

GM NOTES TURN 12 - Next Turn Due August 1st.

If something happens you do not understand email me I keep very good turn-by-turn notes and I can probably tell you why something happened.

Turns Sheets: Please work diligently to make these clean. Clean orders get processed faster and more efficiently. If you can use the Turn sheet with the embedded excel please do so. I really like the movement section on those a lot.

Your Stat Sheets: Please check your stat sheets when you get them rather than at the last minute. Yes, I realize they should be perfect but sometimes it doesn't happen that way. If you check ahead of time it give time for things to get fixed rather than being in a rush.

SE's and Hordes: These are in play as all of you probably are aware. SE's are not numerous and SE's do not play open positions unless they assume a country. I am not allowing the Assumption or Creation of RO's and Primacies so the SE's can have a face to the world.

NPN's: IF you want something from a NPN then contact them by mailing your GM with your request/overtures.

Islands & Colonization and Building Cities: You must colonize an island to zero before building a city on it. This represents the very basic regional infrastructure necessary to assist the city in functioning.

NEW NOTES :

When Visiting provinces for diplomatic purposes I will generally send you home before the end of the turn especially in the case of a nation. Staying longer than the current turn is viewed as over staying your welcome. I have been doing this some since the start of the game, generally I put comments in the Newsfax about it sometimes I don't.

Women Rulers: Women can rule, unless you are Islamic, but the first time this happens there is a risk that you non-Friendly provinces will break away due to dissatisfaction over this turn of events. The chance of this happening is modified primarily by the Queens stats, the better statistically she is the less likely provinces in your country that are not of Friendly status will turn their backs on you.

Once the rule of Queens has been established it becomes less likely that your subject will be opposed to this occurrence. Eventually it will have no affect at all.

Multiple Wives: Yes you can have them. Two weaknesses of this, makes the possibility of a DF greater and eliminates the effectiveness of a political marriage.

ARMY BREAKDOWNS:

Ground troops: 1 Unit = 200 Men

Field Forts: 1 Unit = 1 Field Fort

Naval Units: 1 Unit = 2 Ships

1055 - 1059:

Mercenary Pool:

If a leader is listed you must hire the leader and his troops, leaders minimum is 5GP plus the minimum of .5gp for regular and 1gp for elite troops unit.

Northern Europe:	Johan Olavsen Independent	855	1HI, 10I 10W, 10XW
Mediterranean (Catholic)	Zulicini	649	2HC, 5C
(Catholic)	Barceli	856	5EW
Non-Islamic	Alicius Independent	A44	1EI, 10I 5HW, 15W
France, Spain, Italy, Germany & England, Scotland, Eire	Independents Independent		15I, 20XI 3C, 5XC
Any Nation on the Red Sea Or East Africa	Horgan's Free Co.	882	5HEI, 10EI, 5S
Egypt, Morocco & Cordoba:	Taureg Clan Independents	833	3XEC, 20XC 10XC, 10XI
Hungary, Serbia, Russia, Poland REE	G. D'Kolner	769	6HEC, 10EC
Hungary, Serbia, Russia, Poland	Independents Independents		3HI, 7I, 15XI 5C, 10XC
Buhwayids, Egyptians, Yemen & Shiraz Middle East:	Independents (Moslem) Abdul Mohmar	973 796	5C, 10XC 1C, 15XC 25XC
Shia			
Central Asia (Hsia, Kucha, Samarkhand, Chorasmia & Bolgars)			20XC
China & Korea	Monk Jaing	816	5HEI
India Proper	Deccan Raiders Independents Independents	824	10XEC 5I, 10XI 8XC
Asia (naval)	Independents		10XW, 5W
SE Asia & So.China Khemer, Burma, Java, Maylay, Nanchao, Tiger, Bandits, Zhou and Jaingnan	Chou Yun Independent	888	6EC 5C, 10XC
Liao, Korea, Japan, Hsia & Sung	Independents Ju Jin	A55	40XC 5EC, 5XEC

Africa:

Shia: +1 CL Jerusalem

In sticking with Shia church policies once again the size of Jerusalem was increased and it also continued to be beautified. Lots of facilities were upgraded as well in an effort to become stronger and more stable. This effort was well received in the Shia community. The Fatimid King rebuilt the walls of Jerusalem after the latest round of construction.

Egypt: Alexandria +1CL

The army was increased a great deal this turn as tensions on the Gulf of Cyprus mounted. Ten Thousand Egyptians went to work in the employ of the Egyptian armed forces, which were already large, most of the recruits were mounted soldiers. Many Mercenaries were purchased as well to protect the Holy City of Jerusalem. Much like the Hausa of Africa though the King al-Hakim just waited patiently. In a very interesting turn of events the King announced that his

brother in law the Coptic leader from Thebes would be named as a prince of the realm. This was a remarkable honor for a Coptic and while the Shia were not excited about it but the minority Coptics took note.

Ghana: Royal Road to Segou and Songhai

King Mombega dies and his son Kanissa'ai takes the throne and the whole army. Kanissa'ia was not sure he could trust his younger brother with half of it so soon after his fathers death. Kanissa'ia once on the throne immediately plunges the nation into the harsh world of slavery. Kani with a very large host of 24,000 men of all shapes and sizes march on Garou, Dogamba, Mossi and Banil. This sweep caused those that could to flee far to the south through the jungles and into Togo. Kani pleased with his haul returned home and the society of Ghana changed over night.

Morocco: Idjil City in Idjil, Idjil (F)

Sunni religious zealots piled into Arguin, they confirmed that the provincial religion was Sunni, it was and everyone was happy. The Moroccans, realizing that the only area to expand unopposed laid to the south, began working hard on making those folks like them better. Idjil was receptive to these overtures especially since they got a city out of the deal.

Sunni Church:

Four Cathedrals built in Spain was a real coup. The Sunni faith was prospering in Southern Spain and North Africa. It was also spreading across the desert.

Algeria: Bone and Algiers grow

Algeria continues to grow. Tunisia paid a visit to the Emir but no telling results come of this meeting or what it was about.

Tunisia: Port City of Annaba

Tunis continues to develop both a health economy and a secure country.

Hausa: Zaria +1CL

The Hausa remain ever vigilant on their borders waiting for something bad to happen. Nothing does and everyone is relieved. The city of Zaria grew and this made everyone happy. What didn't make the king happy is that his investments were not paying off like he wanted them too, he hired scads more workers to help the government run more effectively and they just were not getting the job done. Nyambe stomped around a lot and pouted a little but he will get over it, eventually.

Kanem: Jos (NT), Ikego (T)

Kanem continued to expand, this cycle the expansion came in the West. Umbata and Mutvusa both carried out their orders effectively and delivered agreements to their king at the end of the cycle. The agreements while not worth a great deal today did lay the groundwork for future efforts. The warrior king Hendar stayed home and ruled over his country. Hendar's wife provided the king with a son and potential heir, apparently staying around the house pays off.

Zagwe: Omdurman +1 CL

The nation mourns as the highly regarded King Solomon dies at the age of 46. His impact on diplomacy in the Zagwe realm had been substantial, as has his ability to suppress his tyrannical wife Queen Mera II. The nation stood in mourning for nearly the whole cycle as loyal leaders worked to keep the government running properly. Zagwe this turn lost every leader but the queen, since the queen was getting on toward 50 she decided to surround herself with beautiful people who would shower her with accolades.

