

## GM NOTES TURN 6

**Please do you GM a favor and put down points allocated to you actions. I can live without movements point allocations from place to place but you need to put down points allocated to actions, don't put down rest of the phase please. The GM is getting tired of figuring out how many AP's leaders have and have left.**

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.

I like having lots of little states too. Montenegro, Maylay Confederation, Baltic Trade Confederation, Bulgars, SFA's, Chalukya, African states. Some of these folks might actually evolve into nations of worth playing, I suspect that all the Africans will; Kanem is good right now, Bulgars probably will someday if they survive the Hordes, Maylay and BTC will both be viable as seafaring nations if bigger neighbors don't get too hungry.

**RO's:** Am considering experimenting with this maybe. Countries and Hordes will not turn into RO's and I do the setups they will not be like in the rules.

**SE's and Hordes:** Be warned ..... They can start popping now. I will say this about both, I do not expect that I will have an overly active Horde world, things seem to be active without there being one Horde active at all times. I am not inclined to have freaky SE's but historical ones yes. I will set SE goals be warned.

**Don't Forget** (I know this is hard to get used to) You can contact NPN's and they just might be helpful. NPN's like making deals especially when it nets them money.

**Experimentation:** Decided to experiment a little bit for the fun of it. Let me know what you think. Haven't quite figured out the PDF situation on the maps.

## 1025 - 1029: The Age of Turmoil – Troubles at Sea

### Mercenary Pool:

Northern Europe:	Jan Olavsens	855	1HI, 10I
	Independent		10W, 10XW
Mediterranean (Catholic)	Zulicini	649	2HC, 5C
(Catholic)	Buliceli	969	5EW, 10XW
(Orthodox)	Karakus	822	1EI, 10I
	Independent		5W, 10XW
France, Spain, Italy & Germany: England, Scotland, Eire	Lord Bergen	858	1HEI, 5HI
	Independents		15I, 5S
	Independent		3C, 5XC
Egypt, Morocco & Cordoba:	Taureg Clan	833	2XEC, 10XC
	Independents		10XC
Hungary, Serbia, Russia, Poland (no REE contracts)	Moldavian Lord	689	2EC, 3XEC
Hungary, Serbia, Russia, Poland Venice, REE	D'Kolner	914	5HEC, 3EC
	Independents		3HI, 7I, 15XI
	Independents		5C, 10XC

Buhwayids, Egyptians, Kilwa, Copts Yemen & Shiraz	Horgan's Free Co. Independents	882 (Moslem)	3HEI, 6EI, 3S 5C, 10XC
Central Asia	None		
Buddhist & Lamanist Nations	Monk Xain	866	5HEI, 10EI
India Proper	Deccan Raiders Independents Independents	857	12XEC 5I, 5XI 5XC
Asia (naval)	Independents		10XW
SE Asia & China	Chou Yun Independent Independent	888	6EC 20I, 40XI. 5S 10C, 20XC
N China, Japan, Korea	Clan Wolf Clan Smoke Jaguar Clan Ghost Bear Independents	777 852 966	30XC 40XC 40XC 40XC

## Africa:

**Shia:** Jerusalem declared the Holy City by the Shia

The leaders of the Shia church declared Jerusalem as their Holy City after much debate on the appropriate place for it to be. To follow up this declaration Jerusalem grew and many improvements were made to the city.

### **Egypt:**

The King announces the war with the Nomads is over! The King and his entourage returned to the capital in August 1026 and announced that the war with the Nomads was over and that there would be no more trouble with them. The people were overjoyed since there had been many lives lost fighting over worthless land. With the War over the King immediately ordered his army rebuilt 8000 Men were called to arms and the kings will was done. Lastly a huge effort was put into getting the merchant marine up to snuff, though further effort will be necessary good progress was made toward achieving this goal.

### **Ghana: City of Debu-Sevare in Segu, Sudan ( T ), Goa ( NT ), Ghana (3/3)**

The Kings son, Mombega, finally cast off his slacker moniker and became a member of the working royal family. Fortunately it was just in time as his father perished choking on a chicken bone at a harvest festival. Mombega and his troupe of diplomats marched off to the Sudan and began working on securing those lands for the new king. The efforts were somewhat successful and the king did find a wife who would be a suitable queen in the process of the diplomatic endeavors. A Postal road now connects the capital with Timbuktu. In a last bit of good fortune for the new king it appears that there was a population boom in Ghana. Apparently many of the refugees from last cycles flooding moved to Ghana so this ill could not befall them again.

### **Morocco:** No Longer an SFA

In a surprise move that shocked the royal family in Cordoba almost immediately after his fathers death the Heir now king of Morocco declared that the nation of Morocco would choose it's own path and they ended their SFA agreement. The Heir's brother was also put to the sword. Morocco was now on it's own and all wonder how it will fair having in some respects betrayed the generosity of the Cordovan Caliphate.

**Sunni Church:** Continued expansion in Cordoba

**Algeria & Tunisia:** Having done what they could for the Portuguese returned to developing their countries this cycle.

**Incident in Tunisia:** At a local gambling establishment near the city guard barracks and man of middle-eastern decent was arrested for activities dangerous to the well being of the state. It is suspected that the king will be looking into this closely.

**Hausa:** Gourouol Fortified, Auna Port city built in Gourouol  
The "Red Fortress" was constructed on the plains of Gourouol near the city of Auna. It was designed to be foreboding and though it is small in size currently it is still an impressive all red brick structure. The King finally figured out how to avoid tax shortfalls, no one paid any attention to the government and everything ran just fine.

**Kanem:** Lots of Defensive positions put into place in Daza. Though there is a peace agreement in place no reason to take chances.

**Kilwa:** A second city has emerged on the south coast, Malindi. The Kilwan's reorg'ed a bit and generally kept to themselves. The King was both relived and saddened when he got the news of his fathers' death at the end of 1029. He knew there would now be no one that could lay rightful claim to the throne of Kilwa but he was disheartened by the fact that there had never been reconciliation with his father. Though they argued about the topic of religious beliefs they were still family.

### **Zagwe:**

Zagwe used a balance approach as to construction and built up their Defensive ability a bit and their offensive ability a bit as well as increasing the size of Axumopolis.

**Ethiopia:** Economic Development and some defensive builds

### **Coptics:**

Unsure on whether to approach the Ethiopians or not the illustrious primate bided his time conducting much needed administrative duties. Sure the swimming pool was nice to have but was it appropriate? He would pray long and hard on this dilemma. Illubator was fully controlled by Coptic Church now. Lastly for a change missionary work was done and no one was martyred, his holiness was pleased to hear this news coming out of Kordafan. The tribesmen of Kordofan however took no notice of the preaching's of the missionaries and maybe that is why no one was killed.

**Zimbabwe :** More Economic Development

**Zulu Nation:** More Economic Development

## **Europe:**

**Bolgars:** Built the city of Bolgar this turn. (Hope that Horde goes the other way and leaves their Steppe brothers alone).

### **Kiev: Obodoza (c)**

The devout Kievian nations made many attempts at convert heathens, in the past their efforts have been well received but for some reason during this cycle all efforts met with failure and in one instance sub-commander Ivan was killed for his beliefs. On other fronts diplomatic efforts in the province of Obodoza (named after the Polish player apparently) would have met with success if not for those damn Poles showing up and interfering.

**Novgorod:** Continued Economic Development.

**Galica:** The trade agreement with the Rus that secures food for the Galician lands has helped ensure their continued viability. The Galician King walled the city of Odessa this turn and garrisoned it with some of his finest troops.

### **England: Anglia (F)**

The King made the rounds in of his nation this cycle. He aided in the diplomatic actions in Anglia first off and was successful in getting them friendly. He then journeyed to Wales. The people here received the King and treated him well but when the talk turned to unification of Wales with England the Welsh kindly declined the offer. The Welsh are an independent lot and though they recognize the English as the dominant force on the Island they have no inclination to be "English". London Grew again and improvements where made in numerous places across the country.

**Coptic Church:** Oslo (AB), Uppsala (CH)

It just doesn't pay to be a missionary any more, the Gods are obviously angry this cycle because not only are folks unable to do much by sea seemingly every bit of missionary work attempted has been a total disaster. Celtic missionaries in Adger die mysteriously while visiting a village in the mountains. On other fronts the Primate of the Celtic Church passed of old age. He had done much to expand the reaches of the Celtic Church and there is some talk of Sainthood. The church expanded in the Kingdom of Norway and the Celtic church assisted in promoting urban development for all of its constituents.

