the ears of several local despots, suitably modified Nazi rhetoric about Bolsheviks and Jews is common, and local fascist organizations talk about the legacy of the “Andronovo Aryans” and the need to fight Stalin’s Slavs. In Ukraine and Free Russia, talk of the Slavs is muted, while Argentine military advisors and arms sales are valued aid against the Soviets.

Bolivia

Backed by Cuban mages, Evo Morales responded to election protests in 2019 with an auto-coup to “stabilize the state against fascist forces backed by Argentina”. All “fascist parties” were banned, which included every party that had run a candidate against Morales. A new constitution was imposed in 2020; under it, presidential terms were extended to sixteen years. The border with Argentina is now heavily militarized, and both sides accuse the other of harboring terrorist groups.

The Condor and Reich-5

The assumption for this work is that the level of contact with the Infinite Worlds setting is “Strictly Limited”, per the “Technomancer and Infinite Worlds Notes” PDF. Condor Group efforts to develop Plane Shift spells have gone nowhere, and Reich-5 psionics don’t work on Merlin. Contact between the Condor Group and Reich-5 accordingly require either unreliable use of the Antarctica Hellstorm (at the whim of the Penguin Collective) or a Spawn of Tychiron-powered Mule (see *Infinite Worlds*, p.66).

Brazil

Brazil is the big, juicy target of all sides in the Little Cold War, since it has a third of Latin America's population and nearly half of its land area. So far, the struggle has been purely electoral, which amounts to Mexico winning, even as the presidency swaps between leftist and rightist occupants.

Chile

The Argentine victory in the Falklands War was followed up in 1984 with an attempt to seize the islands of Picton, Lennox and Nueva in the Tierra del Fuego archipelago. The successful defense against the invasion, particularly so soon after the Argentine defeat of the British, burnished the reputation of Chile's dictator, General Augusto Pinochet, particularly domestically.

Another item of importance for Chilean domestic politics was that the use of magic to resolve the fate of "the disappeared" by the National Commission for Truth and Reconciliation in 1990-91 meant that there was no way later to claim that they were victims ongoing kidnappings, and thus bypass the amnesty law for Pinochet and his followers by claiming that there were ongoing crimes.

Pinochet *was* tried, convicted, and sentenced to house arrest (plus fines and restitution) in 2007 for corruption related to kickbacks on arms deals from his time after resigning the presidency while still the Commander-in-Chief of the Army. Since completing his sentence for corruption, he has lived in a mostly quiet retirement on his estate in Valparaiso, kept middle-aged by alchemy. His valorization by the Chilean right makes it difficult for the Condor Group to recruit locals; Chileans with a tendency to support right-wing authoritarianism have a living hero and symbol who fought and beat Nazi-Peronist Argentina.

Today, Chile is the most prosperous country in South America, is a close regional ally of Mexico, and has extensive military ties to Israel (based on mutual opposition to the Condor Group). Chile has a network of free trade agreements with other countries, including Canada, the EU, Japan, Mexico, South Korea, Taiwan, the UK, the US, and Vietnam.

Colombia

The hottest front in the *Guerrita Fría* is Colombia. The left-wing FARC (*Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia*, or Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia) is strongly backed by Cuba; peace talks ended in 2013 when hard-liners in FARC seized control of the organization with the assistance of Cuban military advisors. Shortly thereafter, the Black Eagles (*Águilas Negras*, a splinter group from the right-wing paramilitaries demobilized in 2006) saw a major influx of support from Argentina and began their first large-scale operations. Both groups of fighters have formed alliances with rival cocaine cartels. The government's military forces, assisted American and Mexican advisors, are trying to stamp out both.

Costa Rica

Long the most stable country in Central America, and entirely outside Trinity's Shadow, Costa Rica is mostly of note because Mexico has convinced the government to allow Neocontra camps on its side of the border with Nicaragua. Electronic component exports are a major component of the economy, though few foreigners are aware of its importance, thinking of Costa Rica mostly as a tourist destination.

Cuba

Cuba's sugar-centered economy faced disaster in 1969. While it had enough mages to copy the productivity improvements that quintupled farm yields in the United States, there was a major sugar glut on the market as the US went from importing 5 million tons a year in 1959 to exporting 15 million tons a year (in part as a result of aiming its sugar policy at undermining Cuba). Although Cuba was insulated to a degree by existing Soviet purchase agreements, it relied on sugar exports for hard currency, and the USSR had also made it clear to Castro that there was a limit to how long it would pay Cuba more than five times the open market price for sugar.