Ethiopia: Dedre +1 CL

Ethiopians increased the size of their capital and built up some of their defenses.

Coptics: Kosti (AB), New Alexandria +1CL

The religious life is a peaceful one in the Coptic Lands. The evolving city of New Alexandria is quickly becoming one of the gems of the Southern Nile Delta.

Kilwa:

Prince Hakkawndo died in a swimming accident, he was eaten by Hippos, Africa's biggest killer on the water. When the body was recovered it had been pierced many times by spears as the loyal troops had apparently been trying to fend off the hippo. Truly a tragedy but these things happen to nobility from time to time. Hakkawendo & Nikkwendo's younger brother Mafume took over the reins as prince, he hopes to live a better life than his dead brother Hakkawendo.

Things in the nation outside of the horrible accident were peaceful just like the king liked it. Nikkwendo was blessed (?) with two daughters before his wife died in 1054.

Zanzibar:

Zanzibar, we are not quite as bad off as the pathetic Bettismarka. Many new trade routes were started and work was done by Zanzibar in Bettismarka.

Bettismarka: Oh it sucks being Bettismarka

Zimbabwe : Matapos & Gorongo (F), Luangua (T), Postal Road Roswi to Bassa

The generous King of Zimbabwe gave away many gold crafted trinkets as gifts to his neighbors and they were very receptive of this generosity. He also gave away his son, well had him get married to an influential daughter of a chieftain in Luangua which helped with the diplomacy in the region. The Zimbabwean state continues to absorb the Zambezi River delta and move further north. The very strategic postal road from Roswi to Bassa was completed this cycle which will work to further develop the expansion plans of the King.

Zulu Nation: Port City of Umata

The Zulu saved enough up to build a small port village on the coast. The hope was that trade would bring greater prosperity.

Europe:

The Pope condemns the Orthodox religion and heretical and Michael the Orthodox Patriarch of being an emissary of Satan. He issues the order of excommunication and divides the Christians of Europe officially.

Naples, the once glorious capital of the Kingdom of Naples was now a hotbed of religious strife. Many Orthodox and Roman Catholic missionaries descended on the city of Naples. Even with the local garrison led by d'Arezzo this was bound to be a problem. Things began to escalate as Roman Catholics led by Pietro III took to the streets day in day out espousing the virtues of the Catholic religion and casting disparaging remarks in the direction of the Orthodox. The problem was that a vast majority of the people in the city were of the Orthodox faith as were most of the people in the lands that once belonged to the Kingdom of Naples. As the temperatures rose so did the tensions. All throughout the Summer the anger grew between Orthodox and Catholic missionaries on numerous occasions the local magistrate was called in to settle issues. Then the assassins struck! Pietro III heir to the throne of the Kingdom of Naples was killed by a group of Orthodox Missionaries in the streets of Naples on the evening of August 12th, 1055.

All hell breaks loose. On the night of August 16th, the day of Pietro III's state burial, the Catholics armed and supported openly by King Pietro II went on a rampage through the streets of Naples. The first place they headed was the Cathedral, Piazza del Plebiscito, was a bastion of Orthodoxy. The brilliant commander d'Arezzo was leading the way, looking to score some brownie points with the King since now the King's only heir is 2 years old and the King is 70, good time to position oneself to be regent or so d'Arezzo thought. The torches were blazing and the crowd was bent on destruction, a small military force was apparently along for the ride too. They rushed onto the church grounds and d'Arezzo suddenly was peppered with arrows, a shocking amount of arrows, in fact it seemed as if he was the only target in the crowd. He crumpled to the ground in a heap at least 6 arrows protruding from his body. Then the church garrison, heavily armored in steel breast plates, carrying large shields and long swords began streaming out of the facility and attacked, quite by surprise, the Catholics and local militia. With d'Arezzo dead the mob disintegrated, the Orthodox troops reaped a bloody harvest.

The next morning things started getting serious. Pietro II contemplated burning the city to the ground but was talked out of taking such a rash decision by the few remaining leaders of the Catholics alive in the city. So Pietro did the next best thing he sent in the troops. Since he had nearly the entire army on hand this action was particularly bloody. Troops swarmed through the streets led by Papal Missionaries and Catholics. The Catholics and the Missionaries pointed out the houses of those loyal to the Orthodox faith. Those people were pulled from their houses and out into the streets where they had to swear their loyalty to the Pope before a Catholic Priest or be put to the sword. The city rose up against this act in a very violent way and the city was set alight. When a very large troops contingent arrived at the Cathedral the Orthodox priest and the heavily armored knights were waiting and the battle began immediately. There was a large contingent of women and children occupying the grounds because the Orthodox men who had taken up arms had sent their family members the one place they thought people might be shown mercy. On this day there was no mercy to be handed out. The Tuscan troops entered the grounds after an absolutely vicious struggle at the gates and slaughtered every woman and child without giving anyone the opportunity to surrender and convert.

The news hit the surrounding provinces of what was happening in Naples VERY quickly. Spoleto, Calabria, Campania and Apulia all revolted. In Apulia the fighting was not terrible, The Apulians had a large contingent of troops in place

and so the revolt was put down quickly. In Spoleto the mercenary Zulicini was forced to go into the region and assist agents of the Tuscan government in oppressing locals who were incited to revolt by the hideous action carried out by Pietro II and his army. Benevento fell without a struggle. In Calabria a different story as it managed to fend off the loyalist forces. Huge amounts of refugees mainly women and children from Campania streamed across the border into Calabria and on into Sicily which disturbed the Moslem governor a good deal.

Campania suffered the same fate as Naples. Campania gave a pretty good struggle as the regional walled towns all revolted and Pietro II and his bloodthirsty army were forced to purge those well-defended towns one by one in bloody house-to-house fighting.

In the end Campania and Naples were completely devastated but were now Catholic.

Bolgars: Bolgar City +ICL

The Bolgars continue to develop. Forts are placed along the Volga to improve regional security.

Kiev: Atelzuko (Hostile), Levedia (C), Belarus (FA) & Torki (NE)

Yaroslav dies at the ripe old age of 76 leaving his 4-year-old son to rule. Yaroslav's rule while successful was marred by the fact that he had outlived many of his children, brothers and sisters. He was a powerful and effective leader who had helped the Rus avoid a conflict with the Poles and Catholics over the Baltic Pagan lands. He also had avoided a full-fledged invasion by the Seljuk's. Several regions had achieved cultivation status due to the devoted efforts Yaroslav and his close working relationship with the Patriarch.

Yaroslav's departure caused quite a stir. Serena rushed back to the capital and leaders stayed in place waiting for the shake up, Launia took up stewardship of her young brother and took over the Army as well. When Serena arrived there was immediately a confrontation between these two women, Serena was the stronger willed of the two women and the cowed her younger sister into submission. Serena took control of the army and young Yaroslav. Now young Yaroslav was cute as a little button and though Serena wanted to kill him she was rushing precariously toward 50 and she knew she was not going to have any children to follow here to the throne so she embraced her responsibility to tutor Yaroslav about being a proper leader. At the end of the cycle all were relieved this had played out in a favorable manner because Serena had died of the cough. Launia returned to Kiev to take over her position as Regent. When she took over a rider arrived from Novgorod with a message.