**Wales:** Saving the money and manpower for the day when a city might rise out of the wilderness.

**Ireland:** Both the Queen and her right hand man perished this turn but the country surprisingly didn't collapse in the Chaos. Lord Ryn Came to the forefront and held the nation together with the assistance of the Lord of Northern Ireland.

**Norway: Oslo grows**

The Queen ruled over her domain and watched as the City of Oslo continued to grow. This nation of seafarers waited patiently for the seas to subside.

**Orkney/Scotland: Edinburgh Grows**

The Scottish diplomatic corp. marched off to Lothian, not a dime in their rucksacks the diplomats free loaded off the kindly people of this province and accomplished nothing. Surprisingly they didn't get booted out. The king ruled over his kingdom and made sure that his edicts got carried out. HUGE amount of transports were added to the merchant fleets of Scotland.

**Baltic Trade Coalition:** Economic Development

**HRE:** Lausatia (T), Viborg (EA)

Good news on the home front Fredrick and Elizabeth now have two daughters and a son. Elizabeth stayed home to take care of the brats while in the countryside conflict raged. Apparently Elizabeth can be quite the tyrant. Savoy, Switzerland & Tyrol suffered brutal oppression because of their beliefs.

Confrontation in Savoy: Pope Gregory himself showed up in Savoy in hopes of reclaiming the Cathedral housed there.

Matthias	The POPE?
Guard	Yes sir
Mathais	Are you kidding me?
Guard	no Sir
Mathais	He wants to see me?
Guard	Yes Sir
Mathias	Boy the Queen isn't going to be happy about this, send him in

.....

INTRODUCING HIS HOLY EXCELLENCY .... Blah blah blah blah ..... Pope Gregory

Mathias	<i>bows and kisses the Popes ring, mutters something about my precious</i>
Gregory	I am distressed
Mathias	I am sorry your Excellency, why?
Gregory	I see a great many men here
Mathias	Yes Sir you do, it is because of the Branist
Gregory	What would you do with them?
Mathias	Why kill them you Excellency
Gregory	Would that do any good?
Mathias	I would feel .....er.... maybe not your Excellency
Gregory	No it wouldn't, killing the helpless is not God's work
Mathias	I have been killing for a lot of years in the name of God and king
Gregory	I am aware, Otto was a tyrant
Mathias	<i>face gets red a bit with anger</i>
Gregory	Henry was a good man, but they tyrant blood seemingly inherent in all Germans ran in his veins too.
Mathias	Life in Germany can be very difficult on a mans soul

Gregory            Yes.....I am sure it can, when was your last confession?  
Mathias            *stammering* certainly it hasn't been too long  
Gregory            I think you are long over due  
Mathias            I am sure you are right

Mathias confessed his sins and Gregory made himself available to many of the troops in the encampment which raised morale but swayed the troops to refrain from any bloody deeds against the population of Savoy. Later that Cycle the Pope reclaimed Savoy. Good headway was also made on conversion of the province away from the Heretical Branism.

*Queen Elizabeth,*

*It is with the utmost respect I write you to request that you refrain from the conversion by the sword of Bavarian citizens. The people of Tyrol though misled by the preaching's of the Branist theologians are not demons who should be purged. Those lands have suffered greatly over the last decade and this may create a hostile region for decades to come. Military Conversions are best left to the Orthodox and Islamic faithful who are too stupid to realize the do not honor God in the appropriate manner. The Branist only want the church to reform in such a way to be more responsive to the citizens without station. This is not a crime that should bring about the death of women and children.*

*Humbly,*

*Lord Suderlen of Baravia*

Fortunately for all three Branist Territories the Pope intervened and put an end to the slash and burn methods of angry rulers. "See Pope"

**Papacy:** Savoy (CA), Rome grows

The Pope managed to catch the HRE before they started slaughtering men, women and children in the name of God. Conversions occurred in Switzerland and Savoy this turn. Economic development was initiated in the lands loyal to the Pope helped pave the way toward good will, Germany, Hungary, and Leon. Poland, Tuscany & France all received public works. Gregory was certain though that no matter what he did that Elizabeth would probably be steaming about this turn of events. Talks about reconciliation with the Branist were initiated. The Pope considered establishing a Religious Order tasked with the responsibility of ensuring the Catholic way of life was preserved for all men. Lastly the City of Rome was Fortified "Vatican City" and the city also grew.

**Carinthia:** Merchantmen sent to ply the trade lanes

**Bohemia:** Economic Development

**Bavaria:** City in Nordgau

**Branist:** More religious fanatics were recruited to defend the holy city against the Papist. It was hoped some sort of settlement could be reached that has yet to be seen. Languedoc is fully a Branist follower and some of the people of Lombardy have taken up the banner as well. This does not make up for the efforts of the Papist in Savoy and Switzerland but the fact that the Branist in those regions were not converted by the sword is a plus.

**France:** The French King was still not sure what to do about the Branist issue so he put it on the back burner. As long as they did not spread further he would be happy. Economic development in the rest of the country seemed fitting and continued work on those stubborn Burgundians.

**Gascony:** Economic Development

**Aquitaine:** Economic Development

**Leon:**

The War is finally over and now peace can return to the realm. Twenty-five years of warfare will take a while to recover from but the Catholic kingdom of Northern Spain is resilient. Troops were levied to make up for some of the loss of the most recent campaign. The lands were ruled over and administered and patrols were heavy in Portugal as Leon was wary of any potential for an uprising.

**Cordoba:**

Lots of economic development. The life of the King over the past 20 years had been rough. His failure to drive the Catholics out of Spain cost the Kingdom Salamanca and Portugal. A great deal of time had been invested in bringing

the Moroccans into the kingdom and through no fault of the King this had failed as well when the Moroccan Prince chose religion over blood. The king devastated by the most recent turn of events passed in 1027 a broken man. The King's son assumed the throne unopposed and immediately implemented his plan to strengthen the economy. He had no love for Morocco and so when they severed ties he was not terribly upset.

### **Hungary:**

Saint Stephen dies in 1029. A month of mourning was immediately declared. It was a great loss for the Catholic world. Stephen took in the outcast Northern Catholics and united the Magyars, created the Hungarian nation and converted the nation to Catholicism. On other fronts the Hungarian nation was quiet. Economic development continued.

### **Serbia:**

Bosnian Cultivation project continues unabated. A great deal of support comes in from the Orthodox Patriarch of which the people of Serbia are eternally grateful. On the Home front Mikhail's sister dies of "the cough" at age 25, Princess Stephanie will be missed. Mikhail's wife delivers a son in 1025 and dies in the delivery of a daughter in 1026. Mikhail's cousin Prince Lugadore's wife also has three children all girls. It is terribly obvious that the Serb's are trying to keep up with the Jones's or in this case the Russian Royal family, maybe the Kucha.

### **Montenegro:** Development

#### **Venice:** Idalion Grows, Venice Grows

A hotbed of activity, Venice and Verona were lighting up as things got pretty insane but what is new.

*April 6<sup>th</sup>, 1025 in the merchant quarter:*

You have your papers

Yeah, this sure would be a lot easier in daylight

You know the Venetians make all the transports leave within 24 hours after the arrive so it is now or never

This is what they pay us the big bucks for I guess

The sun had been down for several hours two teams moved through the canals, aqueducts and streets of Venice. Two locations had been chosen one for this action. Both of the building to being targeted looked to be ordinary government offices of some sort.

Group 1. The attack went off without a hitch. A training ground/barracks was broken into and all the recruits brutally murdered. Then the building was set ablaze.

Group 2. Apparently the attacks didn't happen simultaneously. When group two launched its attack on the building by trying to sneak in a window. They fell into a trap and were captured. The operatives fought valiantly, well not that valiantly and were captured.

In the Dungeons of the Palace:

Jailer King, pleasure to see you again.

Oreselo Wish I didn't have to come here so often, honestly

Jailer If there was no badness in the world I would be unemployed

Oreselo Yeah well you will never be without a job

Jailer I know, I have job security it is great

Oreselo Hey take me to the Prisoners

Jailer Yes sir right away

In the Torture Chamber:

*Screams of pain and anguish*

Oreselo He is a screamer isn't he?

Torturer Yes sir he is

Oreselo How close is he?

Torturer Very close sir

Oreselo What did you find on them?

Torturer A bunch of HRE coin and some poorly written German documents

Oreselo Taking bets on who sent them?

Torturer The Dungeon pool has 1-1 on the Germans, 2-1 on the ERE and 5-1 on everyone else

Oreselo Standard bet a weeks pay?

