

The background of the cover is a dramatic, high-angle landscape. On the right side, a rugged, dark grey rock cliff face descends steeply. A military-style truck with a brown canvas cover is perched precariously on a narrow ledge of this cliff. The rest of the image is a vast, hazy mountain range with various peaks and ridges, some covered in green vegetation. The sky is a pale, clear blue. The overall mood is one of adventure and challenge.

# THE GREAT RACE

HISTORY BOOK

by JEAN-CLAUDE QUOINEAUD

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## PREAMBLE

A man alone in an office in Paris, under the weak light of a lamp, takes a map of Asia and the Middle East, opens it on his work table.



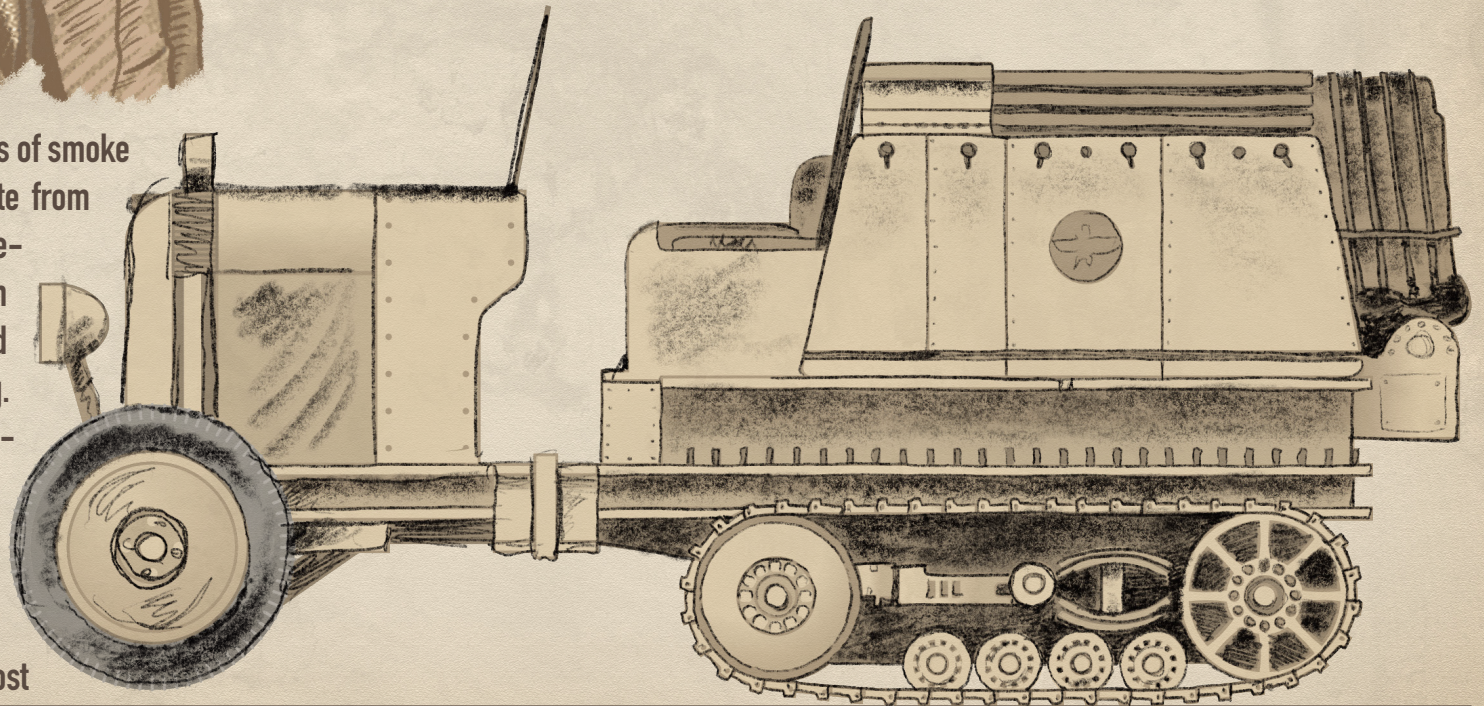
He seizes a pencil and, releasing a few wisps of smoke from a Craven «A» cigarette, draws a route from Beirut to Beijing. He takes a step back, returns on his work. This man is at once an industrialist, a visionary, an adventurer and a precursor of globalization and marketing. He is André Citroën. The red pencil line covers the ancient routes of the silk caravans, across sandy deserts, icy plains, mule tracks, mountain passes and rocky corridors, through war-torn countries, through unknown peoples, all over a distance of almost

13,000 kilometers.

Is this the synopsis of an adventure film directed by Hollywood?

No, it is a French story. The story with a capital «H» of the Citroën expedition on the Silk Road, from 1931 to 1932, which may appear today as a commercial expedition with an industrial stake to show the colonial power of a country.

If these visions were part of the objectives that cannot be denied, for the men, individually, this expedition will have been a true epic exceptional epic with discoveries that allowed to open to the world, the knowledge of different peoples and cultures.



# CENTRE-ASIA CITROËN EXPEDITION

3<sup>EME</sup> MISSION GM. HAARDT L. AUDOUIN DUBREUIL



The initial project consisted of an outward journey along the Silk Road and a return journey through South-East Asia, India and the Arabian Peninsula. André Citroën was refused permission by the Soviet author-

ities to cross their territory, so he had to imagine the impossible... crossing the Himalayas and the Gobi Desert.





If, on the scale of the ministries, these expeditions allow to exist in the concert of nations and to realize possibilities of future benefits at the industrial and commercial level, the men who compose these missions also see it as an adventure, a challenge. The adrenalin of discovery for the scientists, the dream of being the first to bring back something unknown and to become the new Howard Carter for his country, are also motivating and exciting. There is also the thirst to understand, to open up to the world.



Among these men, some are in love with humanism and curiosity, like Father Theillard de Chardin, others see the opportunity to go out and travel, to be able to tell their story, like the pilot and mechanic Maurice PENAUD. The arts, with paintings and photographs, will allow museums to be supplied and other civilizations to be known in the so-called developed countries.

Tropical medicine will also evolve and bring benefits that will allow the emergence of a better life for the people encountered. The knowledge will be shared and will lead, inevitably, to an intellectual approach of emancipation of the encountered populations, which will make its way. This was certainly not the goal, but it will also be an effect of the Citroën expeditions. The Middle East will become aware of the gold that it holds in its subsoil. China, until now considered underdeveloped, mysterious and unknown to the Western population, will open up and show this power that is only waiting to be awakened.



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These expeditions will be also, for the populations which discover them in the exposures and the museums, a way of travelling, of learning.

In this still agricultural Europe, few people are aware that the world is vast. Travelling is expensive and not within the reach of a large majority of the population. In opposition to this state of affairs, we are at the end of the Great War and the people, all the people, whether they are emerging or developed, want to live, to blossom, to dream, to discover and to enjoy. The war, in spite of its procession of despair, has allowed considerable progress in industry.

Mechanization allows us to foresee beneficial evolutions for workers, farmers and laborers. Aviation allowed us to free ourselves from distances and opened new perspectives.



The Central Asia cruise will transmit this bubbling knowledge to peoples who are in full emergence in the technical, scientific and ideological fields. All this will be done, for the first time in the history of hu-

manity, in the eyes of the whole world, thanks to the media, to information, to cinema, to publicity, to exhibitions, to newspapers. These are the beginnings of globalization and marketing. Everyone will be able to live the thrilling adventures of this expedition, in his newspaper, according to the editions, then in exhibitions and in cinemas.



# THE PREPARATION OF THE EXPEDITION



1931 was the year of the colonies for France. Citroën's first expedition, with self-propelled vehicles, took place in 1923 with the crossing of the Sahara. The objective was to validate an industrial concept that Citroën wanted to sell to the military: the semi-tracked vehicle with the Kégresse system. Louis Renault, another national manufacturer, had decided to take up the «gauntlet». His concept was based on a 6-wheel drive torpedo. The operation had been conclusive because its vehicles had been more efficient and faster. But Citroën was able to sell itself and the publicity around its expedition overshadowed the success of Renault. In 1924-1925, Citroën decides to launch a new challenge, the crossing of Africa. He wanted to conclude and establish the fact that his vehicle was really cut out for adventure and impossible challenges. Renault will once again join the ranks. But where Citroën sees a sporting challenge, Renault sees an opportunity to open up a commercial route. Moreover, it is already setting up the first passenger transport routes with the Transsaharan transport company in North Africa.

The 6-wheel drive torpedo will be much better than Citroën's autochenille, but the latter knew how to surround himself with scientists, doctors, journalists and will deploy a flawless advertising by praising the humanitarian benefits of this crossing, with films and exhibitions. Thus,



in 1928, the French population discovered the tribes of Central Africa, its fauna and flora, in museums and during the colonial exhibition in Paris. The visitor will only remember the image of the Citroën car, crossing the Congo River or driving among elephants and rhinoceroses, in the vast plains at the foot of Kilimanjaro. However, André Citroën wants to strike a blow. He was looking for a new challenge that Louis Renault could not meet.

## PARIS 1928



In the offices of the Opéra, a few weeks before the official opening of the Colonial Exhibition, André Citroën has an idea, but it is a crazy one. Leaning over the maps, he finally makes up his mind. It will be the Central Asia expedition. A crossing of the Middle East, in the direction of Peking, via the Himalayas, in two groups. Two expeditions, one leaving from Beirut, the other from Tien-sin, will have to meet in the center of Asia, then reach Peking before re-embarking in Indochina. In his mind, he already had the men who were capable of realizing this dream. Georges-Marie Haardt and Audouin-Dubreuil demonstrated their organizational and adventurous skills during the Central Africa expedition. They will lead this expedition and will leave from Lebanon to cross the Himalayan passes. He still has to find another hothead to make the journey from the China Sea to the center of Asia. This adventure represents 13000 kilometers of effort and 13 difficult months. It brings together 50 people. The vehicles had to be transformed in order to support the heavy loads and the perilous, chaotic and tiring tracks.

In 1929, the economic crisis complicates the plans and some ministries withdraw their funding. André Citroën decided to put his hand in his pocket and finance what he could not sponsor through patrons or his networks.



Between the choice of the route, asking for the necessary authorizations to be able to cross the borders, designing and testing the vehicles, setting up storage areas for spare parts, refueling and obtaining the protection of these areas, which are sometimes located in war-torn territories... It is a real headache, diplomatic, human and political.



Then designing the team was not as easy as André Citroën thought. Georges-Marie Haardt was without question the right man to lead the expedition. Audouin-Dubreuil will be a perfect second.

But the choice of the leader of the second team, Victor Point, who was to reach the China Sea to head for Peking, was not unanimously approved by Georges-Marie Haardt. He found him too young, too fiery, not flexible enough, where tact and diplomacy were needed. After a meeting between the three men, Georges-Marie Haardt accepts this choice and Victor Point will be the head of the China group. Haardt was appointed head of the Pamir group with Audouin-Dubreuil as his deputy.



Agreements were made with the different countries that were crossed and, above all, with the different regions of China because this vast country was in full effervescence. The Southeast was under the control of a certain Mao-tse-Tung, a communist, who was fighting against the central power in Nanking, which was held by Chiang Kai Shek, a conservative. In this ambient chaos, the other regions are under the control of small warlords who make their laws, according to the opportunities. An agreement was finally reached with Tsu-Hing, the Chinese company that has been providing transportation for centuries. This firm will take 2% of the total value of the goods that will pass through the territories. This intermediary will have to take care of the security and set up the material depots, even in the combat zones.

In the Middle East, at the end of the First World War, kingdoms held by tribes, were emancipated. This is the case of Saudi Arabia, with the Saud family. It is necessary to monetize the passage and to prevent the susceptibilities of a kingdom which became the protector of the Kaaba, in Mecca, historical birthplace of the prophet Mohammed.





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The organization and planning will be an adventure within an adventure. Political and diplomatic networks will be activated. This created a buzz around the expedition that fed the adventurous and sulphurous side of the Central Asia expedition. Three years after the success of the *Croisière noire*, which in 1924-1925 linked Colomb-Béchar to Tananarive by car, André Citroën and Georges-Marie Haardt formed the project to link Beirut and Indochina by land. The Citroën-Central Asia Expedition took more than two years to prepare.



Lieutenant Victor Point, with the support of Mr. de Martel, Minister of France in China, obtained Chiang Kai Shek's agreement for the expedition to pass through Chinese territory.

Marshal King, governor of the practically independent Sinkiang, also gave his agreement.



