

Medieval Roma

Lords of the Earth

Campaign Two

Turn 88

Anno Domini 836 – 840

Anno Hegira 214 – 218

**TURN 88 ORDERS DUE BY Friday,
September 5th, 2003**

A N N O U N C E M E N T S

We've Moved! Lords Two has moved to new digs. The email address has not changed and you can still send me orders to that address. If you are still sending orders via regular mail (all one of you), the new address is:

4858 East 2nd Street
Tucson, AZ 85711
Email: ancarc@throneworld.com

Changes in Payment: When paying via Paypal, send the funds to:

lords2pmts@throneworld.com

If sending checks by regular mail to Tucson, fill them out to me and send them to the address above. Speaking of which...

A HANDY GUIDE TO DETERMINE YOUR REF'S ATTITUDE TOWARDS YOU IF YOU ARE IN ARREARS

If you run up a negative account balance it can be difficult to determine the level of emotion the referee may have towards you. What follows is a convenient guide to let you know exactly where you stand.

-\$5.00 or Less: hey, it happens. Please pay your balance as soon as possible.

-\$5.00 -- -\$10.00: c'mon, it's not like this game is really expensive. Please pay your balance. Your kids will thank you for it someday.

-\$15.00 or More: Urge to kill rising!

Modifiers: people who try to make arrangements with me regarding payment (or partial payment) will generally get a favorable hearing. Players who

exceed three turns of debt **without** keeping me apprised of their situation will be dropped and word will be sent out to the other campaigns warning the refs of the offending player's deadbeat proclivities. Players who run up a negative balance and then drop w/o repayment, will have their names sent out to other referees as mentioned above and will have massive karmic debt for being a scoundrel and lout.

Lords 19: Thomas has asked me to take over running Lords 19 until a new ref can be found. To this end, processing Lords will be affected, sadly. Although the date listed above is the due date for next turn's orders, it may not automatically lead to processing the turn starting that weekend, especially if I am hip-deep in processing the other game.

I'm going to keep these reminders here for a while, so everyone sees them.

NEW: Bombards: nations at the requisite Tech Level may build a limited number of a new type of unit, the bombard. These units represent the embryonic artillery park of nations that have exceeded the Medieval tech levels, but have yet to reach those of the Renaissance.

Civilized/ Seafaring nations that have attained TL 7 and have an artillery QR of at least one may build bombards. Each bombard unit (b) is equal to one (big, heavy, cumbersome) bombard and its associated crew. Each bombard costs 10gps and 1 nfp to build. Bombards always have an action point modifier equal to Inexperienced Heavy Infantry for AP purposes only. There are no heavy, light, elite, or inexperienced bombards.

The maximum number of bombards that a given nation may have at any time is equal to the nation's artillery QR x 5. Nations at TL5 or 6 may use bombards, but may not build them themselves. Such nations have a default artillery QR of 1 for determining the number of bombards they may possess. Nations at TL4 and below may not use bombards at all.

For non-siege combat purposes, bombards contribute nothing to combat resolution with the following two exceptions:

- 1) An army possessing bombards receives a -1drm to its battle modifier IF they have fewer numbers of cavalry units present than the opponent.
- 2) An army defending a region under attack by an enemy army containing bombards gains no defensive benefit from field

forts in the region equal to the number of bombard in the attacking army.

An army that loses a battle may lose some or all of its bombard. If the battle result was Withdraw or Retreat: roll a d10 for each bombard in the force. If the result was Withdraw: a bombard is lost on a die roll of 1-4; if the result was Retreat: a bombard is lost on a die roll of 1-8. If the result was a rout: all bombard are lost without a die roll. The victorious army may capture enemy bombard lost in this way but are limited by the tech level and QR restrictions indicated above. Bombard captured in excess of such limits are lost.

Bombard in Sieges: when an army containing bombard attempts to resolve any siege or assault but before the actual action occurs; the game master will check against the loyalty rating(s) of all the defending leaders in the city/ fortress, modifying the die roll by a certain amount; depending on the number of (potentially) besieging bombard present. If all the defending leaders fail their loyalty check, the city/ fortress will immediately surrender. If some of the defending leaders fail their morale and others don't, whichever leader possesses the highest Charisma shall be used to determine the fate of the city/ fortress. If Charisma's are tied, the ref will roll another die: high roll determines whether the city/ fortress stands or falls.

