

CN 08/09

Cline 9-Man Diplomacy V

by Robert F. Cline & Fred C. Davis Jr. & Andrew Poole.

1. All the usual rules of Diplomacy (1971 rulebook) apply, except where amended below.
2. The board of Regular Diplomacy is used, with the alterations and additions as shown on the enclosed game map.
3. In addition to the seven usual powers of Diplomacy, a further two powers are added, whose initial placements are as follows:
BARBARY STATES: F Tunis, F Morocco, A Algeria.
PERSIA: F Jordan (wc), A Arabia, A Iran.
4. TURKEY starts the game with an Army in Constantinople, Fleet in Ankara and a Fleet in Smyrna. The initial placement of the other six regular powers remains the same.
5. With the extension of the board 6 neutral supply centres have been added. These are Piedmont, Canary Islands, Corsica, Crete, Egypt, Piedmont and the Sudan. The Canary Islands are like a coastal land province. Armies may be convoyed there and fleets may move to and from any adjoining sea space.
6. Canals:
 - a. Kiel Canal, Dardanelles, Denmark/Sweden all operate as normal.
 - b. Suez Canal divides Egypt into two parts which still form a single province. It operates just as with Kiel and Constantinople; an army may move into or out of Egypt without concern for the canal, a fleet may move through Egypt using the canal.
 - c. Volga Canal: this is a major change. This creates the possibility of fleet operation in the Caspian Sea which is now passable. This means that Iran has two coasts and fleets may be built in Moscow. Fleets may move through the canal using the adjoining land provinces as if they are coastal spaces. (eg. F(BLA)-Sev; F(Sev)-Mos; F(Mos)-CAS;) This is like moving from BAL to SKA (or vice versa) via Sweden or Denmark. The Volga Canal affects Sev in a similar way to the normal canals through Kie, Con and Egy. Armies may move freely across the line of the canal, their movement is in no way affected by its presence. The canal also forms the boundary between Mos and Geo. Armies may not be convoyed through the canal.
7. Antarctica: The Antarctic Sea is a special Off-board box province which links WAO and IND and allows a fleet to sail 'round the cape'. Fleets may move F(WAO)-ANT; F(ANT)-IND or vice versa. No other provinces may be used to round Africa and no convoys are allowed via this route. Only one fleet at any time may occupy ANT and may be attacked, supported, and give support or attack from its position.
8. Direct Passage: Both armies and fleets may move without being convoyed directly from Ire to Cly and from Sic to Nap (or reverse) as with any adjacent space, because of the Direct Passage or Moses Crossing which links these provinces. Fleet movement from the NAO to Lpl or from TYS to ION is not affected.
9. Special Build Centre: though StP no longer adjoins BAR, Russia may still build fleets on the Barents Sea coast in Ark, as long as still holds StP.
10. With the new powers and neutrals there are now 45 supply centres on the board and so the total required for outright victory is now 23.
11. The conventional game year is used, that is the game begins in 1901.

12. New Province Abbreviations:

Ade Aden	*Cor Corsica	Kuw Kuwait
Afg Afghanistan	*Cre Crete	Leb Lebanon
Ale Alexandretta	Cro Croatia	Lib Libya
*Alg Algeria	Egy Egypt	*Mor Morocco
ANT Antarctic Sea (see 8)	Geo Georgia	PER Persian Gulf
*Ara Arabia	GOS Gulf of Sirte	Sah Sahara
Ark Arkangel	IND Indian Ocean	SAO South Atlantic Ocean
Bln Baluchistan	Ire Ireland	Sic Sicily
*CaI Canary Islands	*Irn Iran	SMS Southern Mediterranean
*Cas Castille	Irq Iraq	*Sud Sudan
CAS Caspian Sea	*Jor Jordan	Waf West Africa
Cat Catalonia	Kaz Kazakhstan	WAO West Atlantic Ocean
		*Zar Zara

THE DECLINE OF THE 9-MAN VARIANT

Long before the days of global monster variants like Mercator, there were those people who wanted to get more players into a Diplomacy game and "round off" the Regular board, and so created various '9-Man' variants; Adding two more powers to the board was no real problem, there are four possibilities which can be experimented with in various combinations: Spain, Scandinavia, North Africa and the Middle East. An American called Robert B. Cline (hence the awful punning title) thought the regular board was too rigid in its east-west polarisation and wanted to give a more circular aspect to the game.

So, casting historical accuracy to the winds, he opted for the latter two choices and tacked the new powers of the 'Barbary States' and 'Persia' onto the southern edge of the board. This grossly expanded the Mediterranean theatre and offered the southern regular powers many more options. "The result is, of course, that all players have more options." The original design was created by taping a piece of white paper over the lower part of the game-board, re-drawing the land outlines and putting in the new spaces, centres and countries. This was in 1966 when 9-Man variants were all the rage and at least 4 different 9-Man variant designs were being played.