Torturer Of course Highness

Oreselo Alright let me go place my bet before you finish torturing him I will be right back  
 .....Time Passes.....  
 Oreselo Alright I placed a bet  
 Torturer Who you got?  
 Oreselo I am taking Naples, no one expects them to take action like this  
 Torturer Alright let me see what I can find out.  
 .....Time Passes.....  
 Captive We were sent by the Patriarch stop the torture pleeeaaase  
 Torturer *inflict pain inflict pain* Are you sure, I have money riding on this  
 Captive I swear on my mother's grave, no more pleeeaaase  
 .....Torturer puts down the tools of the trade.....  
 Oreselo Damn.....oh well least we know who the guilty party is which is what is important  
 Torturer Yep.....what do you want me to do with these worthless carcasses?  
 Oreselo Lock them away

**June 15<sup>th</sup> 1025 Verona: The Revolt begins Padua – Home of the Garrison Command HQ**

With Pietro off in other parts of kingdom the Verona independence movement got underway. The first attack of the revolt was conducted against the headquarters of the local sub-commander, a small-fortified villa in Padua. A small group of men all dressed in black (of course) stuck at the commanders home killing the commander and his entire family. So it began the Verona uprising.

The Tuscan's had 4 fortified villas and 2000 Men at arms both Cavalry and Infantry. By the end of the first month those forces were down by a third. The provincial commander Alesandro was scared to death to let Pietro know things were out of control so of course he didn't. In the second month the rebels still were making progress and still avoiding open field battles. Most of the operations were apparently being run out of the rugged northern half of the province. In September rumors started to circulate that there was at least one Venetian was leading the fight against the occupying force. By the end of the year Sub-Commander Alesandro was in full retreat and Verona was independent.

**1026 Verona:** With the Tuscan's out of the way a full-fledged effort by Venice was started to pull Verona back into the fold. By the end of the cycle after many promises were made, Verona was once again part of Venice's domain. Holding it as always will be the problem. Maybe the Venetians have shown enough resolve that they will just be left alone now.

There were Serbian scouting parties seen near the city of Ragusa checking things out apparently. The reason they were noticed is that the only traffic going in or out of Ragusa over the last 15 years has pretty much been going by sea in order to keep the wrong kind of people from infiltrating the city.

**E. Roman Empire: Bulgaria and Aleppo (FA)**

First things first. Assignment of Fiefs within the realm.

Sub-Commander Hopitus was dispatched to Bulgaria to become their Feudal lord.  
 Sub-Commander Mediocratis was dispatched to the death trap known as Aleppo to be their Feudal Lord  
 Lastly Sub-Commander Horribulis was sent to Dobruja to become their Feudal Lord.  
 All three men were sent with nothing more than a minimal entourage to protect them.

**Bulgaria:** Hooray! For Hopitus! Hopitus is known for his ability to file paperwork with the best of them and the Bulgarians are overjoyed that they have someone decent running the shop. They of course hope that Hopitus shows some spine and gets the Bulgarians some favor in the emperor's court.

**BETRAYAL IN THE COURT:**

The Emperor had grown weary of his brother (the Heir) and so he decided he needed to get him out of the capital for a while, maybe permanently. He sent the following letter to his brother who was with the imperial fleet in the harbor.

*Baras,*

*It has come to my attention that there are some Islands of the West Coast of Africa that are unclaimed and need to be secured for the future expansion of the Empire. You being well versed in the sea should have no problems navigating the distance in your private yacht on these troubled seas and securing a diplomatic relations with whoever lives on these islands. As for the fleet please transfer all ships to me I will be managing the fleet from now on.*

*Basil III*

Baras was incensed. He tactfully told the messenger to wait a moment and he would pen a reply. The reply complete and sealed the messenger ran back to the palace.

*Basil III,*

*Our Father died and left you the throne. I did not oppose this ascension even though I was terrified that someone who was completely lacking in strategic skills would most assuredly lead the empire to ruin. It now appears that you have become engulfed by your own ego and seek to destroy me because your mere presence makes my stomach go sour. I am of course totally loyal to the empire but I can no longer allow your poor judgment to cost me my life. I hope you burn in hell.*

*Baras*

Basil III read the message and stood, gap jawed unable to speak for what seemed like an eternity. He crumpled the message up in his hand squeezing it tight as the blood rushed to his head. He raised his hands into the air and looked up at the heavens and let out a scream. ARGH!!!!!! GET ME THE HARBOR MASTER IMMEDIATELY! The messenger jetted out into the streets and headed back toward the port facilities as fast as he could. Several signal bells began to ring behind the runner; trouble was once again striking the Roman Empire and this time from within.

The warships that were in the harbor were quickly moving out and joining up with the ships in the Sea of Marmara. There was a great ruckus in the harbor itself as well. The messenger found that the harbor master had already been killed along with some dockworkers and sailors that resisted Baras. A few fires blazed but it appeared that the newest additions to the fleet 40 Heavy Galleys with only the most experienced crews were left untouched. Baras was obviously in a hurry to depart. Suddenly there was quite a disturbance in the areas where the new flagship and its escorts. Prince Jovian had not departed south yet due to a minor illness. He was well now and his banner was flying near the newly christened fleet.

A couple of days later in the Sea of Marmara:

Baras & 10 Heavy Galleys, 100 Standard Galleys and 35 Light Galleys

Versus

Jovian & 40 Heavy Galleys with Elite Crews

Though greatly outnumbered Jovian had all the advantages on crews and ships. He also knew that the enemy would not fight as his men would because there would be the question in the back of their minds if they were doing the right thing. The seas were rough which also benefited Jovian and his high-hulled ships. The battle begins as Baras had swung his fleet around to face his pursuer. Jovian with such a disadvantage in numbers never had his men slow the pace they met the Baras fleet head on and smashed deep into the center of Baras's formation. Jovian's fleet was engulfed by Baras's numbers. The battle turned into a giant melee as all the ships got locked together with grappling hooks. The light ships operated only as missile platforms because there was no way their men could get onto the huge galleys of Jovian. The battle raged as Baras lost ships in droves it seemed. A storm rolled in during this battle and the waves started lashing at the ships and the lightning started illuminating the sky and punching into the ocean and electrocuting the poor sailors who had fallen in. The weather was more than both sides could take and the melee disintegrated and the forces split apart the light ships of Baras were very much imperiled now. Jovian wanted to push on but his sub-commanders refused and what remained of the Jovian forces sought shelter. Baras's fleet fled to the south and out into the Aegean where they sought shelter and mended ships a bit. Attrition was high.

Jovian returned to Constantinople where he picked up his assignment from the Emperor. The Emperor after hearing reports of Jovian's incredible bravery awarded him the title "Defender of Anatolia", some lands and additional monies for his unflinching service to the empire.

Baris was not going to be idle. He knew that the biggest weakness the Empire had was at sea and rough waters or not he was going to tread on them. He journeyed to the Klykades where he was embraced. The people here were really upset that the Emperor had put their favorite son to sea and he had died. They would happily join the new nation of Greece. Baris then went to Rhodes. The populace seeing that Baris had the entire fleet decided to join him. There were some in the province however that were not agreeable and the sailors were forced to remove a couple of troublesome fortified manor houses armed with surly guards. Lastly Baris visited Crete. They loved the idea of a Greek State especially when they heard that they were going to be the home for Baras's new kingdom. Several attempts were made on Baras's life but he survived them. Fastios who had been roused by agents of the Emperor tried to resist but it was futile and in the end the Island was under Baras's control. He had a kingdom and it wasn't much but it was a start. If he could parley with the Venetians then things might improve dramatically. Baras's fleet had been reduced to half its size due to the elements and the battle with Jovian but he was confident that the Emperor could be held at bay if need be.

**Patriarch:**



Aleppo bane of the Orthodox Church. Primate Cosmas knowing the risks involved in working in this area felt it important to take the responsibility on himself. *"Into the flaming pit he did look and he saw his maker calling him."* It was to be a momentous occasion a Cathedral was to be constructed in the countryside of Aleppo so that a greater number of the Orthodox faithful could gather and worship. The project was about half done when a large storm blew in off the Med, thunder and lightning raged across the skies the heavens were angry and the serpents tongue did lash out and strike and smite the constructs of the Orthodox Patriarch. Patriarch Cosmas dove into the flames and tried to save the building by doing battle with the demon. Onlookers tried to pull their religious leader out of the half constructed building but it was to no avail. Cosmas died in the fire and the province of Aleppo claimed another Orthodox religious leader. Not long after the event Alexander II (the new Patriarch) arrived in the area and declared that the sacrifice of Cosmas had finally removed the curse from the region and that the efforts of the Orthodox clergy would no longer meet with dismal failure and death. To prove the point Alexander II founded a church in Antioch successfully.