In 1930, Haardt went to Washington to obtain the support of the National Geographic Society.

On his return, he learned that the USSR, which had initially declared itself favorable, refused to allow the expedition to pass through in 1931. This decision forces the expedition to pass by the Himalayas and validates the choice of two expeditions.

The junction of the two groups must take place at the foot of the eastern foothills of the Pamir. The seven self-propelled vehicles of the China group were sent by boat to Tien-sin where they were received by Victor Point.

It is also necessary to foresee hundreds of mules, horses or camels which will make it possible to supply, upstream, the rest areas.

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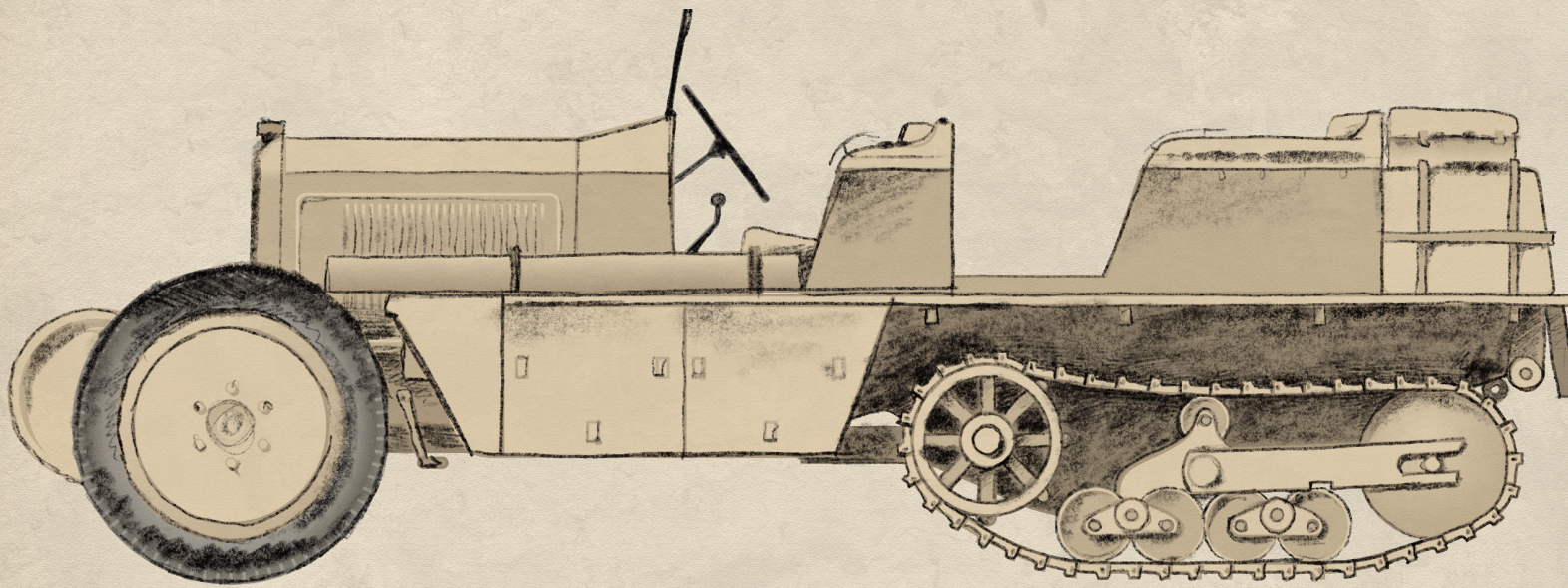
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# MATERIALS AND EQUIPMENT

## PAMIR GROUPE

The Pamir group will have lighter vehicles, the so-called light P17, a «mountain» model. The P17 is derived from the B2, with a 4-cylinder engine with a power of 20CV. The maximum weight of the vehicle is 1140Kg (body weight, fuel, oil, 5 passengers, luggage and 5 mountain bags). It can tow a 500kg trailer (5 beds, 2 suitcases, 1 armchair, 5 stools, 1 table, 4 sleeping bags).



Each group has specific vehicles. In addition to the wireless vehicle, there was a «Meals on Wheels» vehicle that provided shelter for the group's meals, a medical vehicle and what would become the «Lot7» in the French army, a workshop vehicle with all the equipment needed for repairs of all kinds. This expedition will allow us to test certain configurations and to set up well identified logistics for the vehicle columns.

However, these vehicles will always be overloaded because it will be necessary to carry oxygen tubes for the altitude (300Kg), 9 Pamir tents, hoists, cables. The excess weight is between 1000kg and 1500kg per vehicle. These vehicles, lighter at the level of the chassis, have the particularity to be able to be dismantled entirely, in pack of 50kg, in order to cross obstacles on the back of mules or men, in the mountainous zones of the Himalayas. For the time, the material and the vehicles which will be used are at the height of technology. This expedition represents what the maritime expeditions represented at the time of the great discoveries. The whole world will be able to follow the peregrinations of a group of men because, each column is equipped with a radio car. The whole world will appropriate their stories. It is, for the time, new and exciting.

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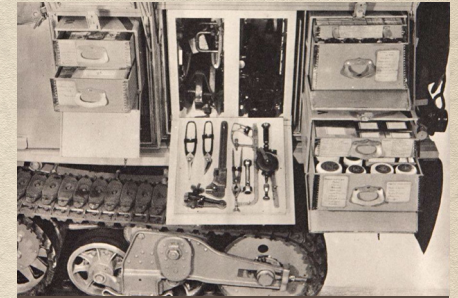
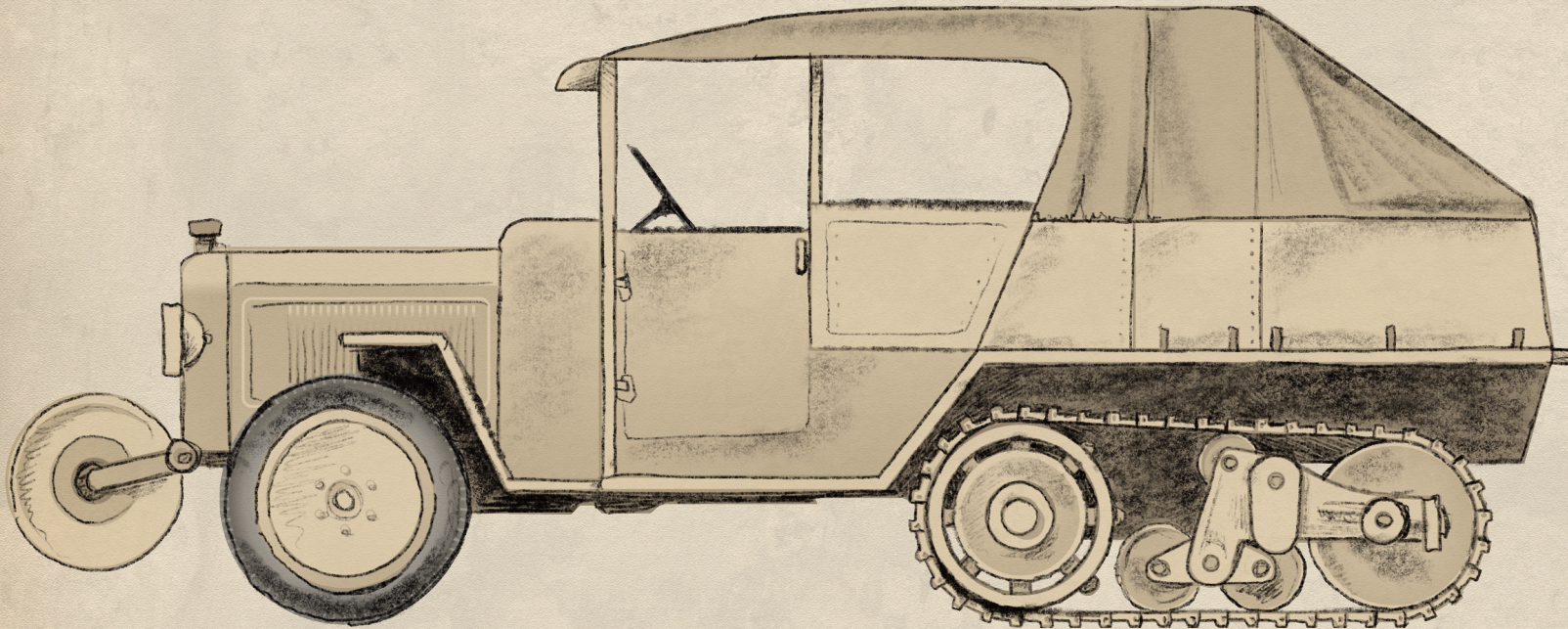
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## CHINA GROUPE

The China group has been allocated weapons for defense and hunting (machine gun, war rifle, pistols) provided by the Navy.

Concerning the tent, the camp is made of marabout tent. The camp is generally made in the middle of a circle, formed by the vehicles of each group.



For the time, this organization is unique, totally new and marked by ingenuity. One can see a certain comfort and a quasi military storage. The group, thus, can live in complete autonomy, after having recovered the food. During a stop, after a day of road, the column puts itself in circle, with the canvas of tent in the middle. Thus, each specific vehicle supplies the center which concentrates the life of the group.

The vehicles of the China group are P21 made on a C6 torpedo base. Some improvements concern the chassis, allowing to make it loads. The engine, C6F is a 6 cylinders vertical, in line of 2442cm<sup>3</sup>, of military type. The power is 42CV at 3000 rpm, regulated at 2000 rpm. It has a turbine radiator of 13 liters. The carburetors are vertical Solex, with 2 aviation type electric fuel pumps. The gearbox is a 4 speed gearbox with reduction gear and reducer giving a total of 6 forward gears and 2 reverse gears. The front axle is not motorized and is equipped with Michelin 17X50, with honeycomb air chamber, practically puncture-proof. Finally, the propulsion is done by flexible tracks with metal-rubber tires. No blocking of the inner track when turning. The bodywork is made of Duralumin panels and the cabin can accommodate 5 people. The length of the vehicle is 4.70 meters, with a track of 1.42 meters and a wheelbase of 2.70 meters. The total weight is 4000kg with a trailer. On flat ground, the speed is 45km/h and the consumption is 40 liters per 100 km and 1 liter of oil. The vehicle has two Chausson-Galley tanks of 100 liters each.

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MER D'ARAL

MER CASPIENNE

U.R.S.S.

TURQUIE

Apr 28 1931

Apr 4 1931

BEYROUTH

SYRIE

DAMAS

BAQDAD

IRAK

HAMADAN

TÉHÉRAN

PERSE

MECHHED

AFGHANISTAN

HÉRAT

Kaboul

May 20 1931

KANDAHAR

PESHAWAR

Jun 19 1931

FROM LEBANON TO KASHMIR

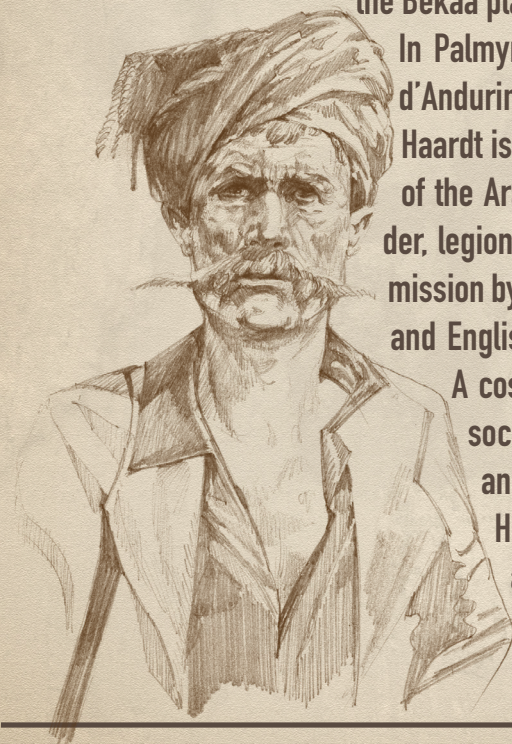


The morning of March 24, 1931, under the ramparts of the Lebanon chain. The port of Beirut emerges from the fog.

The teams enter quickly in action. Seven 5m long boxes weighing from 1.8 to 7 tons had to be pulled out from the bottom of the ships' holds. Stamped with the double chevron they carry the inscription «French scientific and artistic mission through Asia - Citroën Centre-Asia Expedition». These boxes contain the trailers loaded with equipment and luggage for a one-year journey.

In the evening, the formed column reached Bir-Hassan. The tents arranged in a crescent shape opened up facing the sea. The adventure begins.