If a city/ fortress falls in this manner, the ref will check the loyalty rating of the surrendering leader(s). Those with a Loyalty of 5 or less are automatically removed from play (eliminated) along with any attached troops. Those with a Loyalty greater than 5 and their attached troops are temporarily removed from play for the remainder of the year, after which they return to any friendly controlled region (nt or better) determined by the ref.

The surrendered city or fortress immediately becomes P (or PT) to the besieger with its walls intact. More importantly, no APs that the player designated to the siege (and he still must do so when writing his orders) are spent. These AP are immediately available for other tasks, usually for whatever orders the player had written next. Consequently, bombard may give a player an ability to take cities and fortresses on the cheap. However,, once a given nation reaches tech level 8 or higher, its cities and fortresses are no longer susceptible to this kind of surrender.

If a defending city or fortress resists however, and an active siege or assault must be resolved, bombard have the following effects.

- 1) They have a siege multiple of 5 for determining siege strength.
- 2) They increase the defender's divisor by one when determining attacker casualties.
- 3) For every active siege or assault die roll made, there is a chance that a bombard will blow up. Roll a d10 for each bombard. If the artillery QR is one, the bombard will explode on a die roll of 1-4. If the QR is two, the bombard will explode on a die roll of 1-3. If the QR is 3 or higher, the bombard will detonate on a 1-2. A bombard that explodes is of course, destroyed.

Changes to Hands of Trade (NEW): Okay, it appears that HOT is not as restrictive as it used to be. If the King (only!) conducts an Intervene in Merchant Affairs (IMA) for 6AP he may rearrange MSP between existing merchant fleets (and any routes he opens that turn).

Mercenaries: Remember that you **MUST specify a city where you are hiring the Mercs.** Failure to do this will result in no Mercs and the money being lost. Also, mercenaries may not be hired for more than one turn at a time. This may change when the Years per Turn reduces sufficiently enough for a contract to carry over to multiple turns. **NEW: PLEASE put where you are hiring any mercenaries AND how many you are trying to hire AND how much you are willing to pay per point of troops in your builds section on the order form. PLEASE DO NOT put this information in the notes section at the end of your orders or within the orders section of a given leader. If it persists, you will not get the mercenaries and the gpbid on them will be lost.**

Transferring Gold, NFP and Agro: To transfer these commodities between non-trading Empires requires a leader to move them with all the risks this entails. FURTHERMORE. Regardless of how they're transported BOTH parties to the exchange MUST note the exchange in their orders. The first time this is not done will result in the items being returned to the sending player. Subsequent failure to follow this rule will result in the loss of the commodities in question.

Tax Rate, Admin Ratings, Harvests, and Censuses: Be aware that a bad harvest may reduce your tax rate, even if you have a census in effect (in fact, a Famine may eliminate an existing Census status, entailing the player to conduct another one. Furthermore, I may shut down an existing Census

if I feel that it has been in place too long and requires a new one to be conducted.

Also, if a leader with a poor Admin rating is on Administrate, his incompetence will drive the tax rate down, again regardless of whether or not a Census is in place. However, it would not eliminate an existing Census. Just get the incompetent duffer off the job!

Primates and Open Empires: From this point onward, ANY construction (city, colony, project, etc) that one player desires to erect, raise or settle in the regions controlled by the other requires the written permission of that player (i.e. in their orders). "Controlled" in this case refers to non-Primate statuses. So, if the Omnetian Order decides to build a road link in Dai Viet territory, he'd better have the Viet player's permission to do so. Conversely, if the Indonesians wish to add a city level to an Omnetian city, they'd better have the Grand Dragon's permission. Again, the first time this is not done, I will put the gold and nfp in saved. After that, they will be lost.

Primate Influence: Primate players should be aware that Influence in a country must be maintained (similar to an Intel infiltration) by use of the *Maintain Influence* Religious Operation. Failure to do so leads to a loss of levels of Influence.

More Primate Influence Fun: Okay, I just found out that for the purposes of the Exacting Tithe Religious Operation, the Primate needs to have an Influence in the country where the EXT operation is taking place. If you do, you can exact a tithe % equal to or less than the influence value. So if a primate had a two influence in a nation, the primate player could attempt to exact a one or two percent tithe. This makes establishing and maintaining influence extremely important.

