

IN HER MAJESTY'S NAME

Steampunk Skirmish Wargaming

Nick Elms's
**NORTH
STAR**
Military
Figures

PAINTING THE BLACK DRAGON TONG part 1

"The Black Dragon Tong is a secret arm of the Chinese Boxer movement. They are hell bent on bringing terror to the heart of the

West's governments by targeting senior officials, government ministers and even monarchs and presidents."



THE DRAGON LADY

"Few, even among the tong membership, can describe her appearance accurately or consistently – there are even rumours that she can change form. The most common description is of a statuesque woman of indeterminate age, dressed in long, flowing, decorated oriental robes ..."

UNDERCOATING

It is worth going over any model carefully just to make sure there are no sprue, flash or mould lines, clean any off with a sharp scalpel and a fine file. Undercoating is essential as it provides a consistent surface on which to apply the next coats of paint, and it shows up the detail on a model much more clearly than shiny bare metal. For the undercoat I used Humbrol enamel matt black. Usually oil based undercoats better cover better on the bare metal.

THE PAINT

I used Army Painter War Paints to paint *The Dragon Lady*, mixing up colours to suit my style and preferences. The Mega Paint Set provides an adequate range of colours for almost all needs, but you will often need to mix colours to get the desired results, however I have tried to work out colour combinations to reduce mixing if possible.



PAINTING

The figure painting follows my well known method of working from dark to light shaded up from a black undercoat. This three or more colour painting method uses successive tones of colour (shade, middle and light) which are added to the model in layers, working up from dark to light. This creates a bold three-dimensional effect of shadows and highlights, the layers of colour giving greater depth and subtlety to the model. For the facial detail and for the eyes I used an Insane Detail brush. For the rest of the model I used a Warpaints Detail brush.

THE DRAGON LADY

Although I didn't have an illustration of *The Dragon Lady* to work from in the book *In Her Majesty's Name*, her style of clothing and headdress is very reminiscent of a 19th century Mongolian Princess in traditional robes (also not too dissimilar to a certain queen in a galaxy far-far-away!). So I based her costume on that, making sure I had lots of gold decoration and trying to keep my colour palate for her very much Chinese in style.

EYES & FLESH

The Dragon Lady, has a very smooth face as you would expect, almost mask like, but she does have well defined eyes and facial features, all marks of another Steve Saleh masterpiece.

I wanted the Chinese Company to have a noticeably different skin tone from the Europeans and Egyptians so planned my painting accordingly, the skin tone is slightly exaggerated but I think it needs to be so that it is noticeable, on such a tiny model on the tabletop.

EYES

1. Her whites are AP-WP1102 - Matt White
2. The irises are pure AP-WP1124 - Oak Brown



FLESH

1. AP-WP1122 - Fur Brown
2. AP-WP1122 - Fur Brown plus AP-WP1121 - Desert Yellow
3. plus AP-WP1102 - Matt White
4. plus AP-WP1102 - Matt White
5. plus more AP-WP1102 - Matt White

Cheeky

I added a tiny amount of AP-WP1104 - Pure Red to the final flesh mix and painted her cheeks in, just to give a touch of rouged femininity, then added a touch more AP-WP1104 - Pure Red and painted in her bottom lip to finish the face.

FINGERNAILS

She does have very long and potentially poisoned fingernails. But they are nicely done and easy to pick out in your desired colour. I did consider doing them painted in a bold colour, but I figured she had plenty of colours on her already, so in the end went for "natural".

1. AP-WP1122 - Fur Brown plus AP-WP1125 - Skeleton Bone
2. pure AP-WP1125 - Skeleton Bone
3. plus AP-WP1102 - Matt White
4. plus more AP-WP1102 - Matt White

THE REST OF MODEL

HER DRESS

The principle painting on her is her kimono or robe. I took her robes as being a green tunic, over a blue dress with a blue stand-up collar, and a red sleeved garment under the dress. Over the whole ensemble is a turquoise tabard with tassels, and over that is a red sash tied around the waist. All of these are fringed and decorated with lots of gold.