The next day, the mechanics inspected the equipment. The wireless was set up. Laplanche erected the 15m mast and proceeded to the adjustments. On April 4, 1931, the real departure was launched at the sound of the bugle. A row of Spahis presented their weapons. The column left in the direction of the Levant and the first pass was crossed at an altitude of 1600m, followed by the descent towards the Bekaa plain, in the direction of Syria.



In Palmyra, the group gets in touch with Mme d'Andurin who runs the only hotel in the region. Haardt is going to rub shoulders with the chiefs of the Arab tribes, the grandson of Abd el-Kader, legionnaires, a Dutchwoman sent on a relief mission by the League of Nations to the Bedouins, and Englishmen from the Intelligence Service...

A cosmopolitan, curious world where good society and the secret services, Bedouins and tribal chiefs mix, all in a smell of Helle, the effects of which are the same as those of opium, and which are mixed with coffee.



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This interlude is good for the morale but we have to leave despite the rain that arrives after a sandstorm. The consumption oscillates between 40 and 50 liters for 100 kilometers, on the difficult grounds. On April 15, Ruthba is reached. It is a border post, at the entrance to Iraq. The border guards inspected the vehicles and the English meharists kept their distance. Since 1930, a treaty has been signed. The British kept their military bases and a say in the most important matters, and Iraq awaited recognition of its independence by the League of Nations. Arriving in Baghdad, the city of the Caliphs, Le Fèvre, Sauvage, Morizet and Williams set out for Ctesiphon to make a report and bring back as many documents as possible on the Sassanian discoveries of Ctesiphon. Haardt and Audouin-Dubreuil were received by King Faisal, son of the Sheriff of Mecca.

On April 21, the expedition reached the second frontier separating Iraq from Persia. His Majesty Zaher Shah dispatched Colonel Esphandiary-Noury to meet the Citroën mission and escort it across Iran. The tracks clung to the first slopes of the Zagros to reach the Iranian plateau at 1600 meters. During 4000 kilometers, the vehicles will remain on this plateau and will only come down to join the hot plain of India. In this landscape, both mineral and vegetal, the column crosses proud horsemen, Kurds. In Kermanchah, the column bivouacked for a few days and refueled with food.

Two sites are visited and studied, Tac-i-Bostan and Bisoutoun. On a steep wall, a high relief is visible. It is a sculpture ordered by Darius I in order to immortalize his victory over Gaumata.



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The son of Reza Shah, the young prince Mohamed Reza. He will be chased out of power 48 years later by Ruhollah Khomeyni at the time of the establishment of the Islamic Republic of Iran in 1979.

Beside these splendors, the villages we crossed all show a submissive poverty and distress. The veiled women flee from any approach. The men wear the pal-levi, a kind of kepi and their overcoats often hide rags.

In Tehran, the mechanics are making the last revisions of the tracks because the crossing of Afghanistan is going to be difficult. Everything has to be dismantled because sand has infiltrated everywhere. At the level of carburetors, differentials, bridges, with the grease, the sand has agglomerated into a thick paste. Without cleaning with gasoline, then a clean lubrication, the equipment would not last 100Km more.

Cécillon grumbles because it is only the third time that this maneuver is carried out, over a few hundred kilometers, and there are still several thousand to do!

An incident is going to occur which is going to put in anguish during 24 hours, all the men of the bivouac. A reception is organized for the arrival of the young prince Mohammad Reza. While Gauffreteau was returning to his car, he saw a young Iranian man driving his caterpillar, trying to change gears. Yves Gauffreteau, quite impulsive, begs with strong gestures to get out of the way as soon as possible. The child stares at him, gets out of the vehicle and gives a brief bow to the driver. Further on, Gauffreteau sees a member of the column remove his beret as the child passes. He inquires and learns that he has simply lectured the prince. Haardt was informed and decided to keep this incident secret.

The next day, the future Shah of Iran came to visit the bivouac. Nothing is said about the incident. The prince was captivated by the modern mechanics.

From May 19 to June 20, crossing of Afghanistan. Vassoigne and Varnet wait for the column. For a year, they have been looking for a passage for the expedition, in the direction of India. Since wars were raging in the North, they had to take the southern tracks. Insecurity reigns everywhere. One raises 50 degrees in the shade. The carburation is done badly, one does not exceed the 6 Km/h. The consumption becomes astronomical because the gasoline evaporates before reaching the carburetor.

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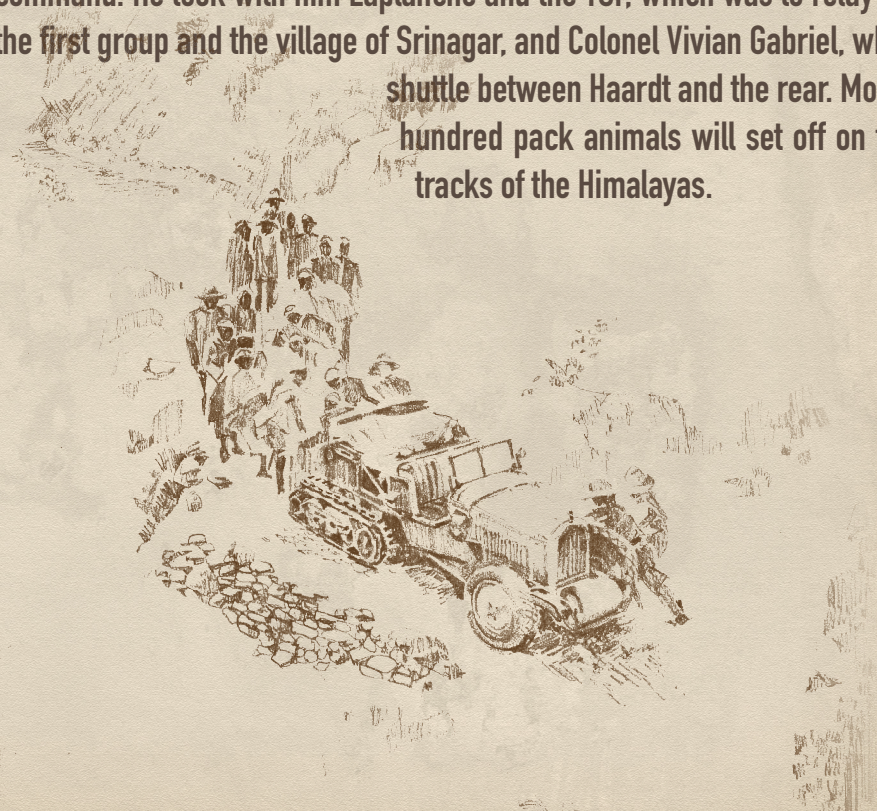
In Bamyán, the men of the expedition saw the first vestiges of Buddhism which spread from India to China and Japan. From the 2nd to the 5th century, the site had an exceptional influence. Sculpted in the cliff, a 53m high Buddha. On June 24, the Haardt mission is in the Kashmir valley, in Srinagar. The terrifying peaks of the Himalayan foothills, make heads drop. Bad news arrives by the TSF. The National Geographic Society of Washington confirms the formal refusal of entry to Sin-Kiang, while the government of India reports a Muslim revolt in Chinese Turkestan and Burma. Colonel Vivian Gabriel, who had been riding the trails for a year, estimated that it would be impossible for cars to cross two-thirds of the route.

Haardt takes the decision: «we will conquer the mountain, to the end of the effort». Two cars, the Scarabée-d'Or and the Croissant-d'Argent, completely unloaded, will attack the mountain

The five other vehicles and the two assistance trucks will remain in Srinagar.

Once the mountain is overcome, they will head back to France with their cars dismantled and crated. It may seem surprising, but the vehicles of the Pamir group were not built for China. These vehicles have been prepared only for the first part of this expedition.

The success of the expedition depends on the two designated vehicles that will have to cross all the passes. Three groups are launched in the adventure. The first group will leave on July 1st and will be composed of a horse caravan escorted by English riders. It will be the reconnaissance group that will have to report, by a daily report, any obstacle. The second group will leave on July 12. It includes the two motorcars with Haardt, the chief mechanic Ferracci and his team (Cécilion, Normand, Corset, Le Roux, Pecqueur, Morizet, Doctor Jourdan, Williams and Gauffreteau. The third group was to leave on July 20. Audouin-Dubreuil was in command. He took with him Laplanche and the TSF, which was to relay between the first group and the village of Srinagar, and Colonel Vivian Gabriel, who would shuttle between Haardt and the rear. More than a hundred pack animals will set off on the mule tracks of the Himalayas.





# ASSAULT ON THE HIMALAYAS

U.R.S.S.

Sep 20  
1931

KACHGAR

رهق شہق

SIN-KIANG

MISGAR

Aug 30  
1931

AFGHANISTAN

Aug 4  
1931

Ghilqit

تگ لگ

رواشپ

رگنیرس

PESHAWAR

SHRINAGAR

Jun 24  
1931

TIBET

INDES  
ANGLAISES

NEPAL



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«The caravan progresses slowly, at the rhythm of the beautiful white horse. It is rarely compact and orderly, to the great despair of the objective people, in premanente action» - Louis Audouin-Dubreuil's notebook.

The first group, led by Hackin, opens the march. The column stretched for 1km. On July 5, Hackin was at the Gouraïs pass at an altitude of 2375m. During this time, the second group advances painfully. The paths must be cleared so that the vehicles can pass in spite of the preparation made by the first group. From Bandipour to Tragbal, two bridges had to be reinforced and shored up from below, four bends had to be widened and for the passage of some of the bridges, the bodywork had to be dismantled. On the first report from Vassoigne, it is indicated that there are 12 bridges to be crossed and 26 difficult curves to be passed with ropes and jack. And this is only the beginning! On July 9, the first group is in Chemlam. On horseback, the progression is done, slowly but progressively. The clearing for the second group is on the other hand a titanic work. A lot of bends to widen and therefore it implies to make jump some rock. The altitude reaches 4000m. The snow and the cold make this work exhausting. At 4575m, there is between 3 and 5 meters of snow. Then until Hindi, there are successions of ledges sometimes cut in the rock, sometimes in scree of loose earth. There are permanent collapses. The cliffs are vertiginous. After the village of Hindi, it will be necessary to employ 400 men to arrange the way, during one month, in order to join the pass of Bourzil. Then it will be a descent of more than 1000m in height difference, in the valley of Astor. It is necessary to

retain the autochenilles which, with the weight, would go to break on the rocks.

Passed Astor, the column is in front of a gaping fault, a tear of 200m caused by an earthquake. The cars are dismantled and converted into 30Kg loads. A continuous back and forth of gearboxes, wheels, rear axles, differentials follows. Water and food are running out, as well as money to pay the coolies. The revolt is rumbling. During the day, the heat is overwhelming.

On August 4,  
Haardt arrives  
at Gilgit.