Regent Launia,

The death of Yaroslav has illustrated to me the weakness of the Kingdom of the Rus. The lack of a strong male to lead the nation and its subjects into the future leaves my people and me in a precarious position. I am therefore ending the feudal arrangement with the Rus so the tribute we have been paying can be devoted to the further improvement of our defenses. It is my hope that our borders remain peaceful and that the trade between our nations continues to flow.

Respectfully,

Ivan of Novgorod

Everything seemed to be smoothed out and so everyone went about their business. Diplomatic efforts in Atelzuko, Levidia, Belarus and Torki.

Novgorod: City of Tver in Kalinin

The City building spree continues. All the lands of the North are blessed with a city. Ivan declared himself King of the north and severed his feudal ties with the Rus.

Galica:

All is quiet in the realm as the Galican's save the manpower for a cultivation project.

England: Lancashire Colonized, Cornwall (NT)

A great effort was put into making Cornwall something besides hateful. Even though Ethelfreda did her best to scuttle this effort with her arrogant behavior things went well enough to set up a wedding between Alfred and a Noble woman of Cornwall. Sadly Alfred slipped on some moss covered steps on his way out of the tower of London, where he had been torturing captured Welshmen for fun, and plummeted to his death. Dead at 35 was Alfred and this was a very unfortunate. Athelstan was getting up in years and this would effectively make Ethelfreda the heir. There were other options the hale Molly Ryn, though that had the danger paving the way for heavy Irish influences. Another of

Athelstan's daughters Edwina might need to be promoted to fill the ranks. The nobles were going to have to be worked on before this came to pass Athelstan thought to himself.

Celtic Church: City Level in Oslo & Edinberg

Lots of money was devoted to improving the economic viability of its constituents.

Ireland: Tronhiem (F)

Pleasant visit from the Scottish in-laws. Diplomats visited Trondhiem and secured the establishment of friendly relations. Economic development and some defensive forces were also constructed.

Norway:

Rested

Orkney/Scotland: Glencoe +1CL

The Eastern Trade Center of Glencoe grew so that it could support even greater trade with the Black Sea. At Home the new Scottish leadership decided that it was time to cast off some of the old Orkney societal issues. Slavery was starting to give way to a more stable Agrarian Society and things economically were also starting to open up as well, the people were very happy about this. On the diplomatic front a trip to Erie was in order and it went reasonably well. The Irish are already married to the Scottish royal family and the heir to the Irish throne. There were some discussions about the Faeroe Is. but they amounted to nothing, the Scots left in time to return home before the end of the cycle.

Poland: Pomerainia (NE)

The Poles took both diplomacy and religion to Pomerainia, this cycle. Though Diplomacy had no effect, the missionary work of Pavel was marginally effective. King Krzysztof II added two more sons to his brood though the mother of 4 of Krzysztof's sons, Katherine, died in 1057. The Poles, as they have to do, began a cultivation project in Kauyavia and completed one third of the project during this cycle. Poland continues to prosper under the supervision of Krzysztof's clan.

Baltic Pagans: Port City of Griva in Obodoza

There was a great deal of rejoicing over the founding of a new city on the mouth of the Dvina. Many trade routes were established.

Baltic Trade Coalition: Copenhagen grows and is fortified

The BTC continues to prosper.

HRE: Frankfurt +1CL

The hearty Elizabeth stayed at home this cycle rise of cultic activity in Bavaria had her concerned about a widening series of events. Elizabeth even required Von Ryan to come to the capital and work vigilantly protecting the royal family. This was tedious work but Von Ryan brought his family along since they had never visited the Capital before. Henrietta also came along and visited with here family members.

Otto IV was dispatched to Northern Italy to make sure things didn't get out of control, of course sense he did not expect anything to happen he took his new wife, Athena, with him. Many troops were raised and organized to go on the expedition to Northern Italy 15,000 Men, all heavy troops. If there was going to be trouble the Germans were not going to be unprepared. There was a large outbreak of hostilities but the Tuscan's seemed well prepared for the event so Otto stayed in the North and protected it from possible unrest in Verona and Romagna the former Venetian lands.

In somewhat disturbing news Christian Von Pruessen died after being assaulted by several men after what appears to be a night of drinking and gambling. Since Von Ryan was in the region he investigated, that is what he does after all, and turned up some interesting information, which he reported to Elizabeth directly on.

Carinthia: Trieste +1 CL

Carinthia continues to develop its Mediterranean presence. Trieste has become a sea port of note both in beauty and size though it is nothing compared to Constantinople, Benghazi, Alexandria or Venice, it's neighbor, it is still a significant achievement for the small nation for Carinthia.

Bohemia:

Brno became a bit more urbanized.

Bavaria: St. Gail built in Tyrol

The Bavarians minded their own business and continued to grow and prosper. They built some defenses just in case Elizabeth didn't like the way they said no to annexation.

Pope:

Rome was handed over to the “Defender of Catholic Virtues” Pietro II. This was an event without ceremony and no one from Tuscany even showed up to accept the gracious gift. In other areas the church continued to expand its influence in Europe both by the building of new religious facilities and by the endowment of civil engineering projects to the loyal followers of the faith.

Also see European Section**Branist:** Marseille and Bordeaux +ICL

Bran Jacobson died in his sleep at age 70, a peaceful death for a man who challenged the authority of the Catholic Church and won, very surprising. The Branist devoted a huge amount of effort toward Gascony this cycle. Southern France is becoming a stronghold for the Branist very quickly.

France: Cherbourg & Rouen +ICL

It is wonderful being a great power and the king of France knew it. Cities grew and prospered, the army got stronger and the city walls got higher. The French economy kept churning along cranking out men and money, which was allocated to the needs of the nation. At the end of the cycle Robert II (the Norman) expired due to a nasty bout of the flu. It was unfortunate but these are the things that happen sometimes to both good and bad leaders. His brother Michael who was married to Anne of Aquitaine took Robert’s position. The assumption of power went very smoothly which was a relief to Michael.

Little of note happened beyond the transition of power with the exception of the activities of Francois in Aquitaine. Francois was the top diplomat in the kingdom and he worked hard to sooth the problems the southern nobles were creating. He parleyed as did numerous little people from the French government but there seemed to be no end to the issues created by the Barons of Limousin and Auvergne. Toward the end of the cycle Francois died in his sleep having accomplished little. His efforts did not go unnoticed by the northern nobles however who were thankful that France was trying at least to resolve the issues of Aquitaine.

Gascony: Toulouse +ICL

The Gascon’s continue to busy themselves with a wide assortment of activities. Sitting on the border between Spain and France can be very precarious so more defensive positions were built in both Catalonia and Gascony its self. The Army was also reorganized to assure city defenses were well maintained.

Aquitaine: Nantes +1 CL

Life in Aquitaine continued to be a bit rough. The southern nobles were once again stirring the pot in regard to the potential joining with France should one of Princess Anne’s children take the throne. There was no open revolt but the nobles in Limousin were openly discussing the possible actions to take should such an event occur. Many southern nobles were also becoming dissatisfied with the lack of development in their lands. The North seemed to be reaping all the benefits of the Duke’s benevolence and the southern lords barely got a scrap.