NEW: the maximum influence a primate can have in a given country cannot exceed the latter's RS.

Action Points: Finally, please make a note of the action points expended when writing leader actions. While most of you do this, some don't.

Pacified & Pacified Tributary: Diplomacy can be conducted on these regions with the success number being added to the Years from Conquest (YFC) number on your stat sheet. It is still a long process.

Rule & Admin Actions: Only the King, Regent or Heir may conduct a Rule action. Only an Heir,

Prince or Lieutenant may conduct an Admin action.

Having Kids: A leader conducting either Rule, Defend (not React), or Admin in the Capital or Homeland region may also perform Have Children actions at the same time. I'm assuming he's not working 24 hours a day on Administrating! Also, please let me know for how many actions your King, Queen, Heir, etc, is having. Unless, it's not specified, I'll assume the HC action is being done for the entire turn. Finally, if the individual doing the HC is female, there is a chance that they may die in childbirth, which can throw a really a crimp into your plans.

Megalithic Projects: the costs on various projects imposed by border terrain are **in addition to** the regular cost and are not effected by the cost multiple. For example: A postal road between a cultivated and wilderness region for civilized cultures costs 37.5 gps and 19 nfp (.5 base x 1.5 for the wilderness multiple). If there's a type one mountain range between the regions, that will add one level to the project for a cost of 87.5 gps and 44 nfp.

Merchant Conduits: For all of you Seafaring types out there, remember that the conduit limit per trade route is **one**. Also, please, please write out your routes that use conduits when you fill in your orders. It makes it easier for me to find them.

Leaders as Espionage Points: If you're using a leader for an espionage operation or bonus point, they must be located in the region or city where the operation is occurring. If the op is a spectacular failure, there is a chance that any leader assigned to the operation may be caught or killed, which can be embarrassing.

Female Leaders: while I don't want to disallow them totally, the Dark Ages were a pretty male dominated time. Consequently, a female Royalty member may only become Queen, Empress, Regent or Heir if they have a Charisma of AT LEAST 10. A Princess will only become an active leader if her Charisma is at least 8 (eight) or greater. Any Charisma statute less than this will result in no generation (although you can still marry them off). Any existing Female Rulers, Heirs, Princesses may remain. **The only exception to this is if the sole available heir is a princess, in which case she becomes ruler regardless of Charisma (and the subsequent DF check gets a big bad negative modifier as the local nobility**

resents the presence of a female giving orders and intruding on their bailiwick).

Finally, Primates and Military Orders may never have female leaders of any kind.

Banks: Some of you are under the impression that banks are going away. This is not the case. All banks are CLOSED and may only be used for internal loans only, however.

Religious Monoliths: As many of you are now building Religious Megalithic Projects to increase your nations' religious strengths, I feel a need to play evil ref and put a restriction; to wit, a nation's RS may not be increased above 5 through the construction of religious megaliths. The rate of 2 levels per point of RS is the same, however, they levels need not be all in one site, you can distribute them among various sites as you wish.

Conceal Fact: This Intel Operation will not work on City Construction/ Expansion or Megalithic Construction projects.

Building in Neutral and Claimed Areas and Cities: If an area or city begins the turn uncontrolled or claimed you may not build cities, city levels, projects, or invest in PWB points in those locations.

Claimed Regions and Cities: These regions and cities will no longer be assigned a control color on the map. They will continue to appear on your stats sheet however.

Cultivation Projects: Starting this turn I will no longer be assessing the terrain multiple for cultivating wilderness and steppe regions to cultivated. I have trouble remembering to assess it and a lot of you don't take it into account when you pay for such projects. I probably will continue to assess Intensive cultivation and Jungle cultivation project terrain costs however.

NEW Agro Transfers Reminder: remember, even if you are giving surplus agro away, it must be put into reserves (at a cost of 1gp per agro) before it can be transferred (See rule 2.11.5.2 in the Medieval Rulebook).

Following these procedures will make my life immeasurably easier. And when my life is easy, results get processed faster. Which is a good thing.

Thanks,

C.D.