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## Progress of the Audouin-Dubreuil group

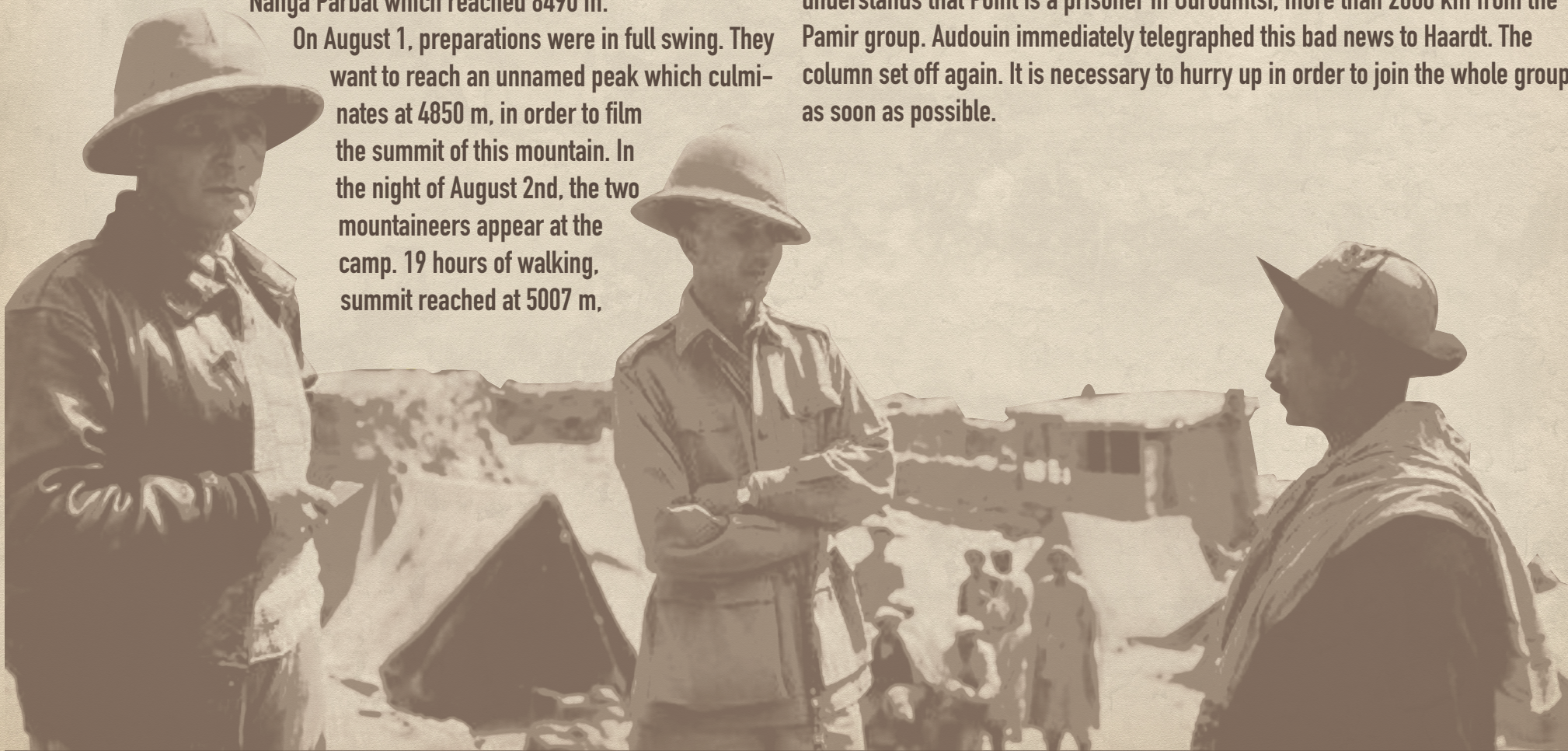
On July 20, as planned, the third group set off. On horseback, they will travel 1400 km, 1000 of which through the highest mountains of the world. The ride will last 3 months and a half. Torrential rains fell on Srinagar, causing devastating floods. The torrents carried carcasses and human corpses. Riots broke out. It is in this atmosphere that the group separates from Bourgoin, Collet, Jocard Schullet and Georger. They left for France with the equipment they had crated. On July 31, the column arrived at Astor located at 2395 m. No news from Victor Point, in China. Sauvage and Le Fèvre prepared to attempt part of the ascent of Nanga Parbat which reached 8490 m.

On August 1, preparations were in full swing. They want to reach an unnamed peak which culminates at 4850 m, in order to film the summit of this mountain. In the night of August 2nd, the two mountaineers appear at the camp. 19 hours of walking, summit reached at 5007 m,

without oxygen. On August 4, Laplanche, leaning on the TSF, receives the code of Victor Point «F.B.Q.R». The message was picked up by an aviso patrolling the China Sea. The content of the message is chilling:

«We are immobilized Our... Stop - Please intervene aff... et... to be allowed to send three cars to meet the Haardt group - Stop - We are being spared.

This last sentence indicates that the Victor Point expedition is being spied on and held. They are prisoners. They tried the impossible to join them in Kashgar but could not cross the line of fire. The Muslims revolted in Sin-Kiang and the warlords fought in Kan-Sou. Audouin-Dubreuil, on rereading the message, understands that Point is a prisoner in Ouroumtsi, more than 2000 km from the Pamir group. Audouin immediately telegraphed this bad news to Haardt. The column set off again. It is necessary to hurry up in order to join the whole group as soon as possible.



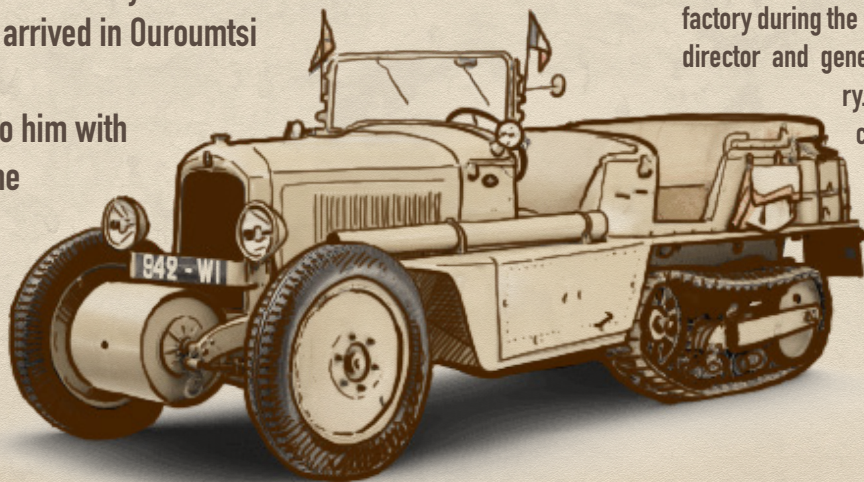
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## The reunion

A few days later, in front of the amazed eyes of the men of the Haardt column, a caravan of seventy camels advances to meet them, led by a Mongol, Moulabai. He has been sent by Petropavlovski, who has been organizing the supply of the China group for two years. This caravan is full of life and arrives from Peking. It is going to lead them to Urumtsi. This man, of an absolute discretion, remained unknown in this history, will have been, by his loyalty and his intelligence, the key of the success. The crossing of the border is done in Tach-Kourgan at 3120m of altitude. The welcome is friendly but very reserved. Petropavlovski sent Haardt a visiting card in the name of Georges-Marie Haardt that Victor Point had printed in Peking. A man goes ahead of the column brandishing this card. It had an effect.

On October 8, a horseman gallops towards them. It is Carl, a friend of Hackin. At the bend in a path, Haardt sees the tall figure of Father Theillard de Chardin. «Reunited at last!» This shout, which blossoms out of his thin, chiselled face, conveys the emotion of all. At the camp, Haardt found four gleaming autochenilles, French flag and pennants in the wind. Penaud and his team are in «reception dress». Penaud explained to Haardt that everything had started out wrong and continued the same way. «We were not at the rendezvous in Kashgar, Mr. Haardt, but we arrived in Ouroumtsi with all your cars.

Penaud is proud, we listen to him with recollection when he tells the adventures of the group of Victor Point. Now, it will be necessary to leave the clutches of the Marshal King and to leave in direction of Beijing!



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# LES HOMMES DE LA CROISIÈRE JAUNE

## PAMIR groupe

The Pamir group is called «Light» because the vehicles used will be likely to be dismantled in order to cross the mountainous obstacles, on the end of the course. At the head is the leader of the expedition Centre-Asia Georges Marie Haardt and his second, Louis Audouin-Dubreuil. The group's objective was to leave Beirut and reach Bandipour, at the foot of the Himalayas, passing through Iraq and Afghanistan, and then to find a passageway to the eastern side of the mountain range. Finally, it must join the China group in Kashgar or Aksou to go together to Beijing.

## Georges-Marie HAARDT

(1884-1932)

Born in Naples, his parents were Belgian. He starts his career as a sales agent at Mors. It is there that he will meet André Citroën and he will be integrated into the management team, at the age of 24. He is a brilliant man who has presence. He is the director of the shell factory during the Great War. In 1918, he was appointed director and general manager of the Citroën factory.

Between 1920 and 1931, Haardt controls the entire sales network. By

1921, Citroën had three branches and 295 dealerships. In 1924, subsidiaries were set up in Madrid, Copenhagen, Amsterdam and Milan, where he controlled, organized and developed public relations and marketing. In 1924, he led a group of mechanics to the United States to set up a project to train technicians at the Ford factories. In 1922, he took command of an expedition to the Sahara, in self-propelled vehicles. In 1924-1925, he was the chief commander of the Black Cruise. In 1931-1932, he was the chief of the yellow cruise. On March 16, 1932, Georges-Marie Haardt died in Hong Kong.



## Louis AUDOUIN-DUBREUIL

(1887-1960)

In 1905-1906, he did his commercial apprenticeship in England, for the needs of his family's brandy business (Cognac). He did his military service from 1907 to 1910, in the cavalry. In 1911, he took over the management of the Audouin-Frères establishments alongside his uncle Henry. On August 2, 1914, he was mobilized and joined the 10th Hussar Regiment. He fought around Arras, in the trenches, then took part in the battle of Argonne in 1915, in the Malencourt wood in Verdun, in 1916; when the cavalry was abolished in 1916, he was in Belgium. In 1917, he obtained his pilot's license and went to South Tunisia. He created the Zarsis aviation camp, fought against the Senoussists and developed the Section of Machine Gun Tractors of the Tunisian Aviation (STAM). In 1919, he accompanied the Saoura-Tidikelt mission to the Sahara, in a military capacity. In 1920, he met André Citroën and Georges-Marie Haardt. They studied together the possibility of a first crossing of the Sahara, by car. In 1921-1922, he carried out a mission to locate and supply the Sahara. In December 1922-January 1923, he was deputy chief on the first Citroën expedition.

In 1924-1925, he was deputy chief of the Croisière noire. In 1926, he became general manager of Citroën for Tunisia. In 1931-1932, he was deputy chief of the Croisière jaune.



## Alexandre Iacovleff

(1887-1938)

Born on June 13, 1887 in Saint Petersburg, he studied at the high school of this city. He entered the Academy of Fine Arts, where he acquired his knowledge of drawing, as well as certain technical processes such as tempera and sanguine. In 1909, he joined the movement that contributed to the artistic renewal of the Russian School, and then travelled around the world to study the painters of the Renaissance. In 1915, he returned to Russia at war.

In 1917, Russia having signed an armistice, he left for a study trip to China. With the Bolshevik revolution in full swing, he never saw his wife again, who died in 1927. He will never return to Russia. For two years he worked in Peking, Chang-Hai and Mongolia. After a six-month stay in Japan, he settled in Paris. In 1920 Iacovleff exhibited his drawings and paintings at the Barbazanges Gallery and then at the Graffon Gallery in London. The success is immediate. In 1923 he was contacted by Citroën, who was looking for a painter with an ethnographer's eye to participate in the Croisière noire. He brought back 700 paintings and drawings which were exhibited in Paris in 1926.

On March 24, 1931, the Mariette-Pacha docked at the port of Beirut with, on board, Alexandre Iacovleff official painter of the Croisière jaune.



**Maynard Owen WILLIAMS**

Seconded by the Geographical Society of Washington to accompany and follow the Croisière jaune.



**Yves Gauffreteau**

He was assigned to the mission and designated as a supply and porter. He will be chief cook, food supplier.



**Pierre Jourdan**

André Citroën said, «Find me someone who is a doctor and knows about mountain life. He was introduced to Pierre Jourdan!



**André Sauvage**

He is the official film-maker of the Croisière jaune. His experience in sound cinema was a determining factor in his integration into the team.

### The mechanics of the PAMIR group :



Ferracci



Cecillon



Bourgoin



Corset



Collet



Leroux



Jocard



Normand



Schuler

U.R.S.S.