Leon: Salamanca Colonized

Having suffered long enough as a slave state the realm of Leon returned to its farming roots. Due to concern in the East from Gascony and South from Cordoba Leon added 5000 Cavalry to its army.

Cordoba: Valencia, Esbelya, Palina & Al Mireya +ICL

The pattern of growth continues for the Cordovans as their cities continue to grow in size. There was a great gathering of all the kingdoms most important leaders this cycle were they met and discussed the future of the country. Abdul had 3 sons and that made the royal line a little more secure.

Hungary:

The Kingdom of Saint Stephen continues to prosper and remain peaceful. No one would have believed that the adoption of Christianity would ensure nearly 60 years of peace and tranquility. The trusted Commander of the Armies Janos passed of old age in 1052. A nice state funeral was held and King Andrew took control of the army until a replacement of Janos could be found.

Serbia:

The king had only one objective...to have some kids. He succeeded with a daughter and 3 sons; there was much rejoicing, YEA! The SEF was deployed to Aleppo. The saw no action but the locals were happy, oh wait they hate everyone, so the locals were actually apathetic about the troops arrival. The lands of Serbia prosper under the able guidance of the Mikhail II; Orthodox Church has also helped of course.

Montenegro: Rhodes (F)

Everyone ventured to the island of Rhodes and assured them of their importance in the realm of Montenegro. This seems to have worked since Rhodes became friendly.

Greece: City of Naxos in the Klykades
Strengthened the regional defenses.

Bulgaria: Pliska +1 CL

The Bulgars devoted all their attention to adding to the city of Pliska. Some urban improvements were added as well.

Byzantines: City of Somosata in Edessa, Vaspurakan (NE), Pamphyla (NT), Capadocia (C)

Important agricultural subsidies are sent to Montenegro and Galica, loyal Orthodox states, and in return more money is added to the Byzantine coffers. The Byzantines did a bunch of running around attempting to secure the loyalty of regions that would allow the Byzantine Empire to hold the Guneydogu Toroslar line. Having the high mountain barrier would make the Byzantine Empire invincible! Jovian and his entourage made plans to travel to Antioch, Jovian was sure that the Moslems of the city of Antioch would like to be blessed with the message of Christianity. After a lengthy discussion with the administer of contracts and pacts though Jovian reconsiders his options and stays at home.

Also see the Middle East Section and the Buhwayids section.

Patriarch: City of Valetta on Malta

The Orthodox Church continues to spread throughout Russia. This area is becoming a bastion of the Orthodox faith, as the Kievian government and the Patriarch seem to be in sync, not the boy band. Conversions are done enmasse and the pagans in greater Russia seem to be very receptive to the call to the Orthodox faith. Facilities are also going up all over the place as well. At home Patriarch Michael had two concerns, the Naples situation and the Buhwayid situation. Seemingly all the Orthodox states seemed to be united in the defense of the Byzantine homeland so the Buhwayid issue was not apparently going to be a great concern. Naples was however and Michael did what he could to assist his brothers in southern Italy but it was just not enough to stop a great misdeed by the Catholic Tuscans.

Also see European Section

Tuscany: *See European Section*

Mercenary League:

Men were sent off and Buliceli was happy. Mercenaries hired meant money coming in and how could that be bad. No additional troops were added to the rolls this cycle. Buliceli died in 1059 and while there was always a fair chance that the Mercenaries would have a falling out at this time however everything transitioned nicely to the authority of Zulicini.

Middle East: Royal Marriage

When the Caliph saw all his lords assembled, his heart was glad. Then, to heighten the joy, he ordered his son to receive his wife. Theodra was her baptismal name. In the great hall there was much merry-making, each one contributing what he could to the entertainment: one jumping, another tumbling, another doing magic; there was story-telling, singing, and playing of both drums large and small accompanied by horns. The maidens sang and danced, and outdid each other in the merry-making. At the wedding that day everything was done which can give joy and incline a man's heart to gladness. There was not a wicket or a gate kept closed; but the exits and entrances all stood ajar, so that no one, poor or rich, was turned away. The Caliph was not miserly, but gave orders to the bakers, the cooks, and the eunuchs that they should serve every one generously with bread, strong tea, and spiced lamb with raisins. The palace rang in joy!

A great dowry was paid by the Byzantines to make the ceremony occur but as is becoming the norm in this part of the no money at all was spent on the actual ceremony so while the people who are paid to write nice things in the public declarations did so (See Above) those in the know saw it as just another hum drum ceremony with little to note except for the fact that somehow the Byzantine Emperor had managed convince Theodra into becoming the wife of the heir to the throne of the Buhwayid Empire would be a good ideal.

Buhwayids: Lebanon Cultivated, Port of Al'Kuwayt built in Kuwait

In a startling turn of events malcontents in the city of Baghdad destroyed several cisterns. This was not the result of an open revolt by citizens so it has left government investigators quite puzzled. There has been growing tension in the city and really throughout the Buhwayid realm over the religious course of the kingdom. In recent years the Pro-Shia Fundamentalist have been getting stronger and stronger and it is possible that the Sunni locals were lashing out against the non-supportive government that had once imprisoned the Sunni religious leaders. The Shiraz rebellion 25 years ago paved the way for the Abbasid Caliphate to flee the country to Morocco.

April 14th, 1058 the illustrious Saurdukar dies of old age, he is 80. Saurdukar is certain to have a place high in heaven. He will always be known as Saurdukar the Defender for his turning back of the Seljuk host without a fight and because he saved the Buhwayid Empire from a devastating civil war when he sided with the heir to the throne and threw off the rebel leaders who had captured the capital. There would be no Buhwayid Empire if not for his efforts.

His sons however did not like each other so shortly after Saurdukar was buried with full honors Hakkim struck. Hakkim had the backing of almost the entire military and he betrayed his brother and attempted to take the throne. He was immediately set upon by assassins who tried to lay him low but they were unsuccessful. He marched on the capital, he was in Mesopotamia already so it did not take long. Al'Basasiri realizing what was going on tried to sway the army into revolting against Hakkim but Al'Basasiri's complete lack of military prowess and his recent marriage to a Byzantine played poorly in Military circles. Al Basasiri fled with his wife to the lands of the ERE and because of his craftiness he actually succeeded in eluding his brothers pursuit. The nation held together but the Persians due to a recent cataclysmic event and the displacement of the rightful heir to the Buhwayid throne, decided they wanted to be free of the Buhwayid yoke so they declared their feudal agreement null and void.

Persia: Qazvin grows, Shabad is fortified

The Persian plateau was firmly in the grasp of the Persian ruler. The message had been sent from the heavens but it was still difficult to determine what the message was so the King ordered that a fortress be built on the spot where the meteor had struck. A new Islamic sect formed in the Shabad province. Persia declared independence for Buhwayid rule.

Azerbaijan: Batum +ICL

Due to high volumes of trade and the apparent departure of the Horde the Azerbaijan King decided Batum needed to grow. Some defensive structures were built to support the growing value of the Georgian region.

Yemen: Zufar (NE)

Sultan Ahmed died tragically while spending quality time with his harem, maybe he died happily come to think of it, he passed nonetheless. His capable son Ali assumed the throne without incident. There was some concern that the Council of Sands might revisit the lands, they did not. On the African side of the Red Sea there was much going on. Babar had been ordered to get rid of the Hindu influences in Berbera. Apparently the Hindu's had not gotten the blessing of the Yemenese Kingdom to occupy the region and build a city and the Yemenese were a little touchy about the sanctity of their region.