Bishop Leo took his act to Atelzuko, after touring parts of Russia, where he had some good success swaying the pagans to see the virtues of the church. Leo felt it was unfortunate he did not arrive province sooner but bishop Dorvin who died saving dragging a pagan chieftains son out of a frozen lake was wildly successful in converting a third of the tribes of this region.

**Tuscany:** Luguria (P), Genoa (T)

Pietro arrived in Savoy already to do harm to the Cathedral there, when he heard however that the Pope was in transit he stayed and waited till the Pope arrived. In the summer of 25' outside the Cathedral of Savoy the Pope and his entourage began the conversion of the Branist, the Cathedral which was in the hands of Pietro and a looking a little worse for the wear was handed over to the religious authorities.

Pietro's meeting with Gregory:

Pietro *Kneels and kisses the ring of his Excellency the Pope.*  
 Gregory Good to see you my son  
 Pietro As always a pleasure to see you, Excellency  
 Gregory It appears the food in Verona was quite good  
 Pietro *sucking in his gut* yes Excellency it was satisfactory  
 Gregory Thanking for not burning the cathedral to the ground  
 Pietro I got word you were in route I thought it might be inappropriate to do so without your blessing  
 Gregory I wish you had refrained from looting it  
 Pietro but.....well I thought it would be best to hand the valuables over to you directly incase something might have happened to them while I was waiting for you to arrive.  
 Gregory it is very fortunate that I have someone like you to look out for my interest.  
 Pietro I try to be guided by God in all things I do  
 Gregory Good, make sure it stays that way, your father was a Pious man he never let the expansive domains cloud his religious beliefs. Do not let the vast domains of the Kingdom of Northern Italy make you think that you are more important than God.  
 Pietro "Gasp" no never your Excellency I am but a man in the eyes of God.  
 Gregory When was your last confessional?  
 Pietro Why only a month ago prior to my marriage  
 Gregory Harrumph.....and a shotty wedding it was. You prepare for a proper wedding in two weeks in my reclaimed Cathedral. I expect both you and your wife will want to recommit yourselves to the following of Christ and God so I expect confessions to be conducted before the Ceremony.

It was a beautiful Ceremony though both bride and groom looked very nervous about the Pope presiding over such an affair but in the end Pietro and his wife were married and then Pietro got out of the province as quickly as he could, he knew if he stayed he would be watched vigilantly by the Pope and that made Pietro nervous.

Luguria and Genoa were easily subdued by the Tuscans, the city surrendered without a fight. Pietro was quite pleased to see he had stumbled on people that were very affluent in trade. Remarkably in the very short time that they had been independent Genoan markets had boomed. Part of this may have had to do with the dislocation of merchants from Verona and the Exodus from Constantinople of a good amount of the Merchant class because of the war with Venice. Pietro got home with his bride quickly and began working on getting a family started. Two Children were born to Pietro and his bride one boy and one girl. Now if only Pietro knew what do about the rebellious Veronan's. Pietro was heard muttering to himself *"Why did I get involved with the war on Venice?"* the answer was always the same though *"you didn't your father did so Tuscany could own all of Northern Italy"* Pietro then chuckled to himself and went about the duties of state. \*SEE VENICE

**The Capitanata (Naples):** Benivito (A), Catanzaro grows

The young King Roger wisely married the daughter of the most powerful leader in the city of Benevento, Anna Lubrizzo. This appears to be a pretty good match up. The Lubrizzo family is always looking to gain more influence among the powerful families of Italy. Guillaume wrapped up diplomatic relations with the city of Benevento and everyone was happy. On other fronts the Romans sent advisors to Naples to assist them in improving everything. The Romans were as always well received. Many defensive structures were erected in Campania so that the homeland could be protected.

**Poland:** Prussia, Pomerania and Obodria (NT), Obodoza (C)

Missionaries ventured to Danzig in hopes of bringing the light of God to the Pagans, several months later the whole lot of them had disappeared never to be heard from again. A battle of Diplomats occurred in Obodoza between Poland and Russia. Both walked away with claims to the area for what that's worth. Poland grew and developed some more.

## **Middle East:**

**Buhwayids: Cedar Grows**

The king continued to work on managing his powerful empire. The King lost two wives and his daughter this cycle. A beautiful fountain was built in memory of his daughter in the center of the city.

**Persia:** Economic development

**Yemen:** Hadramaut (F)

Life in Yemen continued to be peaceful and prosperous. Al-Mokha grew again and will soon be one of the largest cities in the world. Heeding the warning about going to sea the Seafaring Yemenese stayed home and carried out diplomatic actions. The only sad note was that the former King of Kilwa passed away at the end of the cycle. He was found to be a loyal subject of Yemen in the 20 years he lived in his re-adopted homeland.

**Ghazi:** Carmana (NT)

Postal road has now cleared the mountains and entered into Edrosian territory. Further diplomatic efforts into the deserts, Baluchistan wasn't receptive but Carmania was. In 1028 the King passed but the transition to the Heir was peaceful. King Abdul died in the last year of the cycle. The transition to the next in line appears to have occurred peacefully too.

**Edrosia:** Economic development and assisting the Ghazi on a road project.

**Chorasmia:** Further development and military growth.

**Samarkhand:**

Economic development in Ferghana and Bactria made the peoples in these provinces very happy. Some defenses were built up in Uzbek to aid the Allied Lord against bandits and marauders that roam the steppe.

Lastly a diplomatic envoy was dispatched to Chorasmia. The King of Samarkhand was once again trying to gain control over the rich lands but this time through kind words. Though the gifts brought were reasonable the message wasn't. The Chorasmia Shah Askum I would not soon forget the former ruler of Samarkhand's efforts to subdue the small Chorasmian state. Someday this transgression might be forgiven but not while the Shah was still alive.

## **India:**

**Tibet:** Capital grows again and continues to be beautified. Jhorth is built in Gtsang.

**Lamanist Tibet:** Aided the Tibetans

**Punjab:**

Troops were added to the rolls and more defensive installations were constructed. Times were tense as the incredible demands of the people of Dhera-Dun upset the king. An upset king was NEVER a good thing. Messages were dispatched and troops were shuffled around and muscles were flexed. This show of force had little relevance but it made the king happy and that is all that really mattered.

Taran and Dhurma went into the mountains to go see if they could make the mountain men listen to reason. It was a long rough journey but the men were hearty. Taran guide the little expedition to the Naggar Village where last cycles negotiations took place. The Naggar Monk met the gentlemen.

Naggar What brings you back to the mountains Taran?

Taran We wanted to discuss some things with you  
Naggar Interesting, did the king of the valley not like the mountain kings demands?  
Taran Maybe we should discuss this over diner  
Naggar Fine idea

Several hours later after the emisaries had cleaned up and changed.

Naggar Where is your compatriot?  
Taran He was feeling a bit under the weather  
Naggar The high mountain air will sometimes do that to a man, especially flatlanders.  
Taran Sad but true

*Naggar had ordered the appropriate feast be prepared, goat some wild wheat breads with berries baked in it and the like. The food was good and after some light entertainment the men got down to discussions.*

Naggar Well what is it you king had to say  
Taran Well he felt that the tithe was very high  
Naggar Ha! You flatlanders with all that food, no wonder you all are fat.  
Taran I thought it was the poor quality of food that made your people skinny  
Naggar Stop valley dweller I will fall out of my chair laughing at your jokes if you don't  
Taran The King says 10 Agro and 5 Gold per year is far too much money to pay in tribute.  
Naggar Ho! I'll say it is, Taran did a enemy put wax in your ears prior to our negotiations?  
The price was 2Agro and 1Gold per cycle.  
Taran Was shocked, I swear that is not what you said  
Naggar Taran my friend it is not important go tell your king how you drove a very hard bargain  
And issued all sorts of threats if we did not lower our demand. You will look like a hero.  
Taran *Suddenly realized what his real purpose was and he turned white as a sheet*  
Naggar Are you becoming ill as well?  
Taran Yes, yes I need to get back to my tent immediately

Back in the tent Taran waited. An hour later the flap was pulled back on the tent and Naggar entered, he had an escort.