Oct 8  
1931

Dec 6  
1931

OUROUMTSI  
چمۇرۇمۇي

HAMI  
ناپرۇت

TOURFAN

تىيالىۇ

MONGOLIE

Sou-Tchéou

酒泉市

中卫市

LIANG-Tchéou

Jan 10  
1932

PAO-TOW

包头市

KALGAN

张家口市

北京市

PÉKIN

Feb 12  
1932

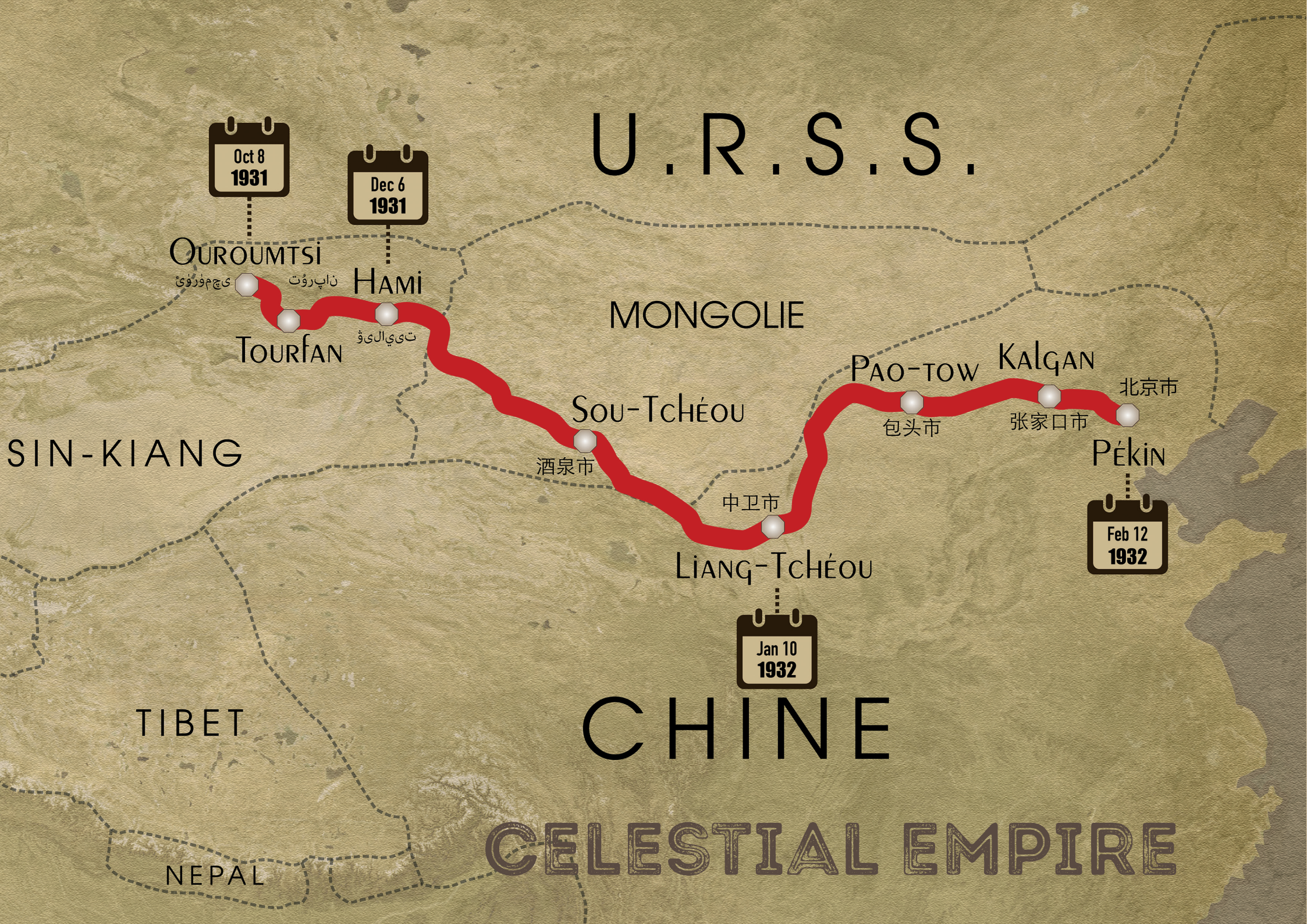
SIN-KIANG

TIBET

CHINE

CELESTIAL EMPIRE

NEPAL



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## The odyssey of the China group

The arrival at the port of Tien-Tsin on April 6, 1931, went well. Balourdet, Rémillier, Piat, Dielmann, Conté, Nuret, Kégresse, Gauthier, Delastre, Penaud were all there. Victor Point is there. Petropavlovski set up the supply zones, from Tien-Tsin to Kachgar, places of regrouping planned with the Pamir group. The seven cars were unloaded and hidden in a garage. The Chinese did not look kindly on the arrival of foreigners. On April 6, 1931, it is the departure. It took two weeks to rent and load two trucks with materials. Father Teilhard de Chardin saw former Chinese colleagues join the expedition. Quickly, he realizes that the reception is cold. Professor Tsu-Ming-Yi, whom he has known for a long time, sends him a curt greeting and explains that he will be the leader of the scientific mission. A journalist, Mr. Chow, is assigned to them whereas he had never been invited. The departure is done in suspicion. The road looks long!

At the beginning of the expedition, it turns out that the pulleys of the treads have been badly adjusted. The stock of spare parts is running out at an alarming rate. In Peking, Victor Point asked André Citroën to send him new parts by rail.

On 24 April, the Chinese wall is in sight and the parts are there. The administrative hassles meant that the expedition could not resume its progress until May 24 and finally reached the gates of the Gobi Desert on May 27, 1931.

On June 6, the explosion of a gasoline can brings a terrifying observation: the cars become condensers and are charged with electricity in this desert of heat and storm. With the gasoline loads, sparks can, at any moment, transform a vehicle into a fireball. The crossing of the Gobi desert is a real ordeal, both physical and psychological. For weeks, a vast expanse, as far as the eye can see, of sand, stones and dunes. At the end of the journey, no more gasoline, no more living. Victor points and Petropavlovski, leaving the main part of the expedition on standby, heads south, in the direction of the fighting to reach Sin-Kiang. In spite of the sign forbidding the entry, because war zone, Victor Point joins Sou-Tchéou because the two depots constituted on the route will prove to be empty, plundered. It is a question of survival.





Arrived at Sou-Tchéou, the men discover a spectacle of death. The city had just been attacked. Under the ramparts of the fortress, hordes of dogs were eating the corpses of those shot. The depot had not been hit. It was well hidden. Victor Point retrieved food, spare parts and gasoline. But, at the moment of leaving, Mr. Ho blackmails him. He belonged to the Nanking government. At the departure of the expedition, the passports were withdrawn, they were forbidden to use the radio, the cars were searched but the weapons had been well hidden.

The Chinese scientists feel now protected but they decide that if the expedition wants to continue to have the support of the government to cross Sin-Kiang, Victor Point must give up his command, if not, Ho and his friends, set out again towards Beijing. Victor Point is caught in a trap. He accepts. He does not want to take the risk of seeing the protection of the government of Nanking withdrawn. Agreements were signed. Brull was invested «head of the Sino-French Mission».





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Finally, the column was able to leave, but it was obliged to take the direction of the desert in order to avoid the combat zone. The war between the Chinese and the Muslim Uyghurs was raging. Finally, they will cross battlefields littered with corpses and wounded. With Delastre, the whole expedition will help the survivors. Father Teilhard de Chardin said, «Strangely, visions of Verdun, where I was a stretcher-bearer, came back to my memory. The remarkably designed medical car and the modern equipment were very useful to us. It is in these moments that the Citroën organization and the technique can be appreciated at their true value».

The column encountered convoys of weapons. Hami has just been attacked. The villages are devastated. However, it was necessary to penetrate this locality in order to have access to the depots. At the idea of meeting the Shantu rebels, the Chinese scientists, terrified, prefer to abandon the expedition, one night, without warning. Petropavlovsky refused to leave the city without his truck, which had broken down. He had to join the group in Urumtsi.



In Ouroumsti, Iacovleff fixes the features of all ministers, here Governor King.

Then, Victor Point receives an «invitation», from General King, warlord of the Sin-Kiang region. It is clear that it is a trap. But Victor Point can't escape it. They no longer have a government official in Nanking to protect them. So Victor Point goes to Ouroumsti where he will be locked up with a ransom demand. Brull took command of the column and went to this locality via Tourfan. Ouroumsti was General King's resistance camp. The column found Victor Point, thin and shaggy. It is now clear that they will not be able to reach Kashgar.

The group puts itself in circle, the canvas of tent in the medium. They must wait for the Haardt group, but how to prevent it? The waiting will last 4 months. Penaud will have an idea. Under the pretext of celebrating the 14th of July, the National Day in France, Victor Point asks the authorization to General King, to allow him to make a ceremony with the mounting of the colors. Obviously, he is invited, with great pomp, to this ceremony. The flagpole will be used as a support. The rise of the flag will allow the antenna wire to be in height to transmit. The ceremony takes place, the colors are hoisted. The cable was in place and the operator, hidden under tarpaulins, transmitted the message which was picked up by an aviso patrolling the China Sea and retransmitted to Audouin-Dubreuil. Haardt was now aware of the situation of the China group. Pecqueur was sent to Ouroumsti to discuss with King in order to allow the grouping of the expedition and the authorization to leave in the direction of the different sites for scientific, ethnological, zoological and geological needs.

Finally, after one month of wandering, Petropavlovski is found by Victor Point, in the pass of Toksoum, whereas he is invited, by the General King, to contemplate a battle that his troops delivers.

«Petropavlovsky is thin but happy: he has brought back his truck and has commissioned a Mongolian, Moulabai, to send a relief column to Haardt. This man is full of resources and will be a blessing for the expedition!

However, by his discretion, he will remain the most unknown man of the adventure whereas he will have been one of the most determining linchpins, in the success.

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## The road to Beijing

When on October 8, 1931, Haardt and Audouin-Dubreuil join Victor Point in Ouroumsi, talks begin in order to obtain the authorization of General King, to leave in direction of Peking. There, Haardt will discover what Victor Point undergoes since months. Everything is going to pass by a financial transaction. General King has obtained, from Citroën, three self-propelled vehicles which have been transported to Russia and which Salesse is in the process of transporting to Ouroumsi. The problem is that these vehicles have fallen into the hands of the rebels. They must be recovered in order to fulfill the part of the deal with the warlord of Sin-Kiang.

General King had to pay 800,000 francs for the equipment and release the expedition. But everything dragged on, and from talks to talks, from dinners to lunches, from meetings to ministerial committees, Haardt's diplomacy wore thin. Meanwhile, Lacovleff «stroked» Marshal King's ego by making him magnificent portraits.

Teilhard de Chardin took advantage of this to perfect his geological knowledge of the region and a small scientific committee gathered around him. The researches will bring them on the Bogdo mounts. André Raymond, whose research was limited to entomology, went beyond this field and pushed his research into the field of biogeography, the result of the combination of biology and geology, two scientific fields that had not been very closely associated until then. Nobody had realized it before him.

The mission is three months late and will have to endure the winter of North China and the Gobi desert. Many foreigners are waiting for their passports to continue their journey. Morale is falling within the team. It is too long!

From November 18, the scientists visit the old kingdom of Tourfan, the dead cities of Gobi, Sangim and Kaza-Khoja, the sanctuaries of Bâzâklik, the caves of Mourtouk. An enormous work is realized, during this forced interlude and a considerable sum of samples, collections of fauna, flora, minerals is collected and will be able to come to enrich the future galleries of the museum of the man and natural history of Paris.

Teilhard de Chardin, equipped with his hammer of geologist, takes rocks of which he will make the study.





The implacable winter falls on the tops of the Bogdo mountains. It is urgent to leave. 3000 kilometers still separate Ouroumtsi from Beijing. Moreover, the last capacitor has just broken down. There will be no more TSF. The expedition is from now on, cut off from any connection with the outside world. Haardt, in agreement with Victor Point and Audouin-Dubreuil, decides that it is necessary to escape from the clutches of Marshal King. When the autochenilles arrive in the possession of the Marshal, Haardt raises the idea of leaving. André Citroën agrees to lose the money for these vehicles.

The decision is made. The Gobi Desert is to be crossed, this time in winter, by  $-30^{\circ}\text{C}$ . Everything freezes! It is necessary to light fires under the engines which turn from now on 24 hours on 24. Fortunately, stocks of gasoline are discovered on the route, under a thick layer of ice. This stock had been put in place by «Péto», months before «just in case ... !»

The crossing of the Yellow River, entirely frozen, takes 3 days. The column will undergo an attack by a group of soldiers, then will cross the steppe of Mongolia, in the footsteps of Genghis Khan and the invaders who succeeded each other

over the millennia, leading to the construction of the Great Wall. This fortification line was in sight and on February 12, 1932, the Citroën expedition entered Beijing. At last, Citroën's crazy gamble had been won. The hardest part seems to be over. The time for receptions and speeches begins.

Diplomatic representations follow one another. After these months of difficulties, of hostage-taking, of permanent suspicion, everything suddenly seems very simple!

Then came the separations. Audouin-Dubreuil left for Hanoi in order to finish the adventure by travelling through Indochina, Haardt for Hong Kong.

Audouin-Dubreuil has a little difficulty in leaving his comrade. For several weeks, the latter has been ill. He has contracted a nasty cough that weakens him from day to day.

The material is loaded on the boats and the adventure continues. On the way to the Indochinese mysteries.