JAPAN & THE PACIFIC RIM

Mercenaries	Minimum bid listed in [x].
Condottieri	15c, 10i, 2s [1gp each]
Captains	None
Quality Ratings	I4 w5 s3 c2

FUJIWARA JAPAN (Kyoto in Yamato)

Ishida Fujiwara, Emperor & Shogun of Nippon.

DIPLOMACY No effect.

Despite his great age, Ishida remained active in the affairs of state. A clutch of new cities arose in the Empire's overseas possessions (Mopk'o, in Silla; Sakatia, in Suifenhe; and Pukchong, in Anshan); as well as closer to home (Kanazawa, in Toyama). Missionary work on Koguryo continues to be unsuccessful, the natives apparently very happy with their uptight Confucianist beliefs. Also frustrating was Admiral Hayato's continued unsuccessful attempts to find a sea passage into Micronesia. His latest attempt to brave the waters between the Marianas and Truk was a disaster with both of his ships being lost in the attempt. Fortunately (or not, he *will* have to face the *Shogun's* wrath!); Hayato was rescued by some passing Fijian merchants and dropped back off on the Marianas; his pride thoroughly sodden, but otherwise intact.

THE EMPIRE OF THE FIJIAN ISLES (Suva on Fiji)

Ratu Vuetilovoni "The Beautiful", Emperor of the Fijians, Ruler of the Open Oceans

DIPLOMACY No effect (the natives had NO desire to listen to anything anyone had to say)

*Moan the waves,
Moan the waves,
Moan the waves as they wash Tainui,
Moan the waves of dark Kawhia,
Moan the waves as they sweep the gorges
Wafting the sad lament and wailings
Of the spirits that haunt the mountains—
Warrior souls, whose skeletons slumber
Down in the caverns, lonely and dreary,
Under the feet of the fierce volcano,
Under the slopes of A waraa!
Moan the winds,
Moan the waves!*

Deciding to avenge himself on past wrongs and humiliations, Vuetilovoni dispatched his favorite war leader, Ratu Koroitamana [*My old warhorse*, Vuetilovoni would say. *What's a warhorse?* Koroitamana would reply, to the general

amusement of everyone.] with an amphibious force of 8,400 troops and 70 ships with orders to bring the Maori of Te Ika A Maui to heel. The Fijians debarked and soon came to grips with over 5,000 screaming, xenophobic locals, ready to die for their land and itching for a fight. Soon the beaches were stained with the blood of many warriors as shark-toothed clubs pulped skulls and splattered brains, blood and entrails. Only after a long and protracted fight did Koroitamana manage to grind the natives into submission. The Emperor than saw fit to grant his warhorse the entire region to rule as his own personal fief. Just how much one would want to lord it over a sullen, hostile vicious population is anyone's guess.

RAJPUTANATE OF MADURAI (New Madurai in Camoweal)

Rhama II, Rajah of Camoweal.

DIPLOMACY Eha-Rana (ea)

Aside from making nice with the Pagans to the east, Rhama (as usual) kept to himself. But then a great flotilla of ships came from the north, bearing supplies, colonists, seed and farming implements and priests, lots and lots of priests.

The long promised aide from the Omnetian Order had arrived and the newcomers set about with a will, cultivating Camoweal and colonizing it to a (2/ 6) region. Rhama was positively ecstatic in his appreciation.

CHINA

Mercenaries	Minimum bid listed in [x].
Condotierri	15c, 25i, 10s, 5w [1gp each]
Captains	None
Quality Ratings	I3 w1 s2 c4

EMPIRE OF NAIMAN IN HONAN (Abgar in Honan)

Kha-Kheng Emperor and Great Khan of the Naiman

DIPLOMACY None

Lurtz died of apoplexy in early 837. After a four-year regency, Oljaitu's oldest son, Kha-Kheng, was declared Emperor with little fanfare. In other news, Abgar continues to grow like mad, reaching size 14; and the royal road link between Hopei and Bao Ding was completed.

WEI EMPIRE (Am'I in Szechwan)

Chang Liu, Emperor of Wei

DIPLOMACY Hunan (f following allied leader death)

Another royal road link through some of the most inhospitable lands on Earth was completed as thousands of coolie laborers toiled away at the Om'chu to Tz'uk'ai road link. More graves of

those killed through overwork, falling rocks and anoxia line the new route.