Just after Bob produced the design he ran a postal 'section' of the game in a sort of one sheet zine which was never named and came to be known simply as 'NAME' and only ran for a few issues. Housed in a new zine appropriately called 'RENAME', the game was revived in 1972 by Conrad von Metzke who republished a thorough edition of the rules. That was Cline I. In August 1973 'Rename' carried the map and rules for Cline II in which a few modifications were made. These included moving one of Persia's home centres from Iraq to Arabia. This version of the game was then re-published in 1977 in Diplomacy World no. 17. The accompanying text claimed it was the third version of Cline 9, but this would seem to be due to the incorrect inclusion of a similar, but now lost, 9-Man variant by Hal Naus.

The game reached the UK when Conrad sent a copy of Cline I to Mick Bullock, then editor of '1901 and all that' who printed it in July 1973, just before Cline II appeared in Rename 12. Mick interpreted some things differently and wound up with a slightly variant. He dropped the Sea of Azov (as did Cline II) but unlike Cline II he kept the Persian home centre in Iraq. Units were allowed to cross between Mor and Spa (as in neither) and Turkey starts with a F Smy. This variant has now be classified as Cline III. After the publication of Cline II in Diplomacy World, Fred C. Davis set about making a few minor adjustments to create Cline IV. Various spaces such as Aden, Afghanistan, Baluchistan, Kuwait and Gulf of Sirte were added to provide additional manoeuvring spaces. Ireland and Sicily were made passable for the same 'historical' reasons as with other Davis variants; Turkmen was merged with Kazakhstan, whilst MAO was made to touch CaI, both so as to make movement a little easier and more fluid.

As well as the extension of the board south and eastwards, all the versions of Cline 9 have also included a Volga Canal to create the possibility of fleet action in the Caspian Sea. As designed the canal also formed the boundary between adjacent provinces and so in Cline II and IV fleets moved along it much as with moving through Denmark or Sweden, using the adjacent land provinces. However, Mick Bullocks CIII (and therefore possibly CI) had the Volga Canal as effectively a long, thin sea province which fleets could move to and from either BLA or CAS, yet armies could cross it as if it didn't exist. Having it like the other Diplomacy waterways seems to make it simpler but slower.

When he was custodian of the Variantbank, Steve Agar included the version of Cline II which appeared in Diplomacy World, in his 1980 'Variants and Uncles Supplement A' (now Variant Package 1). As with CI and CIII, the four provinces which the Volga Canal edged past, also met in a rather awkward four-corner pattern. Units are not allowed to move diagonally across this, except oddly in Mick's Cline III. The Cline map which appeared in Outposts issue 1 (for the OP2 game) included the addition of a small impassable area on the south bank of the canal and at the four-corner meet of the province boundaries. This Cline IIIa dealt more neatly with the problem of diagonal movement at this point.

Fred C. Davis used a more radical solution in Cline IV when he moved the Sev/Arm border southwards and put Armenia back in its logical place and far from the canal. This made the canal cut through the enlarged Sev and made it like Kie, Con and Egy. His other changes were either to improve the opportunities for fluid movement by adding, moving or even removing provinces, or for the sake of 'historical accuracy' (though on this basis the whole of Cline would have been abandoned long ago!) Most of these changes followed along similar lines to his other regular board modifications, as described in 'Variations on a theme by Calhamer'.

In Arda 3 (the occasional zine of the North American Variant Bank) Rod Walker describes the history of the Cline 9 Variants and comments that "the Davis version is ... probably the most playable version of the Cline game". It is surprising then, that it may only have reached the UK in 1981 when Simon Billenness acquired a copy, started a game of it and the variant was published in the zine 'Shellshock' edited by Tony Marchese. Since then it has been the standard version sent out by the Variant bank and also appeared in Ode, Acolyte and The Ring no. 6.