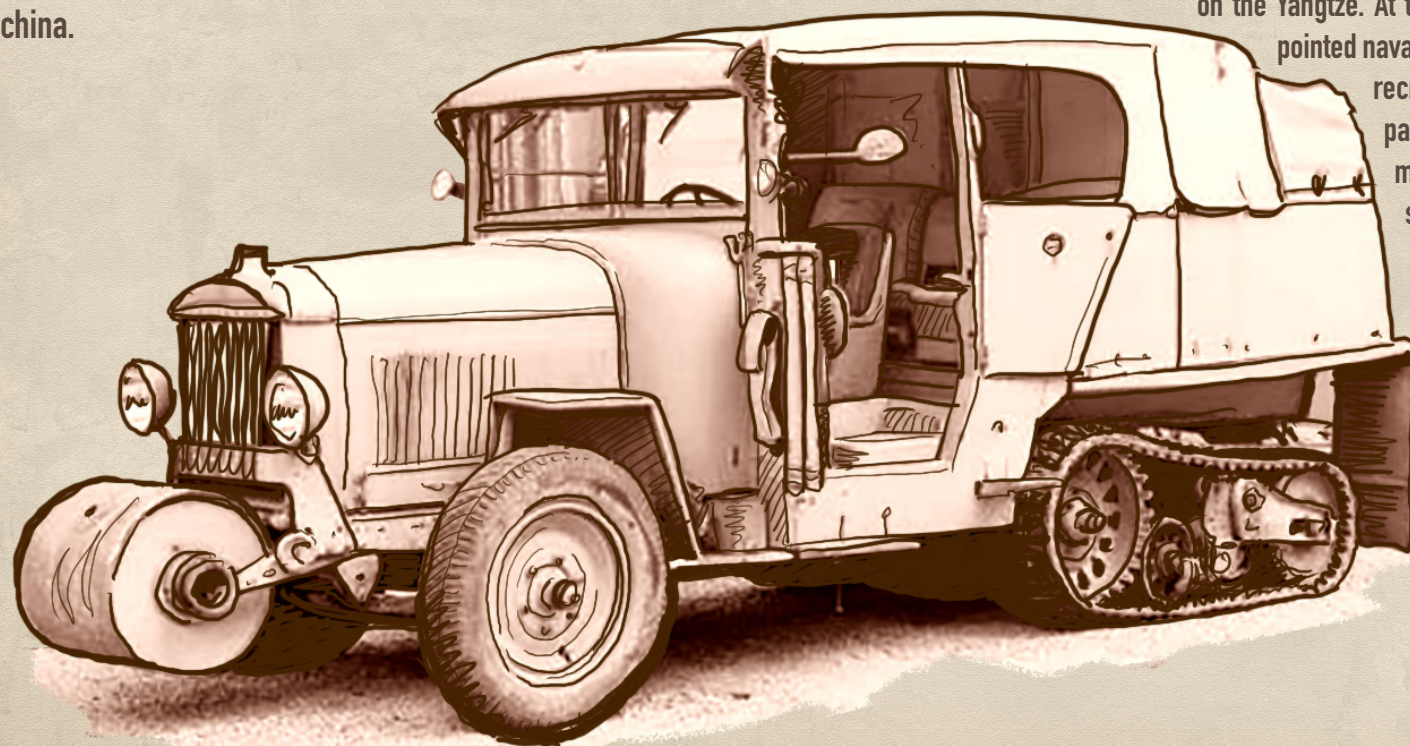


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# THE MEN OF THE CROISIÈRE JAUNE

## CHINA group

The China group is called heavy. The vehicles have an increased capacity of resistance with reinforced chassis allowing to take surplus in material and live. There is, a priori, no reason to dismantle the vehicles to cross possible obstacles. This group will not be able to benefit from safe support, contrary to the Pamir Group which will drive on territories held by the English or, friends of France. The China group's mission is to leave from Tien-Tsin, in the direction of central Asia, reaching the village of Kachgar or Aksou, in the Sin-Kiang, in order to meet with the Pamir group. Then it will be the departure in direction of Beijing, then Indochina.



## Victor POINT (1902-1932)

Born on June 22, 1902 in Marlotte (Seine-et-Marne), he graduated second in his class at the Naval Academy in 1919. In 1922-1923, Point campaigned aboard the cruiser Jeanne-d'Arc in the West Indies, California and the Hawaiian Islands. In 1924, he took part in the Moroccan campaign aboard the battleship Condorcet. From 1925 to 1927, he took part in the China campaign on the aviso Marne, where he defended the French concession in Canton. In 1927 he took command



of the gunboat Daudart-de-Lagrée, on the Blue River. He organized the evacuation of the Sechouan province, threatened by the Communists, and defended the Chug-King consulate on the Yangtze. At the age of 25, Lieutenant de Vaisseau, he was appointed naval attaché in London. Because of his qualities, he was

recruited by André Citroën to organize the expedition's passage through China. Haardt, at the time of the first meeting in Paris, found him too young, too impulsive. For the China group, the head of the expedition knows that in China, it will be necessary to be tactful and to use diplomacy.

Haardt finally agrees with André Citroën's arguments. Victor Point proved to be remarkably efficient. He joins Tien-sin in April 1931 to manage the China group. He will encounter difficulties that could have been insurmountable for many, crossing war-torn territory and suffering from supply problems. The column was taken hostage and, thanks to his ingenuity, Victor Point managed to make his radio work to warn Haardt.

## Reverend Father TEILHARD de CHARDIN

(1880-1955)

Born on May 1, 1881 in Orcines (Puy-de-Dôme), Reverend Father Teilhard de Chardin graduated in literature and science and entered the Society of Jesus in 1900. From 1906 to 1909, he began his work in geology and paleontology in Egypt.

From 1909 to 1912, he continued his research in England, where he was associated with the discovery of the human fossil *Eoanthropus dawsoni*. In 1914 he was a corporal in the 4th mixed regiment of zouaves-tirailleurs. He participated in the battles of Ypres in 1915, Verdun-Douaumont in 1916, Aisne in 1917 and Soissons in 1918. He was awarded the Croix de Guerre, the Military Medal and the Chevalier de la Légion d'Honneur. In 1926, he became president of the Geological Society of France while teaching at the Catholic Institute of Paris. From 1923 to 1927, he made three trips to China during which he travelled to Mongolia and the Ordos. These discoveries gave rise to a study of the Chinese Tertiary and Quaternary. In 1929, he met Victor Point. He was immediately enthusiastic about this expedition.



## Vladimir PETROPAVLOVSKY

A virtuoso violinist, he was an engineer of roads and communications and became an artillery lieutenant at the age of 17 during the First World War in Russia. In 1917, he left Russia for France. He entered the artillery school of Fontainebleau and took part in Lyautey's pacification campaign in Morocco. At the end of this campaign, he embarked for the United States to meet Thomas Edison. Successively engineer in Manchuria, gold digger in Mongolia, builder of dams in Chan-Tong and Kan-Sou, he travels all over China. In 1929, Victor Point met him in Tien-Tsin. Seduced by his courage and dynamism, admiring this man who spoke Chinese as well as several dialects, he recruited him. He was given the task of organizing supplies for the Citroën mission from Peking to Sin-Kiang and of studying a route through China, which was ravaged by war, banditry, famine and the Muslim revolution. During this campaign, he carried out cartographic surveys and ensured the security of supplies.



### Charles BRULL

In charge of the Citroën laboratories. He played an active role in the construction, testing and development of equipment for the Centre-Asia mission.



### Gorges SPETCH

Chief cameraman, at the time when he was hired to follow the Croisière jaune with the China group, he had 385 films in his credit in twenty years of activity.



### Docteur DELASTRE

Although he was very ill, Georges-Marie Haardt made the mistake of depriving himself of his medical supervision by forcing him to go to Indochina with the first group.

## The mechanics of the CHINA group :



Penaud



Remillier



Labourdet



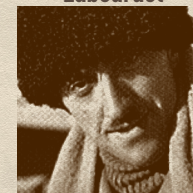
Piat



Dielmann



Gaulthier



Chauvet



Conte



G. Kegresse



Collet



Nuret



Kervizic



SIN-KIANG

INDOCHINA

PÉKIN  
北京市

TIBET

CHINE

NEPAL

INDES  
ANGLAISES

Mar 15  
1932

HANOI  
Hà Nội

GOLFE DU  
BENGALE

SIAM

Thành  
phố Huế HUÊ

MER DE  
CHINE

INDOCHINE

Apr 4  
1932

Saïgon  
Sài Gòn

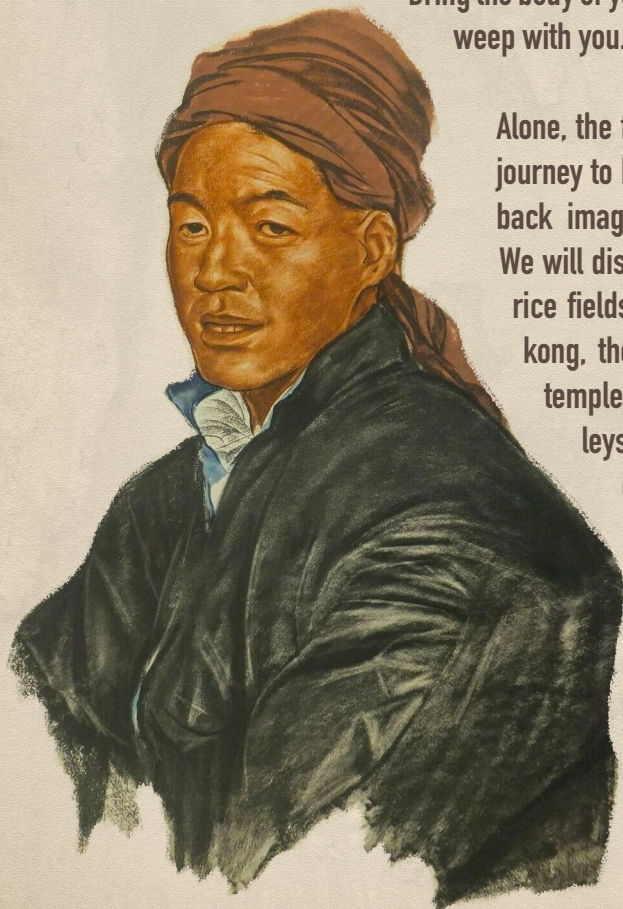
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## Indochina, the aborted adventure

The departure for Indochina with its crossing from North to South by the Audouin-Dubreuil group, should have been the apotheosis of this expedition. The expedition was invited by the French government. Unfortunately, it was cut short by terrible news: Georges-Marie Haardt had just died, on March 16, 1932, of a double pneumonia, in Hong-Kong.

It was a real thunderclap that hit all the men of the expedition. No one had the desire to continue. André Citroën could not ask these men, who had been through so much for months, to continue the mission. He transmits: «The man is dead but the work remains.

Bring the body of your leader back to France. I weep with you.»



Alone, the film crew will continue the journey to Indochina in order to bring back images of this distant colony. We will discover the Muong tribe, the rice fields on the banks of the Mekong, the Annamite highlands, the temples of Angkor, the rich valleys of Upper Tonkin. The rest of the expedition headed for Saigon, then to Cape Saint-Jacques where the boat «Félix-Roussel» awaited them with the coffin of Georges-Marie Haardt in its sides.

Audouin-Dubreuil recalls the memories and goes back in time. The beginning of this adventure with the red line drawn in 1920, on the map of the Sahara, the epic of the black cruise, with this crossing of Africa, from north to south and finally, this completely crazy bet of crossing Asia. How quickly the time has passed!

One year ago, the expedition left the shores of the Mediterranean. What a long way we have come, what adventures we have lived, what people we have met. On April 29, 1932, France was in sight. A boat approaches the Félix-Roussel. André Citroën climbed aboard. He was deeply moved. Georges-Marie Haardt's coffin, covered with the tricolor flag, was laid on the quay.

Thus ends the Citroën Central Asia Expedition.



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## Épilogue

This is the end of the human adventure, but not of the legend of the Yellow Cruise, which will become a formidable communication tool. Two months later, while Father Teilhard de Chardin had not yet returned from China, and while some of the collections were still in transit, an exhibition was held in Paris. Le Fèvre's film «La Croisière Jaune», one of the first sound films in the world, was widely shown and brought Victor Point back to life. Indeed, a few months after his return, the young man committed suicide, for love of an actress. So, communication tool, certainly, but for whom and why?

There is no denying it, even if, within the expedition, collectively and individually, it was above all a human adventure, a sporting and technical challenge, it is obvious that for Citroën, the political and diplomatic world, the stakes are different. There is a certain geopolitical cynicism behind this success! Citroën sees it as an advertisement that allows it to register as «The Solution» in the military off-road vehicle market. He appears as an ingenious, pragmatic industrialist and promotes French engineering. He sees

the future of his company and its success.