Babar with his 3000 mostly light cavalry entered the region and was very surprised to find that the region was prospering and that it was full of defensive structures that his force was ill equipped to deal with. Babar chose to withdraw from the region rather than get his men killed.

In another tragic turn occurred when two of Ahmed's young children died in their teens of the fever.

Ghazi: Merv rebuilt, Transoxnia repopulated

The Ghazi kept one eye looking north toward the Steppe and the other eye on the south where there was much business to take care of. The issues that needed to be addressed with the Endrosians were slavery and civilization. The heir to the throne Ali traveled to the Edrosian capital of Mansura to see how different things were. He was shocked to find that not only did the Edrosians not own slaves, one of the few nations in the region, but they were much more efficient in how they ran their government. Ali returned to the Ghazi capital impressed.

D'Kashet traveled south to the desert clans and negotiated an agreement that made more economical sense to the Ghazi. The desert tribes are receptive to the Ghazi overtures and accepted the renegotiated contracts of peace. In the north nothing bad happened which was a big relief.

Kemal, Minister of Health and Recreation, heard of a new sporting event that was becoming all the rage on the Steppe, Horse Catapulting! While this sounded really bizarre it was worth a try especially if it helped the diplomatic efforts

with the nomads. So Kemal got some financing and put together the basic equipment needed for this activity and found some young bucks looking to make a name for themselves. After experimenting with this contraption, a huge catapult capable of hurling a horse and rider, and killing numerous horses and several riders Kemal put the torch to the hideous device.

Edrosia:

A good deal of economic development occurred in the urban areas of this nation.

Chorasmia: Royal Road to Bokhara

The size of Chorasmia's army was a financial strain so they poured everything into economic development and the road project.

Samarkhand:

Economic Development

Seljuk's: Khotan, Astin & Tarim Enslaved; Kuchans Tribes join

India had avoided the fate of being pillaged by the Seljuk's. The Seljuk's decided to take out their angst on some provinces of the Magna tribes. The Magna were small and their lands were vast so they could do little to oppose the Seljuk's. Toghril took his clan north through the lands of the Hsia unopposed and into the Kuchan tribal lands. Toghril met with the leaders of the region and discussed with them the virtues of joining with him. They were small and the Seljuk numbers were great so they joined. This did create an interesting turn of events. The Kuchan's were of the Manichaean religion. Some of the Seljuks were not terribly excited about this others were actually receptive to the unobtrusiveness of the Manichaean church. No telling what real affect this will have on the Horde as a whole but the Manichaean religion is now being spread. The Seljuks rested and trained in Kerait the hub of steppe life in this part of the world.

India: BATTLE FOR VATSA

July 1057 the army marches north into Jihjhoti 12,000 Cavalry and 11,000 Infantry nearly half of the forces are fast moving light troops that the Deccan Region is known for. They roll on through Jihjhoti and into the waiting arms of the Uttar Pradesh Army. In the province of Vatsa there were numerous fortified towns and villages as well as strategic points 20 or so in all. The Uttar Pradesh army was lead by Raj Suva and his competent General Dwijesh who was commander of the cavalry. All told in the Vatsa army there were 10,000 Cavalry and 3000 Infantry. Important to note that Suva had brought his 2600 man Imperial Guard that had seen a great deal of action in the wars versus Rajput 20 years ago. While the men were not the same the unit flags were carried with pride onto the battlefields of the Vatsa province. Both Dyupati and Suva have their intelligence services stave off assassination attempts.

March 1058: The battle begins. Dyupati was a brilliant tactician and he knew there was only one way he would beat his superior foe and that was to take advantage of the tactical weaknesses of his opponent and the Tripuri army's superiority in both maneuver and equipment. At every turn Dyupati's army gains the advantage of terrain even though Suva had prepared defenses. Suva's heavy troops tried to react to attacks on forts but by the time they arrived at a battle site all they found is another defensive position is destroyed and the Tripuri army is gone. The other stumbling block was that more often than not Heavy Infantry and Cavalry of the Uttar Pradesh army is frequently left without the supporting missile troops and got chewed up by the lightly armed and very mobile forces of the Tripuri army which ran hit and run raids. It was a complete disaster and finally after three months of ineffectiveness on the part of the Uttar Pradesh army and the Kings poor leadership the cavalry army retires to the home province much the worse for wear especially after the retreat across the river. The infantry do all they can to get into Kalanjara (GM realizes this naming problem needs to be fixed).

Just as the Tripuri army is done fighting the first UP army a second one crosses the river from Rajput. This army is better suited to fight the Tripuri army it appears. Not only does it have a good leader in Jish, who is later discovered to Prince Jish the Bengal Heir to the throne but is also has a good complement of light troops to support the heavily armored and well trained heavy lancer units. All told the Bengal Army has 16,000 men of which 4000 are Royal Guard Heavy lancers, and 5000 are horse archers.

The first battle was effectively a stalemate, the Tripuri fought hard against the Bengals, as they were discovered to be after the battle, and drove them from the field but the defeat was only a marginal one and both sides losing roughly 2000 men. The second battle occurred in the spring on 1059. Jish managed to get a jump on Dyupati breaking camp a little earlier (actually same month just a little creative licenses). Jish was hoping to surprise his able foe by maneuvering his army to cut the Tripuri lines of communication. This worked like a charm and Dyupati was very upset. Once he figured out what was going on he rushed his army toward the Jihjhoti border, he knew that Jish would

be waiting but Dyupati also knew being cut off from supply would kill his army much quicker than any Bengal army would. Jish was waiting patiently for his foe to arrive and in April of 1059 the two armies met one last time.

The Bengal center was composed of the Royal Guard Heavy Foot, backing them up was a large contingent of light infantry. Now the Bengal siege engineers had also created some hastily constructed field works so that the flow of the battle could be better controlled, Main idea was to slow the mobility of the Tripuri army a bit and the efforts of the engineers paid off. As with many times before the Tripuri moved up with in missile range and started letting their opponent have it, the large quantity of Bengal missile troops helped act as a counter balance and then the powerful Bengal Royal lancers charged down a couple of lanes that the engineers had created for them. On the approach they were not that noticeable but once the enemy was lured in the cavalry had wide-open attack angles and the Bengalis tried to exploit these. The Tripuri reeled back, a large contingent of lancers led by Govindan rushed in to save the missile troops from being slaughtered, this was effective but pretty rough on the cavalry forces, Govindan ended up paying with his life. The Bengal Army attempted now to counter attack as Jish ordered his entire army forward. The large cadre of horse archers at the disposal of Dyupati were committed to fend off the advancing forces while the cavalry tried to extract itself from the Royal Lancers deadly embrace. The efforts of Dyupati were somewhat effective and the Tripuri army withdrew like James Bonds Martini shaken not stirred.

In the aftermath the Bengal army did pursue and did some additional damage but as April came to a close they ended their pursuit and headed home. Dyupati was happy to be in friendlier territory, he had won a great victory against the UP forces, but the final battle for Vatsa had been a brutal one and his army would need a well deserved rest to recover from the campaign.