Closer to home, Daoist missionaries and preachers continue to have a hard time making any theological headway against the Hindic populations in the southern lands of the Empire. So entrenched are the Brahmin classes and so sure of themselves that they tend to look upon the Daoist counterparts with cool disdain, rather than try to debate them in any meaningful way. To attempt to speed things along (and an indication of his growing impatience), Chang Tse promulgated an edict prohibiting non-Daoists from holding any positions with the Imperial government and military. It is uncertain how much of an effect this had on the situation as the Hindis tended to avoid those occupations like the plague.

Tragedy struck the Imperial family in mid-838, with the death of the Imperial heir designate Chang Wu, who fell ill and died while preaching to the "heathen" in Lingtung. Devastated and grieving, the Emperor designated his second son, Chang Liu as his heir and successor; and immediately training him in the responsibilities of ruler ship. The young man would sadly need those skills all too soon: three years after his beloved son died, Chang Tse died as well, leaving things a bit chaotic, to say the least.

SOUTHEAST ASIA

Mercenaries	Minimum bid listed in [x].
Condotierri	4c 5i 3w 2s [1gp each]
Captains	None
Quality Ratings	i3 w5 s3 c3

THE AVAN EMPIRE (Mandalay in Ava)

Nguyen Ky Cali, Emperor of Ava

DIPLOMACY None
No Orders

THE EMPIRE OF DAI VIET (Vijaya in Champa)

Nguyen Minh, Emperor of Vijaya

DIPLOMACY None

Nguyen was pleased (and very thankful) that the plans to abolish slavery and establish a guild-based economy were successful. Krishna only knows who explosive the conflagration might have been had the land-owning elites throughout the Empire had decided to contest the Emperor's edict and fight the emancipation order. Of course, most of the great slave-owning families are now heads of the nascent guild houses and the average worker's rights outside such organizations are non-existent CAN'T have anything to do with it. nah, not a thing.

THE EMPIRE OF INDONESIA (Jukavu in Kediri)
Rutdayjay, Emperor of Indonesia

DIPLOMACY Aceh (nt), Timor (f)

Rutdayjay continued to oversee the smooth running of his realm. A new road link was completed between Jantara and Utara and a second smaller link was built between Batem and the ferry point on Palembang's southern coast. In Aceh, the city of Langsa was increased to size 2. Hindi missionaries continue to make excellent headway on the island of Sulawesi and the population there is almost completely converted to worship of the Hindic deities.

THE OMNETIAN ORDER OF THE DRAGON
 (Batavia in Pajajaran)

A gung Rah, Lord High Dragon, Father Confessor of the Omnet

DIPLOMACY Khemer (ca), Angor, in Khemer (ca)

A large expedition to succor the Madurai was dispatched and was greatly successful. Attempts to establish churches among them were less so, due to the distance involved. On the other hand, two great Cathedrals were established in the heart of old Khemer, so things weren't too bad.

INDIA & CENTRAL ASIA

Mercenaries	Minimum bid listed in [x].
Condotieri	22c, 27i, 12s, 4w [1gp each]
Captains	None
Quality Ratings	I4 w4 s5 c4

MIGHTY JUANPUR (Patna in Juanpur)
Mehuta, Emperor of India, Ruler of Juanpur

DIPLOMACY Tibet (ea down from a [oopsie!]), Sahis (t)

Mehuta continued to give huge amounts of cash to his many allies, toadies and sycophants. In order to relieve a growing food shortage within the Empire, Mehuta ordered the construction of great fleets of fishing vessels. Soon the Oceans would be harvested and the hungry satiated.

On more ominous note, Mehuta also dispatched a vast war fleet to the Arabian coast with an unknown intent. Finally, huge numbers of Buddhist missionaries descended a Bauluch and converted the Hindics of the region to the true faith.