Naggar It appears your compatriot was not so ill as you might have suspected  
Taran What do you mean? Taran tried to sound surprised  
Naggar Well the princess had a visitor tonight apparently  
Taran Damn his hide  
Naggar You knew this might happen?  
Taran It is a sad story really.....Dhurma is very much in love with the princess. I am the only one who knew of this devotion to the princess and I did not find out until we entered your lands. When the King married off his daughter to one of your men last cycle Dhurma was heart broken apparently, though he hid it well. I guess he was so overcome with grief he had to try to kidnap the princess in hopes they could run away together.  
Naggar Truly a sad story, the princess appears to be very happy here so she will stay. We will keep Dhurma as well until we get a formal apology from your king which I feel is only appropriate.  
Taran Thank you for not killing him, I am sure this episode will help him learn a little humility.  
Naggar Please explain to the king my true demand for our putting an agreement in place. Maybe he will find it more acceptable.

**Shiva Church of Kashmir:** Expansion into Punjab

**Kucha:** All is quiet on the Steppe. The Kucha Khan's wife who has survived the birth of many children has said no more. The Khan who had run out of names anyway agreed. There was some shuffling of leaders and some work with the Manichaeans aside from that all was quiet.

**Manichaeans:** Economic assistance for the Kucha

**Paramara Alliance:** War who care about anything else

**Bengal:** War who cares about anything else

**Kaunaj:** War who cares about anything else

**Kashmir:** Economic Development

**W. Chalukya:** Balanced Development

**Chola:** Pandya (F)

Finally the Pandyan state recognized the goodness of the Cholans and thus the merger was completed and everyone was happy.

### **Sri Lanka: Zaniport on Zanzibar**

Bad weather didn't distract the people of Ceylon from doing their job. The king made the lengthy journey home from far away Zanzibar/Zanziport. Hazimar had renown prowess in Navigation Skills it is said he might even have a couple of star maps of the Indian Ocean but they may be just hearsay. The trip back for it's distance went reasonably well one severe monsoon was unavoidable and cost the king 6 of his 8 heavy transports (no Rhino Hide armor or boots for the elite forces, how disappointing).

**Massacre in the Maldives!** Sub-commander Cey Scarface was sent to the Maldives to conquer the province and convert them to the proper faith. There was an odd change of policy for the Nation of Sri Lanka but apparently it had the king's blessing and Cey Scarface was going to carry out the task. Only 8 of the 10 Warships arrived in the Maldives but Scarface had plenty of men to subdue the historically peaceful tribes of these islands who barely put up a fight. After killing a couple of hundred helpless natives Scarface then informed the natives they would be converting to Buddhism.

Scarface Now that you have felt the might of the Sri Lankan army, you must all agree to become Buddhist!  
Jopu Did you bring missionaries to guide us in becoming Buddhist?  
Scarface No  
Jopu Don't you think that would be helpful in the conversion process?  
Scarface No  
Jopu How can we embrace a religion we know nothing about?  
Scarface You will do as I say  
Jopu What? You have already killed many of my defenseless villagers with your steal weapons now we are to pray to a Deity we know nothing about?  
Scarface That's right  
Jopu but you brought no one to instruct us in the proper methods of worship?  
Scarface Nope  
Jopu hmmmmm I don't think this is a very good thing  
Scarface You are obviously going to resist so.....Say hello to my little friend. BWHAAAAAAAA

Scarface obvious was a little unbalanced by the whole turn of events and he and his men slaughtered the islanders, every man woman and child. It was brutal but effective means of conversion.

**Tripuri:** Kosala (F)

The King died in the middle of the cycle but the transition was peaceful, even though the brothers are not particularly fond of each other they both knew the importance of holding the nation together. There was some economic improvements carried out in the capital and the Army was increased in size.

**Uttar Pradesh: There is a War so who cares about anything else!**

### **The Dismemberment of Kaunaj:**

The attacks happened simultaneously. The Bengals came in from the East, Uttar Pradesh Princes moved in from the West as did the Paramaras Princes.

### **Battle of Rajaput May – July, 1025:**

Vashpal and Ushinin lead the Uttar Pradesh armies 25 thousand men well rounded army matched up against the Kaunaj Raj and his 6000 Royal Guard, 5000 mixed Cavalry and 20 strongly fortified positions. The Raj was already for the assault on all fronts so it was no surprise when Uttar Pradesh came across the border.

As the Uttar Pradesh army pushed into the province they fell right to the trap that Jajavraj had laid. The Uttar Pradesh army had not encountered any military forces on entering the country and Vashpal though that the enemy might be facing off against the Bengals and so Vashpal was taking it easy over seeing the assaults by Ushinin's assaults on some of the local defense. Ah it was good to be the Raj. While drinking tea under the canopy of his tent on a hill and watching Ushinin do all the work the alarm was sounded. The troops were scrambling all around there was shouting; horses were running free in the camp it was chaos. The Raj rose to try to discern what the problem was. Vashpal

moved to the back side of the hill and looked as some of his cavalry was ridding into the trees, WHAT! Where did they come from.....coming up the hill fast was a huge amount of troops. Vashpal got clipped by an arrow as he ran back toward where his horse was kept. The horn was sounding as all the men were suddenly figuring out what was going on. It was a slaughter as the Kanauj troops poured over the hill like swarming ants. A vast majority of the Cavalry forces of Uttar Pradesh's army was wiped out and the Uttar Pradesh army was streaming back home. Raj Jajavraj smirked, here we go again, how long can our luck last he wondered as he reorganized his army and prepared for the attack of the Bengal Army.

#### **Battle of Avanti, May – July, 1025:**

This is another situation where the Defense was just sitting and waiting for Attacker (Paramara Princes in this case) to launch an attack. Ambassador Neshvee was believe it or not a fair general too. Neshvee and sub-commander Djothi entered into Avanti expecting a roll over. This time however there were some more troops and they were very prepared. Neshvee thought it odd that the Paramara army would be allowed to drive so deep into a province only fighting skirmishes. One night his scouts showed up. They reported that the reason the Avanti Feudal Lord had been giving ground is because he was waiting for the Jhijhoti. Now Neshvee knew what was going on. He would strike and strike hard. Both sides had 7000 men.

June 19<sup>th</sup> 6:30 AM.....Neshvee knew he had a slight disadvantage so to make up for it he got up early, roused the army and stole the March. Neshvee's forces smacked into the Avanti force just as the fog was lifting off the forest floor. The Paramara's well-disciplined army attacked all across the front the small cavalry force was held in reserve in case things went south. Neshvee's forces fought fiercely and the battle raged almost all day. Losses on both sides were very, Neshvee did an excellent job of holding his forces together and the one time when the Avanti broke through Sub-commander Djothi rushed into the gap and plugged it though it cost him his life. As the day closed out the Avanti and Jhijhoti were withdrawing.

#### **Battle of Jaunpor, May – July, 1025:**

10000 men mostly Cavalry and 5600 Siege Engineers rolled across the border looking to get even for the disaster of last cycle. Chunda was pleased that for the next three months that his engineers were not interfered with and the field emplacements were removed so he could get on to the business of taking the city. The city had no walls as was dealt with quickly.

#### **Battle of Jhijhoti, March – May, 1026:**

The Paramara pressed into the Jhijhoti lands. The Captain of Jhijhoti was very concerned his uncle was in this position last cycle and it did not go well at all, he hoped he would far better because there would probably not be help from the north this cycle with the river running out of it's banks and all. Neshvee arrived in the province not too long after the Jhijhoti allied commander had. The Captain decided rather than fighting in the field that he would defend the city, he hoped that there would be a better chance of survival that way.

#### **Battle of Rajput March – May, 1026:**

Having had a bad experience the previous cycle the Bengals came prepared with some Heavily armored Infantry. The foundation of a line based off the Royal guard of Jaunpur seemed to be very effective. Both sides were really itching to get at each other as soon as possible. Chunda's shoulder hurt every time the rains came and during the monsoon season he fiercely cursed the Kaunaj Raj who had plunged the sword through his shoulder. The Raj of course had his father killed in the last cycle by the Bengals; there would never be peace between these rivals as long as they were both alive.

The numbers were straight up even which is always detrimental to the attacker, on the good side the field forts would have no appreciable effect due to the large number of Siege Engineers in the area. The Bengals used a strong center just as the Kaunaj did and then they tried to use their huge heavy cavalry force to swing the advantage the problem is that those damn Royal Guards are as maneuverable as the heavy cavalry a so the battle evolved in a free for all. It was, as all combats seem to be extremely brutal both sides as the battle waged into the night because the two sides couldn't or didn't want to disengage. In the end and EXTREMELY battered Bengal army withdrew from the field and back into Kaunaj. The Raj pursued and chewed up some of the siege train trying to make it out of the province. Not a single Bengal Infantryman remained and a vast majority of the Heavy lancers had fallen in the battle as well.