Tibet: Port City of Dhaka in Assam, Gtsang Cultivation completed

The Tibetans are taking a more passive stance these days, now that they have secured the river border with the Bengalis. With some help from the Lamanist a lot of good works get done.

Lamanist Tibet: Port City of Bandar in Ras Hafun

The Lamanist continue to expand, they are now in Africa. Tibetans in Africa how could this happen! Ras Hafun is turning into a resort community for those who want to get out of the bitterly cold climate of Tibet. The Tibetans shied away from close association with the Hsia since the Hsia had launched an attack against the Chinese Buddhist religious facilities. The Southern Lamanist received a good deal of benefit from Lamanist investments.

Punjab:

Prepared a great deal for the onslaught, which never occurred. Received some assistance from the Shivan church.

Shiva Church of Kashmir:

Built a bunch of facilities in the lands of Punjab and finished a couple of conversions. Also sent a good amount of money to Punjab who was trying to recover from their war preparations.

Kucha: Beshablik (EA)

Near tragedy averted! The Kuchan King Massoud who was only 33 died suddenly in a spill while riding. Massoud had a ton of sisters, nieces and daughters so there was no shortage of women to cry at the funeral in fact flood warnings were issued for the capital on the day of the funeral. The 75 year old Elxaria assumed the throne as the regent. She was as tough as nails and surprisingly she was accepted as the regent until Massoud's two-year-old son could assume the throne. A large number of men were brought into military service this cycle as the awareness of the Horde and the potential for other hordes made security an issue.

Manichaeans:

Minding their own business and helping the Kuchans.

Paramara Alliance: CIVIL WAR!

King Mrinal oversaw the construction of a large contingent of troops this cycle he was very pleased to see the army getting back to it's pre- Rajaput war levels. It was indeed quite a relief. Shortly after the recruitment was complete Mrinal died in his sleep of an apparent heart attack he was only 45. Prince Mrigai and Prince/heir Mridul rushed back to the capital, Mrigai arriving first. By the time Mridul made it.....well it was just too late. Powerful men are sometimes the most risky to have around and Prince now King Mrigai was one of those individuals. Mrigai put to the sword to General Pushkar, his sister Keva and brother Mrigesh who he suspected would oppose him at some point and time. Tarain revolted, Avanti would have had they not been so beaten down that they no longer had the will to fight.

Mrigai anxious to prove his prowess on the battlefield rushed the army north and completely obliterated all opposition in Tarain. Subdued completely he returned to the capital to get the house in order and root out the rest of the opposition to his rule. He found none.

Bengal:

Huge military build up was necessitated by the Tibetans to the north and the Tripuri to the south. The king was fearful that he might be put in a vise and he was not going to be poorly prepared for such an action.

Also see the "Battle of Vasta"

Kashmir:

Many Field Forts were built in both provinces.

W. Chalukya: Banavasi +1CL

Construction was completed on the city of Banavasi. It is by far the largest city in India protected by 60' high walls around the expansive outer city and 100' high walls on the inner city. It is a great achievement for such a small nation. When news arrived from Africa about a Yemenese Cavalry force crossing the border into Berbera the Chalukyan king was quite upset. He was certain that he had discussed the occupation of these lands with the Yemenese King ten or so years ago but apparently there had been some difficulty in the translations from Hindi to Arabic. The king was pleased to hear the Yemenese had promptly withdrawn from the region. He chuckled about his good fortune of having placed numerous field forts into the region just in case something like this happened.

Chola: Gangas Cultivated, Matwada and Vindon +1 CL

Chola was very aware that trouble was brewing in the north and so they added to their mobile armed forces and their nations defenses. Don't confuse preparedness with total devotion though as the Cholans added to the size of two cities and improved the economy in the Chera region. Four of the king's sisters were shipped off to retirement communities.

Sri Lanka: Colombo +1 CL, Maldives (F)

The Lamanist made sure that the efforts of the Ceylanese in the Maldives went well, the province is now friendly. Many patrols were sent out to reduce the possibility or effectiveness of piracy in the region. Colombo came fully under the sway of the Ceylanese government as they increased its size. All in all the Ceylanese were enjoying a strong working relationship with the Lamanist and profiting greatly from it. After some lengthy consultations with the Lamanist Primate it is determined that casting off Slavery should be a goal of the small nation of Ceylon, of course with the example recently set by the Hsia it becomes obvious that Slavery is still sometimes practiced in Lamanist nations.

Tripuri: Pundra (FA), Kalinga (A)

While diplomacy is an important part of every government's expansion, war was the call of the day. A large amount of troops were called up and Dyupati and his second in command Govindan headed north to do battle with the Armies of Suva. ***** *SEE BATTLE FOR VATSA* *****

Uttar Pradesh:

Raj Suva was not pleased with the turn of events in the south. Jhijhoti was turning into a no mans land as it had 4 owners in the last 30 years. Suva had hoped he would be the final owner of this heavily disputed territory but he was apparently incorrect in his assumption. He ordered both of his large armies deployed in a defensive posture this cycle just as a precaution against further advances by the Tripuri. His fleet was also deployed on the river to make any crossing difficult hoping he could funnel the enemy into the teeth of his defenses. Many fortifications were erected in Vasta as a precaution as well. *** *SEE BATTLE FOR VATSA* ***

S.E.Asia:

Burma: +1CL Akyab & Songkhla, Sagaing (EA)

The lands continue to grow and prosper as peace permeates the region. South East Asia is a hot bed of economic growth. Emperor Krung's youngest daughter, Heido was married off to the Sagaing leader this cycle and this assisted greatly in the diplomatic efforts of the King and his entourage. All were home before the end of the cycle, as they did not want to overstay their welcome. Under the guiding hand of Hkamati the army was reorganized and strengthened.

Khmer: Angkor Wat +1CL, Port City of Kampot in Siam, Royal Road Kacheh to Kampot, Champa (A)

The Khemer continue to work hard to please their former enemies the Champans. These efforts have finally met with success as the province became allied. Economic development which included the construction of a road to connect the first Khemer port on Siam Wan.

Vishnu of SE Asia:

Great deal of urban improvement among the loyal followers.

Malay Confederation: Colonized Singapore

In the never-ending struggle to gain financial stability the Maylay established a full-fledged colony on the strategic island of Singapore. Large amounts of ships scurried to and from the island as manpower and resources were allocated to this project. The Maylay boss in his infinite wisdom also sired several children in hopes one of them would be notable enough to take over the helm when he passed. Conversations were had with the Vishnu priest and conversion to the Vishnu church was seriously considered then accepted. This caused a few problems on Hainan Is. but nothing that could not be subdued easily.

Java: Laid claim to Flores, Sumba, Kepeluan, and Belitung, Sulawesi (NT), Mindinao (NE)

The Javans concerned about the growing traffic in the islands laid claim to a ton of islands planting a flag and then leaving in Ceylonese style. The Diplomatic efforts in Mindinao were a bit scary as things got heated so Sarapha being the good diplomat he is bailed before things got out of control. In SuliWest they were just not that impressed with the Javans.

The king took the army in to Jambi, his storm troopers brutally put down the insurrection then they militarily converted the province to make sure this kind of problem did not ever crop up again.

Asia:**Sung Imperial Domains:**

Only one thing mattered so all the forces of the Sung were gathered and they marched north to participate the Betrayal of Ming Wan Chan.