For the politicians, this expedition is a great showcase for our colonies to the population, and allows to establish the power of France within the nations by promulgating the products that will flood the French and European market, feeding the economic power of the country. Diplomacy will be able to advance its pawns in emerging countries as well as in countries in turmoil with respect to their parent countries, and England is clearly targeted (Middle East, Near East, India, Burma).

China will see its contacts with France multiply in the following months, in terms of various commercial openings. The exhibitions, films and symposiums that followed had, without a doubt, this vocation: after the First World War, France was still as powerful, its empire was immense and the people could be proud of their

country! However, people are moving, information is spreading more and more rapidly, populations, until now submissive, also want to taste the joys of technology and materialism. This feeling of power of the colonial countries, with respect to the colonized populations, invites the tutelary powers to a certain immobilism which, finally, will be right of these immense empires.







For the men who took part in this expedition, only the aspect adventure, challenge, humanism can be retained.

Le Fèvre, Laplanche, Pétropavlovski, Teilhard de Chardin as well as all their comrades, and their chiefs Audouin-Dubreuil, Haardt or Victor Point are far from its state, commercial or diplomatic considerations. They saw in it a formidable epic which began in 1920, in the dunes of Colomb-Béchar, in Algeria, then continued in the green hell of Congo, the plains of Sarengeti at the foot of Kilimanjaro to touch, with their finger, during this ultimate expedition, the eternal snows of the highest summits of the world, the deserts of heat which are transformed, in winter, into deserts of ice, from the lost Assyrian cultures to the millenary fortifications of this China which is waking up.

They are full of it, and they have taken it in their eyes. The one who will speak best about it, is certainly Maurice Penaud.



He was there from the start. He was present when Citroën met Kégresse in 1921. He kept logbooks with anecdotes of all the expeditions. He remained at the Citroën factory. In 1960, he was about to carry out a new expedition! The Citroën factories must release a new vehicle: The two-legged one! (The 2cv). With his friend Audouin-Dubreuil, they planned to redo the first Touggourt-Timbuktu crossing in order to recall the memories by making the same stops, at the same places. Everything was ready and Penaud was waiting to retire. Unfortunately, the death of his friend stopped this new adventure. Maurice Penaud stopped working at the age of 75. He will share his time between Paris, the Quai de Javel where he will «prowl», Provence and Biarritz where he still has family. In 1957 he donated to the city of Saint Jean d'Angély (Audouin-Dubreuil's birthplace) and to the Musée des Cordeliers some of the drawings, photos and objects collected during his various missions. It is the only museum that houses the only public collection dedicated to Citroën's exhibitions in Africa and Asia. Among other things, you can see the «Silver Crescent» car, a survivor of the Pamir group. In 1967, he stayed in a hotel in Bedoin, l'Escapade, at the foot of the Mont Ventoux. Before his death in 1975, a journalist came to meet him, and in Penaud's eyes there was still a sparkle in his eye when he told his stories.

Only passion, without a doubt, animated his men!





THE PARALLEL  
BETWEEN THE STORY  
AND THE GAME

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## Introduction

Just like the first opus which was based on the epic of the Black Cruise in Africa, The Great Race Wild West and Far East is based on the history of the Citroen Yellow Cruise in Asia. The reverse side allows for an uchrony, the crossing of the USA. The parallel does not stop there! The Great Race follows closely the historical events of the time, mainly through the leaders.

Several themes are addressed in the game.

We find the emancipation of women, the emergence of peoples seeking their independence, discovering the wealth in their possession, the remains of some empires, the birth of new powers seeking recognition and, for some, a feeling of revenge.

The Great Race covers this period of history. This game, in addition to being fun, will be educational.

The USA set, allows you to travel through this vast continental country, using, once again, historical themes such as airships. Concerning this mode of travel, we often think of Zeppelins, but we forget that the United States was at the forefront of this technology and had a monopoly on the manufacture of helium. The game allows us to see the vast, unpopulated expanses, the Indian reserves, the fantastic landscapes, and the flora and fauna of this nascent industrial nation in 1930.

The Asia board, on the other hand, allows you to replay the Yellow Cruise. The mechanics set up by Maxence Vaché, allow to replay, in cooperative mode, the game that took place between Georges-Marie Haardt and Victor Point. The narrative PDFs concerning the danger tiles bring this immersive side to the adventure, instructive on the fauna or the environment of the crossed countries and playful because the choice will influence your race. These choices, the adventurers of

this epic had to ask themselves, sometimes!

As much as the first opus was based on the race, this second campaign will be marked by «prestige».

The Central Asia campaign, historically, has been focused on the scientific side, discovery of natural sciences, ethnic and cultural encounters. The game will therefore revolve around this concept and will allow to bring back victory points in order to start, in the best conditions, the USA campaign. In this sense, the illustrations of François Launay immerse the player in this exotic adventure! Through the leaders of the game The Great Race Wild West and Far East, we will cross the 1930's and the interests that could emanate from each nation and discover emblematic characters who initiated the imagination at the service of the game.



# THE AMERICANS



## Historical Background:

The character of Alexander Cook is taken from a famous American explorer, Frederick Cook. He was born on June 10, 1875. When his father died, his family moved to New York where Cook worked hard to support the family and pay for his medical studies. He became a doctor of medicine in 1899.

In 1891 he participated in a first expedition to Greenland led by Robert Peary. In 1893, he set up his own expedition. In 1897, recruited by Adrien de Gerlache, he participated in a Belgian expedition and made the first wintering in Antarctica. His status as a doctor contributed considerably to the success of this expedition. Back in the United States, he briefly turned to mountaineering and claimed the ascent of



Mount McKinley. But this exploit, in solitary, suffers from a lack of witnesses. He will be confounded and accused of lying.

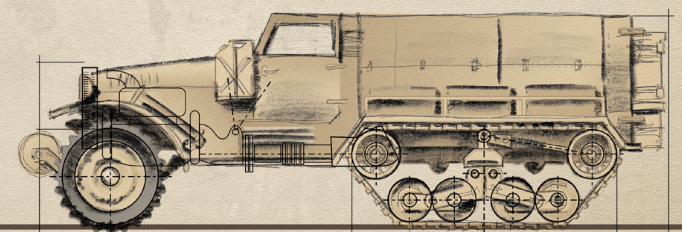
He then turned once again to polar expeditions. In 1906, he set up a light expedition, with two Inuits, two sledges and 26 dogs. He was a visionary in that only light crews could succeed in reaching the North Pole. He will affirm to have reached it but will be, again accused of deception.



## In the game:

The leader, Alexander Cook, is an explorer in need of recognition. He is an adventurer, with an impetuous temperament and misunderstood by his contemporaries. When he learns of the departure of The Great Race, he decides that this is the chance of his life. Around him, he gathers only veterans of the Great War, former Marines or Texas Rangers. He thought up the vehicle, imagined it and had it built. It is the industrial power at the service of a challenge. It is financed by the National Geographic Society and by the American government. He is a trigger-happy man, a renowned doctor and an experienced explorer. His charisma and his glibness allow him, the US machine is on the move! Nothing could stop him.

**His motto:** «America, whatever the cost!»



# THE GERMANS

## Historical Background:

Wilhelm Dörpfeld (1853–1940) was a German architect and archaeologist. He began his career as an architect and then assisted Friedrich Adler in his excavations of Olympia from 1877 to 1881. Invited by Heinrich Schliemann, in 1882, he participated in the excavations of the city of Troy, Mycenae, Tirynthe and Orchomena. He joined the German Archaeological Institute of Athens, where he was secretary for 25 years. He will direct other German sites and will advise foreign excavations in Pergamon, Attica, Athens, Thermos, Thebes and Corfu. Dörpfeld will bring an important contribution to the technique of the excavations, by his pragmatism, his discipline and his rigour.

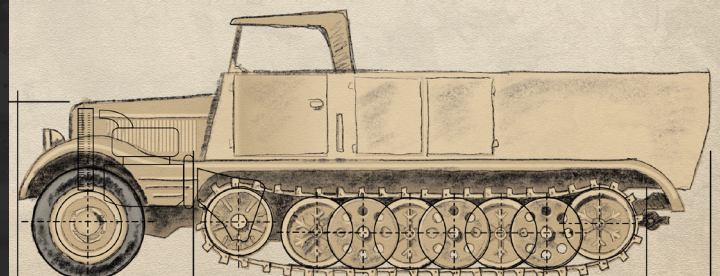
Emperor Wilhelm II was one of his fervent admirers.



## In the game:

Baron Wilhem Von Dörpfeld is, like his mentor, Field Marshal Hindenburg, straight in his leather boots. His strong stature and his moustache and beard give him an image of quiet strength for his supporters. For the others, he gives shivers! Germany is in the middle of rebuilding its industrial fabric, and the crew is going to rely on the Swiss experience of the first edition by taking over a part of the vehicle of this team. A significant improvement was made to the track system: a tensioning roller at the rear, a drive sprocket at the front and a set of interlaced wheels (rollers) on which the track rests. The ground pressure is limited and the efficiency is improved, despite a heavier assembly and a more technical maintenance. The Baron is a logistical maniac.

**His motto:** «The unexpected is in the action, it is the preparation that brings the victories.»



# THE CHINESE



## Historical Background:

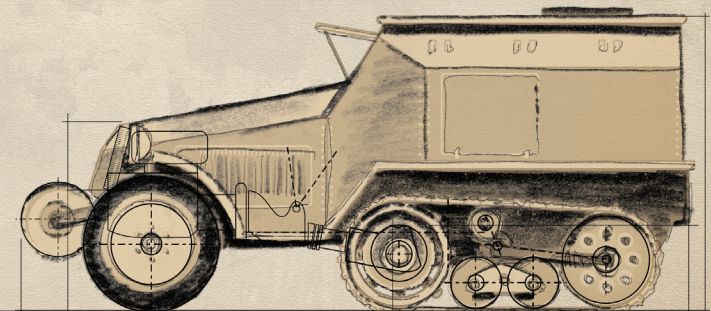
Li Linsi was born on February 18, 1896 and died on October 21, 1970. He will be considered as the Chinese Mahatma Gandhi. He was a Chinese educator, diplomat and scholar recognized as one of the key figures in modern Chinese history. While traveling through Europe, Li came into contact with a range of Western progressive ideas and met students like Zhou Enlai and Zhou De who would later become leaders of the People's Republic of China. In 1930, he joined the service of Chiang Kai Shek's Republic of China, whose government was located in Nanjing. He actively promoted communication between China and the League of Nations, opening up to the former colonial powers while preserving his country's renewed independence.



## In the game:

In the game, Li Jiaxiang is from the recognized national government of Nanjing (Chiang Kai-shek). He is a scholar who graduated from the Sichuan University of Languages. His curious and adventurous side led him to accompany various foreign expeditions. He has specialized in ethnology. He intends to prove that the Chinese are capable of competing with the most powerful nations in a peaceful and sporting challenge. He is a communicator, he speaks several dialects and will therefore have no difficulty in finding help or hiring locals in addition to his crew. Every two rounds, Li Jiaxiang can recruit 6 assistants. The sleeping dragon awakens. Chinese adaptability and ingenuity will surprise you!

**His motto:** «It is better to live 20 years like a tiger than a thousand years like a sheep! It is our actions alone that will make us respected by others!»



# THE SOPHISTICATES



## Historical Background:

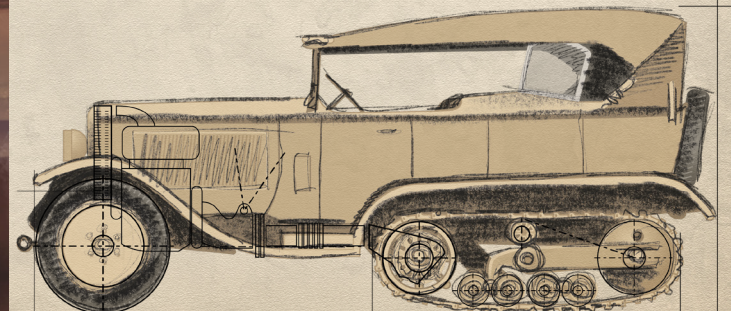
Women have been emancipating themselves since the 1920s. They get boyish haircuts, wear pants, smoke «Craven A». They distinguish themselves more and more in sports that were previously reserved for men but they are still victims of clichés. In Hollywood movies, for example, they are often confined to submissive or hysterical scenarios. They are rarely the heroines but they accompany the «male» in his exploits and comfort him. In the 1930s, the feminist movements are gaining momentum. The LFD (French League for Women's Rights) or the NAWSA (National American Woman Suffrage Association) became more radical. Unemployment was on the rise and politicians were sending women back to the home! In this context, some women, actresses, break the conventions. This is the case of Katharine Hepburn, daughter of a suffragettes, Martha Houghton, who can not stand that she plays «potiches» as the vast majority of Hollywood actresses of the 1930s. She will always claim roles against the current of Greta Garbo, Mae West or Jean Harlow. When reproached for her behavior, she could be very acerbic!