#### **Siege of Kalanjara, June 1026:**

Neshvee knew that if he could capture the city then the Raj of Kaunaj would have no reason to come south of the river so he pushed his men to throw everything they had into busting the defenders. The walls were only 10' high how hard could it be. Unfortunately for Neshvee he did not know how many men the Jhijhoti Captain had, this was a very bad thing. The Siege Engineers got in place and started trying to move some 10' Ramps in place the light infantry in the city rained down arrows on them so the Paramara bowman moved in with some shield bearers covering somewhat, when the missiles from the wall abated a bit the rest of the elite forces moved into position and started going over the

wall. Suddenly things started getting really hairy. The troops clearing the wall suddenly found themselves engaged with a couple of detachments of royal guards, that put them on an equal footing with Neshvee's men. Fighting was heavy around the breach until finally Neshvee realized that the enemy was too strong to be forced out after making several other attempts to over run the small town. Neshvee was now a little concerned that he no longer had enough troops to hold back a concerted effort by the Jhijhoti Captain so he withdrew to Avanti and ended the Paramara part of the campaign.

#### **Kaunaj revisited, April 1027:**

Chunda was pissed, he gathered up all his units and prepared to defend Kaunaj. He still had a decent sized cavalry force maybe he could find some way to hold out against Kaunaj. The King insisted they leave the province though. Losing in Kaunaj might jeopardize the home provinces which have remained untouched up to this point it was not worth the risk. A lot of damage had been done to the Kaunaj army of that people were sure. It was only a matter of time till the buckled under the weight of the assault, only a matter of time.

## **S.E.Asia:**

### **Burma:**

There apparently was great concern over the fact the Samatata was Hindu and the Empire of Burma was Buddhist because the King, his youngest son and the kings most trusted aide Li Quan all attempted to foist the Buddhist religion off on the citizens of Samatata. Remembering 10 years ago when some Hindu Priest were found butchered (allegedly by Buddhist but the crime was never investigated) the Hindu's of the region grew weary of the preaching and decided to strike back.

**Tragedy at Chittagong (1028, Jan):** The three Burmese leaders had decided to meet and discuss strategies for converting the Samatata population thus far the province had seemed to be totally resistive to the three men's efforts. On the outskirts of town at the Broken Wheel Inn all plans suddenly became irrelevant. At first there was a racket outside then a dull roar. The always-curious Prince Thep went to the window to see what was going on. Thep was fascinated with the newness of being out in the world and being just 16 was feeling very privileged at being called on to aid the kingdom in its efforts to convert the heathens. Thep died when hit by a flaming arrow in the chest, so many years to ahead of him, his life was now lost. Shock and horror struck Li Quan and the Emperor of all of Burma. Oil Pots and flaming materials came in through the windows along with rocks and arrows. The Emperor pulled his son back from the window and held him for a moment tears streamed down from his eyes. Li Quan pulled him back to the reality at hand, the building was on fire and apparently it was surround by angry Hindu's. The men scampered around the small building the Owner and his wife had rushed out the door but screams had been heard immediately after their exit which meant no one was intended to get out alive. The Building burned more furiously. Quan and the Emperor got low to the ground, they were having trouble breathing smoke and flame filled the main room of the building. Suddenly screams and shouts could be heard outside, apparently there was a panic outside, was that the sound of horses? Quan and the King now lying on the floor found some rags and buckets of water; they covered their faces and doused themselves in the water. The clash of swords could definitely be heard now outside, apparently several detachments of troops had arrived. The Emperor decided it was time to try to get out he knew they would not last much longer. Quan and the Emperor took a deep breath of the hot air their lungs were burning but they made the dash and erupted out a busted out window spilling out on to the ground roughly. Quan was on fire the king was smoldering both were quickly put out but Quan did not look well at all. Several days later Quan died, he was buried next to the remains of the Emperors son on the site where the Broken Wheel once stood.

Strife struck Samatata pretty hard but there were enough troops in the province to brutally put down the Hindu uprising.

**Champa:** Strong arm take over! In a bigger country things like this can get really messy in a small country not so bad. General NamChao sitting in the capital province of Champa with the entire army. The army who still remembered the glory days with Sri Viencene and the conquest of Annam Liked Nam Chao a great deal, he was a good general and he campaigned with Sri V. in the glory days. The King was not well liked by the military however. He was Sri Viencene's heir but he was weak and uncharismatic, nothing like his father. When NamChao suggested there needed to be a new order the men all agreed and power was assumed quickly. Now when news got to Annam of this event General NgoChun acted immediately and tried to roust support for opposing Namchao, the northern provinces were interested and the end result was NgoChun disappearing before he got killed. Order was restored to the kingdom and life went on as normal for the peasant who barely noticed the difference. The Last act of the new regime was to marry NamChao's son off to some daughter of noble blood in Annam. This did wonders for the diplomatic efforts there.

**Khmer:** Lampang (NE)

The Khmer King ruled over his nation wisely this cycle. First and foremost Jayavarman VI ordered YouLy to Lampang to secure the king a bride. This he did and in the process he was also supposed to bring the Lampang chieftain closer to the throne. When returning home at the end of the cycle he accomplished little on the diplomatic front but he did secure the King his wife. Jayavarman sent out explorers apparently trying to get them killed off errr so he could discover some unknown lands. One of the leaders surprising returned with a rudder in hand.

**Vishnu of SE Asia:** Palembang and Srivijayan both are now Vishnu Hindu's, Church Upgrades in Khmer lands  
The Vishnu devoted a great deal of effort to finishing the conversions of the former Srivijayan home province. Some assistance was lent to their primary benefactor the Khmer as well.

### **Malay Confederation:**

Some economic growth and lots of patrolling the shipping lanes to make sure bad things don't happen.

**Java:** Timor (FA), Sunda Grows

The Javan leader Replak aided the Vishnu Primacy in completing the conversion of the province of Palembang. Further to the east the diplomatic corp. worked on the Timor tribal council. The absolute refusal of the Javans to offer any incentives besides kind words is beginning to grate on the tribal councils nerves. The Javan's did have one thing to be very happy about the end of the Sung meant many new trade partners and they took advantage of the opportunity.

## **Asia:**

Somewhere in Kaifeng:

*Hurry up get the combustible materials someone is going to see us*

*Would you shut up I am hurrying*

*Damn man there is no way we are going to get away with this*

*Shut up you idiot you will jinx us, we have gotten this far haven't we*

*Yea but damn this is the capital, I know the guards will show up soon*

*If you would shut up maybe the whole neighborhood won't be aroused from their sleep*

The blaze was set and the building burnt up quickly. Screams were heard from inside the "government" building butt it did not appear to anyone that there would be any survivors. A job well done.

### **Sung: Renamed the "Empire of the Red Monkey" Houma and Hopei (P)**

The Emperor General Chan Cao stormed into the Throne room. He could not believe the insulting blow delivered to him in his own capital. Being a city guard in Kaifeng right now was a very bad thing. A whole shift of guards in the warehouse district was dead because someone decided to burn down a building last night that was important to the administration of the government.

The Emperor orders that every man between the ages of 15 and 50 be called to arms. There was going to be a new Dynasty in China the Cao Dynasty and the road to greatness as always in China was paved with the bones of enemy. In preparation for the campaign against the hated Lung family troops were upgraded and a bunch were also mobilized. The Buddhist Primate had apparently taken an interest in this war and thus donates a HUGE amount of money to support General Cao's efforts.

Into Shentung the army marches. Across the river the Jingji watch intently and follow their movements toward Shensi. The Red Monkey leader General Cao pushes forward toward Shensi. Cao has a single-minded focus on one thing putting down this insurrection and crushing the Lung Clan utterly.

## **War Against the Jingxi**

### **The Battle of Shensi (1026):**

Emperor General Cao and General Jin and a very well mixed army of 40,000 men

VS

Shou Lung, Chang'An Commander, Shansi Allied leader and a well mixed army of 26,000 men defending in their home province with numerous defensive emplacements to fall back on.

The battle looks to be pretty even as the forces deploy very near the fork of the Wei and the Ching rivers. On the interior of the fork some miles in the distance is the capital of the Jingji, Chang An. Many citizens are certain to be watching from the walls on Chang An as this battle develops. The battle lines were drawn and skirmishing began. The large amount of light troops possessed by General Cao was causing the Shou troops some real grief. Shou was

becoming very frustrated as his skirmishers were driven from the field and so he committed his troops completely, he was on his home turf he shouldn't be so sorely tested by the Red Monkey.