“See Hsia”

Bandit Kingdoms of Hunan:

Just waiting around, and minding their own business.

Shanan – Zhou: +1CL Chaing-Ling & Kwanchou

The Zhou settled into economic development mode. It was high time the rich lands of the

Jaingnan: Anhui Colonized and Chekaing, Kaingsu (F)

The Jaingnan leadership assumed they had seen the worst the Zhou were going to deal out. The relations with the Tiger and Nanchao seemed to be good and supportive so the Jaingnan decided to roll the dice. Both Anhui and Chekaing were colonized (the GM hadn't spent any NFP's in a while).

Clan Iiachi: Gouangxi (F)

The convulsions in northern China continue to be a concern in the south. Two Thousand men were called into the armed services and the army waited incase there was a need to spring into action. None violence came to the lands and everyone was happy, well except the Ngo Fu who was really itching to get in a fight. Some attention was paid to the economic development of the country as well.

Buddhist Primacy: Kaifeng +1 CL

The Buddhist devoted all their efforts to the downfall of the Hsia. The Primacy hired every mercenary they could find, 34,000 men mostly horse archers from the steppe. It was a huge force led by a slew of capable leaders only Ju Jin was the equal of Ming. In other but related news Primate Chou Ding IV decided to send some missionaries into some Hsia provinces. The men were immediately sent packing, as no one wanted to be caught even associating with the Chinese Buddhist after last cycle.

Nanchao: Lanchou (NE), Laos (T)

A great deal of effort was put into building up the defenses in the north. With recent events in the north this kind of precautionary measure seemed very appropriate. In though south things went a bit different as diplomacy with the southern neighbors was given top priority. Both Laos and Annam were receptive to the overtures of Gu Ku and Mista

Ones. In fact a political marriage with Han's eldest daughter tying the knot to a notable powerbroker in Annam things seem to be moving along very well.

Diplomatic council Yu Tu ventured into Langchou. He was on a mission of peace offer assistance to those who might be fearful of the possibility of Hsia slaving parties. Langchou as a result of all the chaos swirling around them had actually become a province living in fear. They were somewhat hostile to all outsiders and thus Yu had little effect when trying to sway these people to accept the Nanchao's offer of protection. Yu also ventured into Chinling to investigate the devastation. The message he sent back is the one all that journeyed into those regions brought back, there is very little left. Small population pockets still exist as not everyone in the province was rounded up by the Hsia but they were scattered and just trying to eek out enough food to survive on. Religious institutions were burned to the ground as were a vast majority of the villages since there was no one left to put out fires after the ruthless Hsia moved through the region. It was a horrific tragedy on a massive scale.

His Hsia:

The Hsia prepared for war, as was their way. Another 9000 Heavy Lancers were brought into the ranks of the military and a HUGE contingent of troops, nearly 35,000 men, were sent off to kill the Koreans. At home the 30,000 slaves taken last cycle from the lands of the former Sung were put to work in the new Hsia capital. A fantastic amount of improvements were made in the city.

BETRAYAL OF MING WAN CHAN:

Ming pride, of Kuluki the Hsia Emperor, traveled at the head of a huge army of nearly 35,000 men. They were some of the best horsemen in the world and when they charged the earth shook and the winds howled no army would be able to stand before this army he chuckled to himself. He traveled through the lands of Houma desolate now that the people had been stripped away from the land. It was almost like the steppe Ming thought to himself, so serene with out the deluge of people working in the fields. Many a village that would have been teeming with people were merely burned out shells now. Some chickens or the occasional stray cow would be rounded up and captured by the outriders. A little more meat in the pot was a good thing. The army was happy and full of vigor as they traveled the death of the Red Monkey not so long ago and then more recently the purging of the Sung sympathizers from the lands of the Hsia. It had been nothing but glory for the armies of the Hsia for the past 20 years. The Conquest of Korea would be the first step toward making Ming a man to be reckoned with in the future, the first of many glorious campaigns that would bring power and prominence to the Hsia.

Ming and his army arrived in Hopei in July of 1050. It was humid on the river, Ming preferred the former capital of Wu Hai much more than the Chinese lowlands so did the steppe ponies that had to lug around the heavy lancers. The night after arriving in the province of Hopei an assassin struck. It was the middle of the night, like there is another time for assassins to kill people? A man who appeared to be a horse handler tried poorly to slip into the Princes tent with a poisoned dagger. He was unsuccessful and died a very miserable death.

Ming a couple of days later met up with the Liao host. Ming mused over the array of troops he saw before him; it appeared to him that every one of his steppe brothers was coming to the party in Korea. Ming met briefly with Khaidu the discussed marching orders and things of that nature then Ming went and visited the Bear, Wolf and Jaguar Clans. They were in a festive mood and Ming and his entourage enjoyed their company. They were acting a bit odd but Ming thought nothing of it. On his way back to his encampment in the early evening several armed assassins assailed him and his group of protectors. They initiated the attack by firing short bows into Ming's group and downing a few of the horses then they ran out from cover and engaged directly. They also were not overly effective since Ming's father had assumed there might be some attempts on his young sons life. These Assassins were not Korean that was a certainty, they looked to be Sung and when stripped down they bore marking of the SID order. SID members tatoo themselves in recognition of rank the higher the rank the more of a tatoo they have, it begins as a single circle the size of a standard serving plate in the middle of the back and as rank and notoriety is gained the Circle is filled in.

Ming hurried back to his encampment. He told his troops to be ready and the watches were doubled. Now Ming was not the slyest man but he was no fool, people were trying to kill him and it wasn't the Koreans. That night several women were brought in for Ming to satisfy himself with. He chose two since he had a feeling he would not be sleeping much that night anyway adrenaline was coursing through his veins over the recent attempted plots to kill him. Food was brought in and none of the food tasters died so the prince ate and drank. Several hours later after the servants were gone the ladies and the Prince were in the process of getting on friendlier terms when one of the concubines decided she needed more wine. She brought some for all of them. Ishi who had stayed with the prince immediately consumed hers and fell to the floor dead! Ming sprang to his feet throwing down the tainted wine, the remaining concubine drew a very long hairpin from her hair and lunged at the prince she was too slow though and the prince severed her head from her body with one quick stroke of his blade. The guards rushed shocked to see both women dead. Ming ordered Ishi to get a proper burial and the other nameless concubine to be thrown on the fires and burned. Ming was merciless.

The Hsia deployed immediately for war, the outriders left very early in the morning and the Hsia began a tactical withdrawal. He may not be very sly but he was a tactical genius, he knew the pincher was closing in on him and he was certain the Bear, Wolf and Jaguar would be leaving early in the morning to try to gain the flank on him. Ming also wanted to position himself so there would be no field forts to concern himself with. Ming and the vast allied army maneuvered for a couple of days until Ming found a spot that suited his needs. Ming was not a coward he just wanted to tip the scales a bit. He was amazed his adversaries had led him into this trap and bungled it so brilliantly by sending waves of assassins after him thus exposing their plan. He of course was also very thankful that he was alive.

In an area with lime groves on the left flank and the Yellow River on his right flank Ming chose to take his stand. There was always the risk of a wide encirclement by the Steppe tribes but Ming was certain if the Liao, and his allies attempted such a strategy that they would leave themselves woefully weak for the main battle. Ming was also very confident he could break any Steppe formations if he needed to with his heavy lancers.