## In the game:

Red Kate, movie stars will be keen to compete with men and show that women can also be brave, tough and competitive. At the beginning, this candidacy made people laugh. Then, as the team was being put together, it made people smile. Since the Elegant Women have taken over the vehicle of the suffragettes of the first edition of The Great Race, of which they claim to be the worthy heirs, they no longer make people laugh at all! They are tigresses ready to pounce on the Asian tracks. At home, in the States, these women will be formidable because they have their public all acquired. They are supported by their manager and the studios of Metro Goldwyn Mayer.

**Her motto:** «It's with our teeth that we're going to get them and as long as there are men in front of us, they'll have us on their asses!»



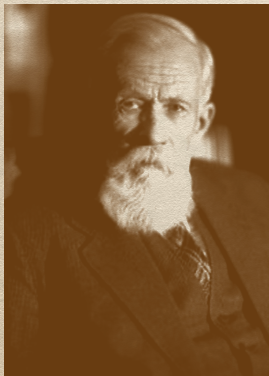
# THE RUSSIANS



## Historical Background:

The October Revolution of 1917 brought Russia out of the feudal system in which it had been mired for millennia. The change is brutal and Russia wants to turn quickly to modernity. It is in this context of a nascent nation that a new talented leader will emerge from the people. This is the case of Vladimir Afanasyevich Obruchchev (1863–1956).

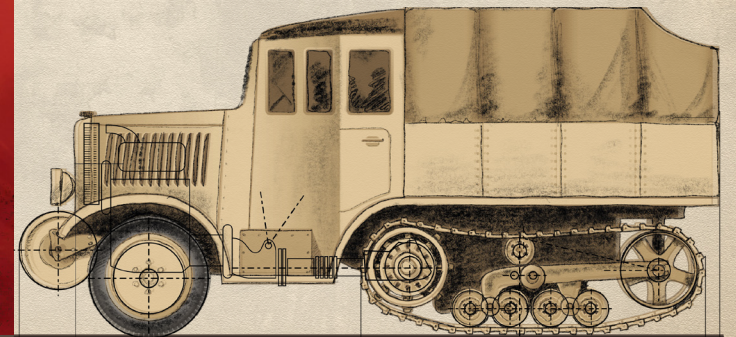
A geologist by training, but closely associated with the Geographical Society, his main scientific legacy concerns the effect of faulted neotectonics in the rejuvenation of ancient massifs, the importance of post-loess reworking and the nature of alluvial gold deposits cemented by permafrost. Passionate about the field and distant explorations, Obruchchev carried out many in Siberia and Russian Central Asia, but it was his participation in the second Potanin expedition to China that made him famous. The fame of Obruchchev exceeded the scientific sphere to reach the cultural world, thanks to his two novels, translated in the whole world, which made of him the inventor of the Russian science-fiction.



## In the game:

The leader Boris Afanasievich Obruchchev is a pure product of the collectivist system, which makes him dangerous for these opponents. All the collective tends towards the finish line, and all the means are good! Their vehicle is in the image of this state of mind. The Kégresse system has been improved by including the Christie system, at the level of the tracked train. The solution lies in the addition of an angled lever that allows the direction of movement to be changed to horizontal. The wheels of the undercarriage are then each mounted on a pipe that can only move vertically, at the top of which the bell crank transmits the movement to the rear. The advantage is that you can drive without tracks! This system has a great advantage: It is very simple to maintain and does not require a large and technically trained workforce. It is simplicity at the service of efficiency. Beware, the Siberian bear is coming out of its den! Nobody knows the limits of resistance of this young political nation, but these values are the image of its history! We will have to be wary. We might be surprised!

**His motto:** «We will seek fear to dominate it, fatigue to triumph over it, and difficulty to overcome it.»







# THE INDIANS

## Historical Background:

Since the creation of the League of Nations, the colonizing nations have found it increasingly difficult to establish their power over the enslaved populations. In India, England has kept an Indian elite by trying to convert it to its culture (like Rome with its conquests). Peacefully, this elite is giving birth to a nationalism within the population. Perfectly educated people, through rhetoric, are peacefully putting the colonial government in check. Protected by the League of Nations, these movements lead the population towards a desire for emancipation. This is the case of Prince Gaekwad III of Baroda. Established in 1875 by the British, he governed the population of his kingdom, the province of Gujarat, with a lot of humanism,



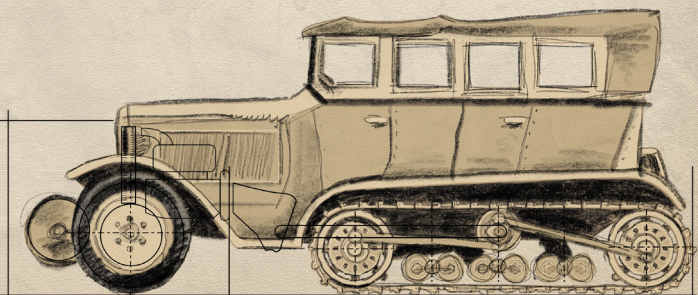
bringing modernity, cultural and political progress and recognition of merit within his population (repeal of the laws on untouchables). Only by the intelligence of a humanistic policy, contrary to the colonizing country, he will put in failure the administration of trusteeship and will participate in the emulation of Indian nationalism.



## In the game:

Prince Dakar, educated from an early age in English schools, is haunted by a painful past and is very distant from the society of men. He is self-taught and has built up a solid knowledge of scientific and technical matters. He feels that the time for revenge is born and a victory on The Great Race would allow him to spread his message about the emancipation of the Indian nation. He surrounded himself with Gurkhas, these Nepalese soldiers trained in the English way and particularly loyal and rustic. His objective is the same as his mentor, Mahatma Gandhi's: to use his charisma to create an emulation within the Indian nation to take its destiny in hand.

**His motto** «If you throw a stone towards a goal, your chances of reaching it are slim. But if you throw a handful of stones, at least one will reach its goal.»





### Historical Background:

Emir Nessib is based on the 1957 novel *Black Thirst* by Hans Ruesch. The story takes place in the 1930s. Two emirs, Amar and Nessib, are fighting, for historical reasons, over a territory called «The Yellow Corridor», desert and, obviously, without much interest. Emir Nessib wins the war and decides to establish a «no man's land» status in this corridor. To stop all attempts at control, he takes the Emir's two children hostage. 19 years later, when he has lost his wife due to lack of care in his particularly poor country, he learns that Americans from Texan Oil have discovered oil. He wants to capture the financial windfall for his own benefit, without referring to Amar, which will trigger a new war over black gold.

This novel is emblematic of the rivalries that were

played out in the 1930s in the Middle East, in these territories lost by the Ottoman Empire and which will see the Saud family take over from all the emirs who, as warlords, shared the Arabian Peninsula. From these wars were born Saudi Arabia, Oman, the United Arab Emirates, Qatar, Yemen and Kuwait.

### In the game:

Emir Nessib is at the beginning of his rise and power. He is aware that fuel is going to be the nerve center of this race. He owns what the competitors will covet, to win.

You will always run out of fuel. The Emir, opportunist and holder of this future wealth, is therefore a formidable leader in this long race.

**His motto:** «We are barter tribes. You have money, we have what you lack. So we can only be friends!»



### Historical Background:

Alexandrine was the daughter of Philip Frederik Tinne, a Dutch merchant who had settled in England during the Napoleonic Wars before returning to his native country, and his second wife, Baroness Henriette van Capellen, daughter of the famous Vice Admiral Theodorus Frederik van Capellen. The young Alexandrine was educated at home and showed some talent for the piano. When her father died, the 10 year old Alexandrine was one of the richest heiresses in the Netherlands. She and her mother began to travel, first to Norway, then to Italy, then to the Middle East and Egypt. She set out to explore the headwaters of the Nile from Gondokoro, where she began to demonstrate a great talent for photography. She undertook a second expedition from January 9,

1862 with her mother and aunt. The scientific and geographical results of the expedition were very important. For the next four years, Alexandrine Tinne remained in the Orient, visiting Algeria, Tunisia and other parts of the Mediterranean.

### In the game:

Alexandrine Tiné comes from a former Dutch planter family in Indonesia. She is the pure product of what remains of a vanished colonial empire. She possesses wealth, an address book and is an expert in import-export. She is also part of this wind of women's emancipation and she is attracted by motor sports which she practices as a hobby. This taste for adventure led her to go beyond the concept of leisure to become a true passion. She was the first woman to cross the Sahara.

**Her motto:** «If money is the key to the world, then the treasurer of this key is the woman... and I have a double!»





### Historical Background:

Maki Yuko, known as Aritsume, is a Japanese mountaineer born on February 5, 1894 in Sendai and died on May 2, 1989 in Tokyo. He climbed Mount Fuji at the age of 10. He created a mountaineering club in Tokyo from which he graduated in 1919. He made the first ascent of the Eiger, then in 1922, he made the first winter ascent of Mount Yari at 3180m, in Japan. In 1925, with five Japanese climbers and three Swiss guides, he made the first ascent of Mount Alberta in the Canadian Rockies. In 1926 he made the ascent of the Matterhorn in the Alps. He is the emblem of the triumphant Japan of the 1930's which lives under the Showa era or luminous peace. The Japanese economy was based solely on the export of industrial products with very low manufacturing

costs. Its development, within this framework, is exponential, despite the world crisis. Japan of 1930 has only one way out: go forward or decline!

### In the game:

Maki Aritsume is always moving forward. Nothing stops him and as long as there is a way, he continues his way. If you are a go-getter, this leader will be your best weapon. Passing through a city won't stop you. You take the cards and continue on your way.

Beware of the intoxication of this headlong rush, always dictated by audacity and the desire to bend events, despite the hazards that can occur in a long-distance race! This strategy can be very costly in terms of materials and fuel, but if you have a well established financial strategy with well identified points of passage on your axis of progression, Maki Aritsume can become absolutely formidable.

**His motto:** «Boldness, more boldness. Success is falling down seven times and getting up eight to keep moving toward the rising sun.»



### Historical Background:

Eugene Bullard is an unknown hero. Born on October 9, 1895 in Columbus, he underwent the segregation that raged in the United States and witnessed the lynching of his father, which decided him to leave his country at the age of 17. He will follow a family of travelers and during his wanderings in Europe, he will make a passage in Paris, in 1913, during a boxing match, and will decide to settle there.

In 1914, he lied about his age in order to be incorporated into the Foreign Legion and immediately went to fight at the Marne. He participated in all the major battles until he was seriously wounded on the Verdun front in 1916. Discharged to the infantry, he passed his pilot's license in order to continue the war and became the first African-American fighter pilot. He obtained two victories within the N93 and N85 squadrons on Spad S.VII. In 1917, the US troops landed in France and, as an American, he joined the Flying Lafayette Corps, different from the Lafayette squadron which was made up of American volunteers. There he was again segregated and denied the right to fly a plane. Out of anger, he asked to be integrated again into a

French infantry regiment and ended the war with the 170th RI. After the war, he will be the director of a boxing gym and a music hall administrator in Paris. In 1939, he was mobilized and took part in the fight in 1940 to stop the Germans in Orleans. Seriously wounded in the spine, he will be evacuated to Spain, thanks to his relations with several stars of the show-biz including Josephine Baker, then exfiltrated to the United States. Unable to be mobilized due to his injuries, he campaigned for the Free French, with General de Gaulle's representative in Washington within the organization France Forever. He died in 1961 and was not recognized until very late (1994) by his country of birth, which, under the impetus of General Collin Powell, appointed him posthumously to the rank of second lieutenant. He will be buried in the French veterans' plot of the Flushing cemetery, in the state of New York, with the military honors of French officers, in his legionnaire uniform.

### In the game:

Eugene Bullard, with his communicative empathy and charisma, attracts the sympathy of the natives who will do everything possible to make his job easier. He is a very powerful leader and this can be a determining factor in The Great Race, Wild West and Far East, as the race is going to be long.

**His motto:** «All blood runs red.»





Thanks to Evelyne and Pauline