This is what General/Emperor Cao "the Red Monkey" had been waiting for. Cao engaged the Shou across the line tying them down. Shou was pleased as it seemed that the battle on the lines was going well, everyone was giving their best then he realized.....Cao had not committed his guard units. Shou attempted to begin dislodging himself from the melee he had gotten his enemy into. Suddenly Shou saw his left flank getting rolled up as a large force of Heavy Horse bedecked in Red tinted armor smashed into the Chang'An Commanders largely infantry force. Chang'An force was getting hammered so Shou sent Shansi Allied Commander Wu, who was handling the reserves, in to hold back the rising tide.

General Jin was gleeful; his troops were destroying the pathetic infantry of the Chang'An commander. Suddenly he was pegged by three arrows one in the hip, one in the arm one in through the ear hole on his helmet. The third arrow did the trick and General Jin crumpled down off his horse very dead. Jin's troops immediately withdrew and that freed up the Shou to withdraw in orderly fashion. Shensi was lost but the capital of Chang'An was not.

12,000 in losses for Cao & 17,000 in losses for Shou

General/Emperor Cao contemplated an active siege on Chang'An but with it's high walls and stout defenders he realized that this probably would not go well unless he had some engineers, he was terribly lacking in those after finishing off the provincial defenses. A large garrison was left in Shensi to make sure the Infantry forces of the Chang'An commander didn't sally forth he assigned sub-commander Ki. The thirty year old Ki had served Cao well in the previous Campaign to win the initial Shou War.

Cao heads east to Houma while Ki with 5400 men garrison Shensi and watch the Shou capital.

**Battle for Houma (1027):** Shou didn't like giving up land but he was intent on bleeding Cao's engineerless army (very few engineers left after clearing Shensi. Shou had an all-elite force of Cavalry, some of the Emperor's best when there was an emperor on the throne. He longed for the days of working under General Zhou. Cao meticulously tore apart the provincial defenses. It was a bit time consuming but with the exception of one lucky strike against an infantry encampment where Cao's men gave as good as they got Houma was subdued.

**Battle for Hopei (1028):** Shou weaker still was displeased with how things were going but he continued to try to stave off the inevitable annexation of all Shou lands by the vile "Red Monkey". Cao had mastered taking provinces without siege engineers apparently, may have something to do with lots of elite troops who knows. Shou retreats into Shansi worn out and hoping he can find allies in the coming cycle.

**Second battle of Shensi (1028):** Sub-commander Ki dies while drilling with some of the troops in Shensi province. Word quickly reaches the Shou forces in Chang 'An and the garrison commander sallies forth hoping to catch the Red Monkey army off balance. The forces were very even. Sub-commander Ju had 4000 Armored Foot with a contingent of 1400 Armored Elite Foot as well. Chang'An had 3000 Elite Swordsmen and 1200 Armored Elite Foot it was definitely a toss up. Battle lines were pretty standard with the Armored Elite Foot holding the center on both sides. Sub-Commander Ju was very confident rather than put all his troops on the line he actually kept 600 Armored foot in reserve. Apparently this was his person retinue as Ju was not part of the Elite and there had been some serious debate between the Armored Elite and the Regular Armored foot as to who the next commander would be. Ju ordered his forces to advance at a walk toward the enemy Chang'An commander waited....if the enemy was going to come to him then he would let his men rest.

**BETRAYAL!** Sub-Commander Ju and all his Armored foot suddenly fell on the Armored Elite! Chang An commander was stunned as he watched a bloody vicious melee ensue. Eventually the battle was over and the Red & Gold Elite Monkey banner fell, all the Elite Armored foot were slain. A runner came from the battlefield and addressed Chang'An Commander, Mei.

Messenger	My master request and audience
Mei	Well send him up
Messenger	He wants your assurance he will not be harmed
Mei	He has proven that he is no enemy of mine
Messenger	I would say so sir he will be here shortly then

*An hour Later*

Mei Greetings honored guest



Ju        You honor me too greatly  
 Mei      You did me a great favor today  
 Ju        That I did  
 Mei      What can I do in return  
 Ju        I intend to join your forces  
 Mei      Really? Well that would be exceptional  
 Ju        I am glad you think so  
 Mei      Why would you betray the Red Monkey?  
 Ju        When in the Sung/Zhou army Shou was our commander, when Zhou took the Throne our units got shifted over to Cao. All of us were loyal to Zhou as was everyone in the army. While under Cao last cycle we learned what a tyrant he was but because of things being the way they are it wasn't like we could just leave.  
 Mei      He is a bastard isn't he?  
 Ju        Ha! Isn't that the truth. We should dig in, if Cao has time he will be back.

Cao could not make it back to Shensi in time to actually campaign so he left a garrison in Hopei and returned to Honan. Though he had not accomplished one of his goals destroying the Shou he did do a lot of damage to their army and he took two provinces from them as well. Cao schemed and plotted....Next Cycle he would end the Shou Dynasty !

### **Bandit Kingdoms of Hunan:**

Built up economically, they are bandits after all so they have a military.

### **Shanan – Zhou:**

Apparently the Emperor was sure that the Sung would not attack him so he built an army and attacked the Bandit kings. He also sent a force to the east to subdue the Jaingnan. It was risky but worth a shot.

## **WAR AGAINST THE BANDITS**

### **Battle of Ghangde (1025):**

The Ghangde Bandit Lord was the most skilled of the Bandit lords. Friends and foes alike knew him as “Tree Killer”. His ability to hide in the wilderness of his homeland was renowned and though the Sung had claimed his lands the real master was “Tree Killer”. The Descendant’s of Zhou had battled the bandits for centuries and knew their tactics well “Emperor” Zhenzu held his son and the support troops in reserve and took care of the bandit “king” effectively and efficiently with his elite army of infantry. He took little damage in the conflict, 2000 Bandits were dead though.

### **Battle of Miao Ling & Pao'Ch'ing (1026):**

“Tree Killer” was incensed the Zhou clan was far too effective and the Bandit kings had barely enough time to organize the defenses of their capital Pao'Ch'ing. It turned out this was the battle of Pao'Ch'ing. No enemies were “sighted” or “discovered” in route to the bandit capital. Zhenzu was concerned; he didn't expect the bandits to be defeated so easily of course he did kill nearly two thousand bandits in Ghangde so who knows.

Pao'Ch'ing was an interesting city. Zhenzu and his son scouted it out looking for the weaknesses in the walls. None were obvious. The City only had one discernable gate and the city appeared to be built up on a hill, though the walls were at the hills base. There were no interior walls, the ruling Zhou family was thankful of that. The tops of the walls had spikes with heads on them and the walls were colorfully decorated with the suits of armor and nasty anti-government propaganda in blood (?). Zhenzu assumed that as soon as the word got to this region the immediately rose up and slaughtered the garrison and marked the wall to dissuade the next dynasty from venturing into the bandits lair. The city though small had a creepy feel to it though there had been no rumors of secret societies in the region so it was doubtful that that was the situation.

**The Siege begins:** Zhenzu's men were elites this city was no different than any other enemy city. In fact it should be easier to take because it was only defended by bandits, right? After a few weeks a couple of wall breaches have occurred but been plugged up quickly by the defenders, apparently the hill is giving the interior defenders the ability to rain down arrows from the edge of the city while the troops struggle to get up the hill then the interior reactionary forces get the advantage of charging down the hill at the invaders with their long spears. Things seem to be more complicated than they should be but that isn't a big surprise, they are nasty bandits after all.

**SURPRISE ATTACK:** Damn it, Zhenzu cursed, I knew there was going to be a problem! Where are those damn scouts! Why do I have 2000 men specifically suited for scouting and missile duty in the province if none of them are going to do their job! Zhenzu was incensed and he ordered his son to pull everyone away from the city as quickly as possible. The lightning fast bandit light infantry and cavalry were all over the place. Zhen was quick to respond with his elite Cavalry in all flavors but the Bandits came in droves 12-15 thousand of them all very capable in the restricted terrain of making even the Zhen forces miserable. The battle was very flowing with very skilled troops on both sides the Zhou had problems with operating their cavalry in the heavily wooded areas of the province even though the troops

were all elites they just didn't move as quickly or react as they would on open ground. The Bandits held the upper hand throughout the battle and successfully drove off the Shana-Zhou forces. The battle was costly for both sides as most evenly matched battles are.