Battle Lines:

Ming Wan Chan 2000 Royal Guards Heavy Lancers, 30,000 Heavy Lancers and 4000 Horse archers

VS

The Sung led by Chin Tzn Kai and Chou Tiberum - 1000 Imperial Guard with long spear and sword, 10,000 Heavy Foot with sword and shield and 4000 light bow and spearmen.

The Liao led by Khaidu with 2000 Guards Heavy Lancers, 4000 Horse Archers and a smattering of infantry.

The Mercenaries:

Monk Jaing with his 1000 Elite Heavy Foot and 2000 Elite Swords

Chou Yun with his 1200 Elite Light Lancers

Qaser of Clan Wolf with his 8000 Horse Archers

Bekter of Clan Bear with his 6000 Horse Archers

Togrul of the Jaguar Clan and his 8000 Horse Archers

The Allied army approached with caution, the Sung formed up the center since they were the only ones that had a prayer of standing up to a charge by the Hsia's ferocious heavy lancers. The Horse archers laid out a variety of intricate screens in hopes of not only distracting Ming from his goal of destroying the allies but also so they could throw down as much firepower as possible on the Hsia horse as they advanced. The Hsia Horse archers positioned themselves behind the heavy horse so as to not draw fire. Outnumbered, as they were it was a much better idea to just give supporting fire for the main formation.

And they did come, 35,000 Cavalry, their lacquered armor glistened in the early day sun their shield bore the symbol of the Wu Hai and the lances held the streamers from past campaigns waved by the Hsia, most prominent was the Red streamer signifying the Red Monkey Campaign. All the Hsia warriors knew that winning this battle would certainly earn them another streamer for their bloody lances. Ming ordered forces forward and the wave did surge forth, the thunder did begin to roll across the plain and the earth shook. It was terribly frightening to all on the allied side; no one had expected to have to face so many warriors. The Hsia had no superior in the world when it came to mounted combat and only the Liao on this day were their equal, they greatly outnumbered the Liao. Jaing's troops took up the center position as they were better trained and equipped than the Sung ground forces. The huge amount of Allied horse archers sprung into action the sky was nearly blacked out with the mass of arrows launched into the sky it was impossible to miss the oncoming Hsia it was mainly a matter of whether the arrows would pierce the heavy armor of Hsia. Some damage was done but the blow delivered initially by the horse archers barely slowed the massive wave that was about to engulf the Sung.

The Sung ranks split asunder and exploded under the brutal onslaught. Make no mistake though the Sung took their toll when the Hsia hit it was just there was so many Hsia heavy cavalry that the sheer magnitude of numbers was all but unstoppable. Yun & Khaidu now engaged their forces in an attempt to stop a complete rout. The Wolf & Bear also descended on the left flank of Hsia. Ming had prepared for this and he launched his Royal Guards and his horse archers against these two foes or tried to but the Jaguar interceded. The Jaguar were being held in reserve for just such a situation. Yun, Khaidu and the flanking action by the steppe lords stopped Ming's momentum. A tremendous melee now ensued. The Sung were rallied and now returned to engage the enemy.

The Jaguar were smashed by Hsia Royal Guard heavy Lance and the Elite horse archers. Though the Jaguar had the numbers they could not hold up against weight of the heavy horse. The Heavy Horse and the Light Elite Cavalry hit the flank of the Bear, if you can really hit a flank in a full-fledged melee. Ming drove a wedge into the Bear and they

began to crumble like the Jaguar. They withdrew too. The all the allied forces began to attempt to extract themselves from the conflict. The Horse archers backed out but then turned and began peppering the Hsia as they tried to pursue the troops trying to pull back. The huge amount of horse archers began to be felt now by the Hsia. Ming could not chase down the horse archers so he declined to pursue the enemy.

Aftermath:

The Hsia lost close to eight thousand horse. The Sung got whacked losing nearly 10000 men. The Liao lost nearly 3000 horse. The Jaguar and the Bear got beat up pretty badly the Wolf survived reasonably intact. Chou Yun and Monk Jaing both acquitted themselves well and survived, though Jaing will have a hard time reforming his force. The crow in Hopei are all very fat now.

In the West the Seljuks passed through the Hsia and Tagnut lands the leaders of those provinces watched them pass.

The Liao made raids against Hsia lands that were somewhat productive but the allied leaders who had been left as a home defense force drove off the Liao before they could do a great deal of harm.

Korea: Hongwon +ICL, Tsainan (EA)

The Korean's appear to be oblivious of the going on's in China and continue to develop their nations. Some troops were gathered and sent to the northern frontier, Suifenhe. The Korean Emperors daughter was carted off to mainland chain and handed off to the Tsainan Overlord as a wife, well one of them. This greatly aided the efforts of Ming and Ill in their efforts to woo the province into being loyal to Korea.

Japan: Port City of Miyazaki in the province of Kagoshima

Queen Ishi ruled and watched over her country like a hawk. The northern warlords had been subdued in recent history but the islands had been very quiet for the last 50 years, were they the next trouble spot for the Empire? Not this cycle at least. All was peaceful and the nation ran smoothly. Grand Diplomat and advisor to the Queen Kato secured the loyalty of Kwanto before passing due to heart failure. Chia succeeded in actually having two daughters this cycle, which was a fine addition to the royal family as far as the queen was concerned.

Shinto: Sakhalin and Okinawa Colonized

The Shinto did not want for manpower and they put the masses to good use aiding their parent nation in Okinawa and colonizing Sakhalin for themselves(?).

Liao:

The Liao and her allies devised a devious plan. The Hsia had been declared the scourge of Northern China after the enslavement of many Chinese provinces last turn. The Liao who have a similar heritage to the Hsia had often worked together with the Hsia against their hated enemy the Sung and so this act against the former Sung states was not that shocking. However the attack on the Buddhist Church who had been so helpful to the Liao was. When the head of the Chinese Buddhist church called on the Liao and asked for their assistance in a plan to betray and destroy the Hsia the Liao agreed. Kuzhuk realized that this action could easily pave the way for the Liao to completely dominate all of northern China for centuries to come and it was not an opportunity to be missed. The groundwork was laid, the Liao would request some assistance in dealing with the indignant Koreans and if the Hsia agreed then the Liao and her allies would ambush the Hsia in the Hopei province and destroy their army. That was the plan at least.

PACIFIC RIM

Australia: Ayr Cultivated

The rise of an organized religion caused quite a positive stir in Australia. The people of the nation seemed very pleased at the direction things were going economically as well. All of the original provinces of the nation were now cultivated and the economy of this small nation was booming. A flourishing economy and a happy population paved the way for the a population boom in the newly cultivated region of Ayr.

New Zealand: Samoa (NT)

The New Zealanders continue to explore the Pacific with a good amount of success. They are once again blessed with an accomplished explorer in Kai and he is following in the footsteps of his predecessor. At home everything is peaceful the King sent one of his sons to Australia to get a further education in the Shark Cult. Everyone knows of the Great Shark but the proper way of worshipping what needed to be determined.

Shark God Cult: Abbeys all along the Australian coast

Tithing was established in Australia. The High Priest of the Shark spent much time improving the facilities in the coastal regions of Australia.