There was another attempt to repeat the crop diversification and industrialization plans that had been attempted in the 1960-1963 time period, this time advised by Eastern Bloc planners as part of the "socialist international division of labor" in COMECON. These efforts had marginally more success than they had the previous time, but the real Cuban success was exporting people. Mageworkers, particularly enchanters, were sent to work in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union, where they would live lives of

relative privilege far away from the envious eyes of the Cuban peasantry, with a good chunk of their wages paid to the Cuban state.

That state of affairs lasted until the end of the Cold War. While Cuba had been able to rely on the security services of the Warsaw Pact to keep its mages from defecting, the new democracies were not willing to play police state. As Cuban mageworkers started applying for refugee status throughout Europe in 1990, Cuba started ordering them home, and stopped sending more overseas. Combined with the loss of direct Soviet support, this marked the beginning of the “Special Period in Peacetime” as the Cuban economy adjusted.

(One fortunate feature of the Special Period in *Technomancer* was that there was no widespread hunger as a result. Though the loss of imported agrichemicals and fuel for mechanized agriculture hurt crop yields, the combination of magic to enhance yields and the previous diversification of crops away from sugar meant Cuba was able to feed itself, though with a reduction in meat consumption.)

The key transformation of the Special Period was the construction of industrial enchantment lines on Cuban soil for the first time. While Castro did indeed worry about the effects of having an “elite wizard caste” on Cuban society, national survival was at stake, and compromises were necessary. The lines were lower-tech than in North America (TL7 or even TL6) and ran at half efficiency without NEMA power, but Cuban enchanter wages were enough lower (\$2,100/month equivalent instead of \$7,200) and average work-months were enough longer (22 days instead of 20) to allow sale of enchanted items on the world market at roughly the same price per energy point even with the lines only providing 5 (TL7) or 4 (TL6) energy per mage per day.

The result is that Cuba transformed in the 1990s into a “socialist technomagical society”, a form it retained after forming its alliance with Venezuela in 1998, and then after the restoration of the Soviet Union in 2008. Since the USSR came in and completed construction of the Juragua Nuclear Power Plant in 2013 (construction had been abandoned by Russia in 1992), the doubling of the efficiency at Cuba’s key industrial enchantment lines has further improved the country’s economic position. Fidel Castro has found he quite enjoys Cuba’s role as the magical crown jewel of the new Communist Bloc – particularly when Stalin’s envoys come hat-in-hand to Havana to ask for more help with the war in Ukraine.

El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras

Mexican cocaine cartels and criminal gangs with origins in the United States (such as MS-13 and M-18) plague the countries of the “Northern Triangle of Central America”, along with a revival of the left-wing guerilla movements that had abated in the 1990s. Mexican efforts to maintain stability and order run into difficulties with corrupt government officials and patriotic resentment of foreign interference. When Mexican demands for clean government get too loud, local officials are quick to invoke the subjugation of the region to the First Mexican Empire in 1821-1823. “We will not join Chiapas”, invoking the Mexican annexation of part of what was the United Provinces of Central America, is a fairly common graffiti tag in the region’s cities.

In addition to agriculture and the drug trade, remittances from Mexico and the US are major parts of the local economies. Local officials complain that the “Mage Drain” of their most talented wizards to those two countries hamper domestic development efforts.

French Guiana

The victory of teleportation magic over rocketry as a means of space launch led to the abandonment of the rocket launch facility in Kourou shortly after completion; the French have been largely uninterested in their large chunk of South American rainforest ever since. If the independence movement could ever manage to get a majority of the locals to support it, it is expected that France would gladly quit the place.

Haiti

Mexico

Over the last quarter-century, Mexico has climbed from a newly-minted “developed” status to the front tier national income; per-capita parity with Greece and Portugal in 1998 has made way for parity with Australia and Germany in 2023. With its relatively large population (121 million), it has the

world's fourth-largest economy (as measured by PPP, behind India and ahead of Japan; third by nominal value, behind China and ahead of Japan). If it is not yet treated as a major world power, that reflects a lag in its involvement and its military spending, factors that are changing with the *Guerrita Fría*.

As Mexico has become more prosperous, it has become more hostile ground for the drug cartels. As money in other careers went up, the cartels were less able to recruit capable people. As money available to members of the government and law enforcement went up, bribes sufficient to buy them went up, too. And as the cartels increasingly made money selling to Mexican users, social attitudes became more hostile than when they were perceived as preying on the *Yanqi*. That is not to say that the cartels are dead, but they have been forced to become more careful, and have increasingly moved what operations they can to Central America, where "soldiers" are cheaper to hire and the law easier to bribe.

