

## Cyborg (Quantum 7)

This Quantum 7 world is about two steps up from being a hell world; its history has gotten steadily more and more dreary and dark since the 1600s. It's polluted, dirty, not particularly safe -- and uniquely valuable to both Centrum and Infinity, because its inhabitants seem almost addicted to trying out new prosthetic, biotechnical, and general medical procedures and devices. The timeline also strictly off-limits to both groups, because the inhabitants also routinely test out all of these things on unwilling test subjects. Cyborg's techniques even makes *Centrans* squeamish, and they don't squeam easily.

How well this ban works is a matter of some debate. Certainly every new innovative medical technique that comes out of the Infinite Worlds is eventually linked with Cyborgian vivisectionists -- at least, according to conspiracy theorists. And there certainly are crosstime organizations out there that are less squeamish than even Centrum.

*Cyborg, 1945 AD*

## **Current Affairs**

A balkanized world, constantly at war, and constantly improving its medical technology at a horrible price.

## **Divergence Point**

1618: A medical death cult causes the Endless War to spread from Germany to the entire planet.

## **Major Civilizations**

Chinese (Diffuse), Islamic (Diffuse), Western (diffuse)

## **Great Powers**

None. Every country on Cyborg is fairly small, is either an oligarchy or an outright dictatorship, and has a CR between 4 and 6.

## **Worldline Data**

TL: 5 (TL 8/9 for medicine and biotech)

Quantum: 7

Mana Level: None

Centrum Zone: Red

Infinity Level: Z1

On Cyborg, in the current year of 1945, separatism is the order of the day: there are five countries making up the

British Isles, the New World is an endless patchwork of petty states and minor dictatorships that fight each other constantly, China is known as the Thousand Kingdoms, and Australia has yet to see a successful colonization effort. Technology languishes at the Steam Age stage, but the lack of universal standard weights and measures precludes widespread transportation or communication networks. It's a rare region that hasn't had a war go off in the last five years.

It all started with what Homeline calls The Thirty Years' War. On Cyborg, the Endless War first destroyed the Germanies. Then it wrecked Scandinavia. From there it dragged in first the Holy Roman, then the Spanish empires; the former destroyed itself killing off the Ottomans, and the latter fell to civil war. The Far Asian world stayed unscathed for another generation, but they too fell to anarchy and chaos.

It was all due to the *Pestärzte*, or 'Plague Doctors.' They may have been insane cultists who worshipped Death itself, but they were insane cultists who had somehow discovered the principles of germ theory, centuries before Pasteur. The *Pestärzte* used this knowledge to wreck every empire on Earth; many a royal court was certain that they could control the dangerous knowledge that the cult

controlled, and many a royal court ended in a frenzy of sickness, madness, and death.

Ironically, the *Pestärzte* themselves collapsed as an organization, once the last empires fell; they were no more immune to the dangers of the Endless War than anyone else. Even more ironically, the medical arts flourished in this new era. Doctors were in high demand in a world where smallpox was a weapon of war. Three centuries of constant, low-level conflicts have produced a system that is as good at healing the injuries from wars as it is bad at preventing those wars in the first place.

Remarkably, Cyborg's medical tech is, in some ways, superior to either Homeline's or Centrum's: what they lack in electromagnetic theory they make up for with brute force, three hundred years' worth of dedicated focusing on biological solutions to medical problems, a cultural tendency to be uncritically supportive of comprehensive experimentation, and an utter lack of medical ethics. Cyborgian prosthetics in particular are amazingly sophisticated, given that they're not even electric, let alone electronic. Their teaching methods are likewise more efficient than either Homeline's or Centrum's, although anyone who graduates from a Cyborgian medical apprenticeship could easily be convicted of war crimes.

## Outworld Involvement

Both Homeline and Centrum banned all research and products from this timeline when they saw the first reports from the mass human vivisection camps of the Caribbean and South Pacific. It bemuses agents from either organization to see their own horror mirrored on the other side; Infinity is appalled by the human rights violations, Interworld is revulsed by the callous disregard for human potential, and both sides have a visceral loathing of Cyborgian research protocols. The rule of thumb is that smugglers of Cyborgian technology or research never seem to want to surrender; the only time that prisoners are taken is when one side or the other are cracking down on smuggler networks.

So, who *does* smuggle? Some of the more depraved criminal groups. The Cabal, certainly. Probably one or another rogue governments or Services -- or at least factions inside of them. And, of course, desperately ill people with more resources than ethics. If you can live through the experience, there's a lot of money to be made from Cyborg.

On the timeline itself; about the only groups that have anything like an acceptable ethical outlook at this point are various religious organizations. Infinity has been working primarily through the remnants of the Roman Catholic Church (currently in exile in Sardinia), while Centrum has effectively recreated the Salvation Army (using that name). There is a tacit truce in place, on the grounds that when Centrum and Homeline fight here, smugglers slip through the cracks. The truce has already lasted longer than expected; it might even prove stable.

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