## **WAR AGAINST THE JAINGNAN**

### **Battle of Kaingu (1026):**

Across the mountains into the wilderness with an all cavalry force and no Siege Engineers.....hmmmm. I am sure this looked like a good idea on paper. Apparently the plan was thought up by someone who was not actually going to carry it out. The 8000 Cavalry lead by Zou crossed the mountains and rolled into the province. Unfortunately for Zou the defenders were sitting in the province sharpening their spears and swords expecting someone to come calling. Zou with a nearly 4-1 advantage and though he was not excited about dealing with those Field forts he had to press the enemy in hopes of breaking them. It was a good day for Zou and all that pre-planning paid off as he swept away all opposition and even managed to efficiently dispose of the Field Forts. After Kaingu the Army moved on Tiaping and was surprisingly unopposed in that province. Zou felt the strategy was solid the Chekiang province would be isolated. Back into Kaingu, Zou went.

### **In The Chekaing Court:**

Cmdr Kagasi       Patience, I know these Zhou well  
Chin Lord         We can destroy them in Taiping  
Cmdr Kagasi       Sire we do have roughly the same amount of cavalry but we have infantry who should really find it advantageous to operate in the forest of Kaingu besides I do not think we can catch the enemy in Tiaping  
Chin Lord         Our defenders got destroyed there, not 3 months ago  
Cmdr Kagasi       Ah but they were not lead and that will be the difference  
Chin Lord         Are you sure they will head back into Kaingu?  
Cmdr Kagasi       Nothing in life is certain but my scouts tell me they are heading into the mountains now  
Chin Lord         Then we must engage them in Kagasi , We will go with the whole army.  
Cmdr Kagasi       A wise move, I knew it would be a good idea to gather all our garrisons in the capital.  
Chin Lord         Very wise indeed.

### **Second Battle of Kaingu:**

Well it was obviously too good to be true. Zou rolled back into the province and found out immediately he would have to fight for the province again. This time things would be much more difficult.

Zou's force is pretty much the same; this time he faces Kagasi and the Chin Lord with the full host, 7000 Cavalry and 4000 Infantry. Zou was undaunted he had made it into the province and wasn't going to be pinned up against the mountains so he was confident he had a chance. A battlefield was found near the village of Shangra. It was somewhat open terrain so the Cavalry on both sides filled the field. The Chin opened up by trying to run some flanking actions with the infantry which had the effect of distracting some of the Zou troops. Kagasi ordered the cavalry forward. Both sides clashed hard it was a bloody melee the infantry lead by Chin tried getting in on the flanks but Zou was the master of the battlefield today, for every punch thrown he had a solid counter. Zou successfully drove Kagasi from the field and the Chin Lord had to withdraw as well. When all was said and done the Jaingnan lost about 4000 men mostly Cavalry and Zou lost about 3000 men. Zou decided to hold position until next cycle he had lost about half+ his force and wasn't sure he would win the numbers game again.

Late in the cycle the Jaingnan retook Tiaping which had no garrison.

**Jaingnan:** Built up and awaited an assault. They did get attacked.

### **Jingji: (Shou Lung's Kingdom)**

A good amount of troops were built but the war did not go well. See the Sung

### **Clan Iiachi:** Gouangxi (EA)

The long neglected military got the attention it deserved this cycle. There was much rejoicing. The King braced for an assault but no one was interested in tangling with the Tiger this cycle.

### **Buddhist Primacy: Facilities in South China**

Rough seas did what the Vishnu Hindus couldn't last turn and that was kill the Buddhist Primate. He was lost at sea in 1025. His great distance from home made it so the replacement couldn't possibly pick up were Ling was supposed to go. Chou Ding was productive in his efforts throughout southern China. Maybe most importantly though Xan'Pu began the serious work of converting the steppe heathens. He also assisted the Koreans in other tasks as well.

**Nanchao:** Economic build up the Nanchao are apparently not inclined to go to blows in China.

**Hsi Hsia:** Large military build up and the Hsia eye some choice lands in China.

**Korea:**

The peaceful Koreans saw the breakup of the Sung as a golden opportunity and because they were peaceful that meant...TRADE! Trade ships were shuffled and all the large players in China received visits from Korean Merchant men. Korea also considered the hard work of improving its domains. Ming So II worked diligently on furthering the cause of the Buddhist and had pretty good success.

**Minamoto:**

Bracing for impact. A bunch of fortifications were constructed in Aichi. Ouch! There sure are a lot of cavalry around.

**Japan:** Toyama and Kwanto (P), Aichi (F)

Futito was sent south to continue to search for the means of reaching Taiwan. He was never heard from again.

A New Plan: The Emperor had a brilliant idea; hey I will hire a freaking ton of mercenaries and crush the damn Minamoto insurgency once and for all. This action was met with great concern in the court as the barbarians might want to stay after their service contract was completed but the emperor did not care he would see the Minamoto Clan destroyed no matter what! The Emperor decided to levy a huge tax to pay for these mercenaries and this was met with resistance in the provinces but all opposition was quickly crushed in the typical and brutal way the Japanese are known for. Hey peasant come her I need to test this new sword and make sure it is sharp. The economy will suffer next cycle but who cares if those dogs the Minamoto are dead dead dead.

Lord Mashita was ordered to take command of the army. He led them across the mountains and into Aichi. Now Mashita was no prize to have leading troops on the battlefield however the Clan Lords were a vicious bunch of howling dogs and they were not about to be beaten down by a bunch of Islanders even if the overall commander was an idiot. Now the attack plan was completely unimaginative and attacking over the mountains into a directed defense is not something that should be done if it can be avoided. Fortunately for Mashita there were 32000 nomadic tribesmen on ponies tromping around the countryside.

Assault across the Mountains: There was nothing terribly spectacular about this. It was a brutal and time-consuming effort that ground down the Minamoto Clan. The Nomads of the Steppe were poorly prepared for such an action (what a surprise) so the Japanese infantry had to bear the brunt of the action. The Minamoto infantry did fight to the last man in some tough mountain fighting and this allowed the cavalry to escape relatively unscathed. Dropping boulders on and advancing Wolf Clan column was effective in knocking the Wolf Clan out of the war as their commander was nailed pretty badly. In the end Aichi was reclaimed by it's rightful owner.

The troops of Mashita marched into Kwanto unopposed (apparently the Minamoto army had fled back to their homeland. The city surrendered in hopes of making the occupation not so brutal.....apparently the emperor's patience was exhausted by the ungrateful swine of the north and they were to pay. The city was sacked and some of the citizens were taken by the nomads as slaves. The city went up in flames as things got really out of hand. Mashita let it go since trying to stop the nomads would just piss them off and open up a whole lot of other problems for Japan. Mashita did confine the looting to the city and that was a good thing.

Mashita attacked across mountains again and into the wilderness this time. Fortunately the only real opposition was the Field Forts that had to be cleared out and that takes time so Mashita captured the province and ended the cycle here. The Mercenaries departed for home with loot and new steppe wives.

In an effort to prop up the sagging regime Emperor Nito elevated his older sister to a position of authority along with his younger sister. Could Japan be on the verge of becoming a matriarchal society?

**Shinto:** Improvements were made to the Holy City and some facilities were upgraded.

**Liao:**

It was very quiet in this part of Northern China. The King watched over his lands and nothing else really happened.

**Australia:** Cultivation Project initiated and University expanded by these peace-loving primitives.

**New Zealand:** "What do you mean the shamans say don't go to sea? Well if the God's are feeling unusually surly then I guess we should avoid their wrath and stay at home". Declared the King. Economic Development.

### Available Regular positions:

**Hsi-Hsia:** Good military, good economy all around good nation.

**Nanchao:** Good kingdom well defended nice economy.

**Tibet:** Good nation, decent economy and nice military.

**Lamanist Primacy:** Buddhist Tibetan based primacy. Good income and large domain.

**Free Positions:** Free players get 4 turns for free in these positions. The situation will then be evaluated to see if it makes sense to move the nation off free status.

#### **Jaingnan:**

Coastal kingdom just south of the Yangtze. The Sung Admiral fled to this area and so it is suspected that the former Sung fleet can be found here. Got roughed up a bit this turn so they have questionable viability.

#### **Maylay Confederation:** Indonesia

Once the Srivajaya, a maritime nation with some potential since apparently the Javan's have decided not to kill them.

**Chorasmia:** C. Asian nation with a C2 province and 15 more years of guaranteed peace with Samarkhand.

#### **Baltic Trade Coalition:** (Not a Combine)

Small but growing little island nation

**Ethiopia:** Plateau kingdom. Poor but pretty capable of defending itself against it's neighbors.

**Chalukya:** Little Seafarer on the West Coast of India. These folks have a decent economy and a decent defense.