Nicaragua

In the southernmost country to largely lie within Trinity's Shadow, Daniel Ortega's government has tried to reorganize society on Cuban lines. The result has been the birth of the Neocontras, a revival of the 1980s anti-Sandinista guerillas. Cuban mages and military advisors back Ortega, while Mexico and Argentina have provided aid to the Neocontras. A center of the civil war has been government attempts to build a Nicaraguan Canal linking the Atlantic and Pacific. Locals who would be displaced by the canal infrastructure (including two planned dams and reservoirs) provide much of the manpower and support for the Neocontras.

Of note, lightly-populated eastern Nicaragua, which includes the area that would be most disrupted by the canal, is not within Trinity's Shadow. The "Shadow Line" also roughly corresponds to the ethnic divide between the parts of the country with a white-and-mestizo majority (the west) and the parts with indigenous and African-descent majorities (the east). The magical have-and-have-not divide was added to a long-existing ethnic, racial, and economic divide in Nicaragua, which helped fuel the Contra war in the 1980s and helps fuel the Neocontra war today.

Panama

Since the overthrow of strongman Manuel Noriega, Panama has been stable, democratic, free, and relatively prosperous. The locals are generally in favor of the recently-resumed US military presence, expecting that it will help keep things that way in the face of the conflicts in Colombia and Nicaragua.

Suriname

Maria Hawker's hold on power in Suriname is stable, and her cooperation with the Leviathan Investment Group has brought prosperity. That stability and prosperity, combined with Hawker's solid anti-communist credentials, have allowed her to openly denounce the Condor Group and refuse Argentine offers of military advisors. As a result, Suriname has been able to maintain close relations with the Dutch and cordial relations with the European Union, despite Hawker's dictatorship.

Uruguay

Venezuela

After the death of Hugo Chávez from cancer in 2013, Nicolás Maduro consolidated control with the backing of Cuban and Soviet advisors. He imposed a Marxist-Leninist constitution in 2017, including making the United Socialist Party of Venezuela only legal political party in the country. Nationalizations followed, and the economic crisis deepened. Between the institutional damage to PdVSA (the state-run oil company) and the continuing magic-driven decline in demand for crude oil, there are few prospects for improvement in Venezuela's condition short of Maduro's ouster. Venezuelan refugees tend to make their way to Mexico, the richest Spanish-speaking country in the world.

South Asia

Afghanistan

Bangladesh

Bangladesh is, unbeknownst to the inhabitants of Merlin, one of the world's great losers from the Trinity Event. Textile exports, a mainstay of the economy in other worldlines, were strangled in the crib in the 1970s by golemization of the US and Mexican garment industries. Bangladesh's next-biggest export, jute fiber, has struggled in the face of competition from other fibers (whether the animal fibers mass-produced by Hair Growth, other plant fibers that have been affected by the productivity gains of magical agriculture, or synthetic fibers whose price is down with the reduction in oil prices).

India

Pakistan

Southeast Asia

Shortly after South Vietnam conquered the North, Cambodia, Laos, and Vietnam applied for membership in the Southeast Asia Treaty Organization. France and the UK noted they couldn't let them join under the terms of the 1954 Geneva Agreements, but neither really wanted to be in SEATO any longer. An extensive reorganization was negotiated (and in the meantime, Papua New Guinea, newly independent from Australia, applied to join), with the result that on July 1, 1977, SEATO was re-formed with member states Australia, Cambodia, Laos, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, the Philippines, Thailand, the United States, and Vietnam.

Burmese incursions into Laos and Thailand in March 2003 resulted in the first-ever formal invocation of SEATO's collective defense provisions, resulting in a US-led intervention that overthrew the military regime. The consequence was a collapse of central authority in Burma, and a multi-sided ethnic struggle combined with a guerilla war against SEATO forces. The US withdrew in 2011, and then returned in 2013 for a new round of fighting which ended in 2017.

Burma

The Kingdom of Burma is a fairly loose confederation, with each of the eight states corresponding to the "traditional" ethnic-geographic groups having substantial self-government and local military forces, while the central government has strictly limited powers. Soe Win of the Konbaung dynasty reigns as King of Burma, while Aung San Suu Kyi is the Prime Minister of the central government. Thailand and China currently are competing for influence in the country, and another round of civil conflict is seen as likely.

Cambodia

The Kingdom of Cambodia spends a lot of time trying to maintain neutrality between its neighbors (and fellow SEATO members) Thailand and Vietnam; it is as a result very cooperative with the United States

Indonesia

Malaysia

Laos

Thailand

Vietnam