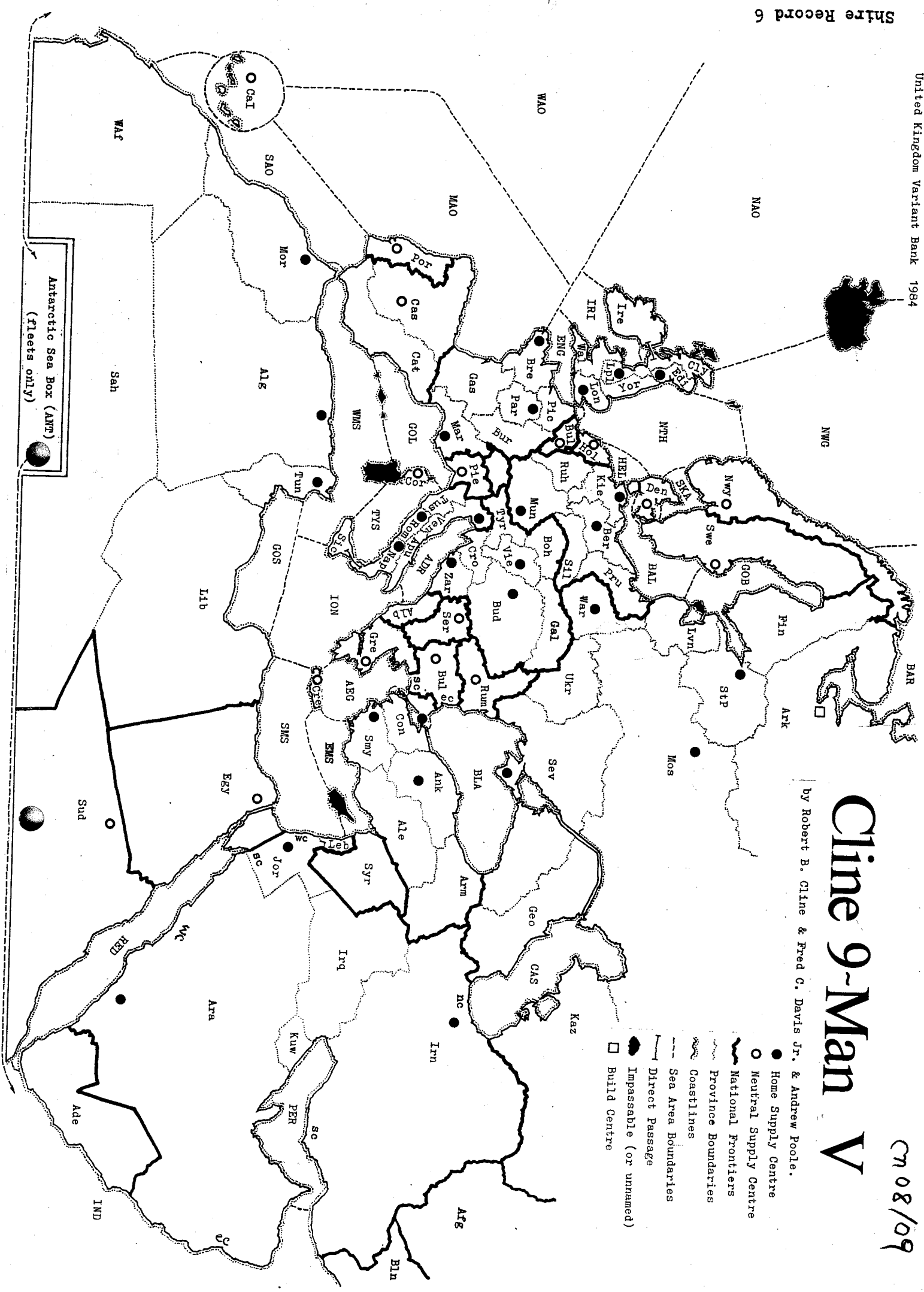
The experience of OP2, the lines of thought in 'Variations on a theme by Calhamer' and an imminent gamestart have produced a few ideas for further improvements. Fred had considered creating an Arkangel province (with special build centre) out of the northern part of StP. For Cline V, this change was adopted along with the division of Trieste into Croatia and Zara, moving the Austrian home centre into the latter space and further away from Italy. The 'variations' article also mentioned the 'Gibraltar bottleneck' and the problems it causes of movement from the Med. to Atlantic. With the Barbary States as a new power on the southern shore of these seas the problem is increased, and movement between the Iberian peninsular and North Africa is still more difficult.

The other changes aim to improve this situation, but still ensure it is not too easy for the Barbary States to invade northwards. The problem of Por adjacent to only two other spaces is dealt with by making Por touch SAO and so making it easier to enter or leave both. This partly deals with the problem of Spain's two Atlantic coasts, as does dividing Spain into the two provinces of Castille and Catalonia. This helps further widen the Gibraltar bottleneck and makes it a little easier to enter Europe from North Africa (and probably vice versa), whilst not having the 'open-door' of a direct passage link (which there is in CIII) and keeping the prize of the supply centre at a safe distance. OP2 shows that this is a good area for a stalemate line, these changes should reduce that attraction and make it easier for various powers to move either north or south. Now, only running the game will indicate whether or not I'm right.

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North American Variant Bank Notes on "Cline V" - Andrew Poole version

This is a genuine Cline V, not to be confused with a mix-up in enumeration which occurred in the 1970's, which had led to a different version being called "Cline V" for a period of time. In this version, Andy Poole has built upon the Cline IV version (Fred Davis' revision) to make a few more specific refinements. To wit:

1. Spain has been divided into "Castile," a SC, and "Catalonia," an ordinary space. This eliminates one two-coasted province.
2. St. Pete has likewise been divided into a SC in the south and a Build Space, "Archangel," on Barents Sea. (This is identical to what Fred Davis has done in several of his other variants, such as Abstraction). There are now only two 2-coasted provinces, Bulgaria and Jordan.
3. Trieste has been split into "Zara," a SC; and "Croatia," an ordinary space. (Again, identical to several other Davis variants). This strengthens both Austria and Italy.
4. There are two name changes. Ethiopia has become "Sudan;" Mauretania has become "West Africa." Both are probably more suitable names.
5. There is a slight map error, in that Syria should be shown as part of the Turkish Empire. You may wish to amend your copy to show this.

I heartily approve of these changes, and recommend that future play of this game be made on the Cline V map.

- Fred C. Davis, January 1986