The red sleeved garment & sash

RED

1. AP-WP1105 - Dragon Red
plus AP-WP1124 - Oak Brown
2. AP-WP1105 - Dragon Red
3. AP-WP1105 - Dragon Red
plus AP-WP1104 - Pure Red
4. above plus AP-WP1106 - Lava Orange

The blue dress

BLUE

1. AP-WP1116 - Deep Blue
2. AP-WP1116 - Deep Blue
plus AP-WP1102 - Matt White



3. plus more AP-WP1102 - Matt White
4. plus more AP-WP1102 - Matt White

The green tunic

GREEN

1. AP-WP1112 - Angel Green
2. AP-WP1112 - Angel Green
plus AP-WP1109 - Goblin Green
3. plus AP-WP1109 - Goblin Green
4. plus more AP-WP1109 - Goblin Green

The turquoise tabard & tassels

TURQUOISE

1. AP-WP1114 - Crystal Blue mixed
with AP-WP1111 - Greenskin
2. plus AP-WP1102 - Matt White
3. plus more AP-WP1102 - Matt White
4. plus more AP-WP1102 - Matt White



HEADDRESS

There were a few bits of decoration on her headdress that were in the same colours as her clothes so I painted these in at the same time.

THE DRAGON FAN

Perhaps a bit obvious to paint a black dragon on it but I couldn't resist it! I did go and look at lots of Chinese dragons as they are distinctly different from their European counterparts and I wanted one in the right format, as it were. The fan itself is white with wooden slats and with a black dragon!

WHITE

1. AP-WP1102 - Matt White mixed with AP-WP1117 - Ash Grey
2. plus more AP-WP1102 - Matt White
3. plus more AP-WP1102 - Matt White
4. pure AP-WP1102 - Matt White

BLACK

1. AP-WP1101 - Matt Black mixed with AP-WP1125 - Skeleton Bone
2. plus AP-WP1125 - Skeleton Bone
3. plus more AP-WP1125 - Skeleton Bone
4. and lastly even more AP-WP1125 - Skeleton Bone



There were a few bits of pieces in black, like her hair and collar, so I painted these in at the same time as the Dragon.

Wooden struts of the fan

1. AP-WP1124 - Oak Brown plus AP-WP1122 - Fur Brown
2. AP-WP1124 - Oak Brown plus AP-WP1122 - Fur Brown plus AP-WP1121 - Desert Yellow
3. plus AP-WP1121 - Desert Yellow
4. plus AP-WP1102 - Matt White

THE GOLD WORK

I wanted her to have lots of gold to convey her position at the top of the Tong, and because it contrasts nicely with the other colours of her outfit. Some of the edging is detailed on the model, so I used all of that, but most I painted on where it looked good. Also there is lots of gold in her headdress, which I painted at the same time. As a contrast I didn't do any gold on her fan, keeping it just monochrome black and white.

GOLD

1. AP-WP1133 - Weapon Bronze
2. Foundry PP036C - Shiny
3. Foundry PP044C - Burning Gold

THE BASE

For all these IHMN models I decided to do a very minimal base, a fake stone paving trompe l'oeil effect. The key to the trompe l'oeil effect is to decide where the light is coming from and highlight accordingly. The final highlight goes on just the very edge of the fake stones on the paving.

1. AP-WP1101 - Matt Black mixed with AP-WP1122 - Fur Brown
2. plus AP-WP1102 - Matt White
3. plus more AP-WP1102 - Matt White
4. plus even more AP-WP1102 - Matt White

VARNISH

Make sure all the paint on the model is thoroughly dry before commencing varnishing.

Gloss

The models were then given a coat of Humbrol polyurethane gloss varnish and set aside for 24 hours to dry completely. Be careful not to let the varnish pool, especially under the horse and on the feet. You

don't need a very thick coat of varnish, in fact the thinner the better.

Matt

Then they were given two coats of AP-WP1103 - Anti-Shine Matt Varnish. Be even more careful when painting on the matt varnish. When applying the matt, brush it out well from any nooks and crannies where it is likely to collect and pool.

A BIGGER BASE

I would seriously recommend a bigger base if you are going to game with your models. The small bases are perfect for photography, but your models will fall over if you are playing on anything than a perfectly level surface, or if you jog the table or are less than very careful how you place them down.

Try something like this, using a 25mm circular plastic base from Renedra. Use superglue to stick the models in place, blowing over them with a hairdryer set on cool, to prevent the glue whitening off on the model, then infill around the model base with household filler. When the filler is hard paint on the stone paving *trompe l'oeil* effect as detailed above.

Below. The Dragon Lady commands the Tong in the pyramid of Akhenaton.



Below. The Dragon lady in action near Spitalfields, London.



Below. The Dragon Lady mesmerises sergeant Wilmot, with her Mystical Power, Clouding Men's Minds.





The Dragon Lady in action around the docks on Limehouse Reach, the East End of London.