THE CHURCH OF STHAVIRAS (Dacca in Palas)
Moggaliputta Tissa, Grand Abbot of the Sthaviran Church

DIPLOMACY Bankipur, in Rajput (ca), Chandela (ab), Kausambi, in Jihjhoti (ab), Vatsa (ab), Jawalamukhi, in Tarain (ch), Sahis (ab), Uttar

Pradesh (ab), Meerut, in Uttar Pradesh (ch), Gaur (mn), Baghapur, in Gaur (mn), Ava (ch), Mandalay, in Ava (ch)

With such massive funding coming from his Juanpuri hosts and benefactors; the Buddhist religious organization continues to expand at a phenomenal rate. The apex of this mad rush of growth, was the founding of a great Cathedral (that is, the Buddhist equivalent) in Bankipur at the end of 840. Hundreds of thousands of monks, and other religious functionaries now visit the place yearly.

JAINIST EMPIRE OF SATPURA (Kodwarua in Pawar)

Prashant II, Emperor of the Jainists

DIPLOMACY None

Parashant, having practiced fiscal restraint lo, these many years; blew a truly incredible amount of money on a veritable orgy of city expansions: Here's a handy-dandy list (and shades of old Lords four).

City	New Size
Daman	6
Nellore	2
Nagpur	5
Ujjian	5
Malkhed	6
Puri	6
Vatapi	4
Soppobaya	6
Trivandram	3
Kodivarva	6

Aside from this, there was some minor missionary activity among the Hindus of Chela; and Prashant was also resorting to the construction of many fishing vessels to supplement the Kingdom's food supply.

THE KINGDOM OF UND (Peshwar in Und)
Shapata II, Prince of Peshwar

DIPLOMACY None

No Orders.

THE PARTHAIN EMPIRE (Nisa in Kophat Dagh)
Boraz II, Emperor of Parthia.

DIPLOMACY Baluchistan (ea)

Deciding that a stand needed to be made against further Buddhist encroachment. The Emperor ordered his generals Khadames and Arschat to march into the southern deserts and secure Sistan. Their 6,000 troops had a fine old time chasing the nomadic tribesmen around before managing to secure the region to some degree. The Parthain armies than pressed into Baluchistan

where; joined by the Parthian diplomat Rhadames, the three leaders managed to convince the local ruler there to join the Empire. The Persian Gulf beckons!

Back at home, a new fortress was built in Kara-Khitai and a road linking it to the fortress further south in Bactria was also finished. A great deal of agro was shipped to the ZCR amid much muttering about how in the not to distant past the \$*%* priests had tried to seize it outright. Long memories in Nisa, very long...

THE NEAR EAST

Mercenaries	Minimum bid listed in [x].
Condotierrri	10c, 7i, 5s, 1w [1gp each]
Captains	Aziz (left for parts unknown)
Quality Ratings	I4 w4 s4 c3

THE SCYTHIAN SULTANATE OF SHEBA (M'rib in Sheba)

Rholah Khalid ibn al-Walid I, Khan of the Scythian Turks, Protector of the Caliph and the Holy Places.

DIPLOMACY None

Missionary activity continued as the As'Summan tribes embraced the Muslim faith...and immediately sent representatives to Madina (se the Abyssinian results).

ZOROASTRIAN CHURCH OF REUNIFICATION (Ctesiphon in Selucia)

Ghadames, Supreme Mbad of the Holy Church of Zoroaster, Habadan-Herbad of the Light, Dihgan of Ctesiphon

DIPLOMACY Tabaristan (ch), Nisa (ch, then degrades to nothing due to AR limit), Ashgabil, in Gurgan (ab down from mn), Mashad, in Turkmen, (ab down from mn)

Aside from some half-hearted attempts to expand the Church's holdings in Parthia (yes, assigning a leader with a CHA of "4" qualifies as half-hearted), Ghadames was completely absorbed with secular concerns (which was doubtless NOT a big hit with the local clergy, neither in Persia, nor in Parthia). Rather than deal with spiritual issues, Ghadames invested much energy in preparing to defend the Church's holdings against the expected Jihadist hordes. Much money was poured into city defenses, both around Ctesiphon and Sarif and around many Sassanid cities as well. Work on the El Bruz – Tabaristan road continued as well, and additional funds and manpower were dispatched to the Ghadmaes' co-religionists in Zanzibar.

THE SASSANID EMPIRE (Susa in Ahvaz)
Pirouz I, Shahanshah of the Sassanids, Ruler of Mesopotamia, Lord of Persia.

DIPLOMACY Circis (nt), Armenia (nt, but see below)

Like his Primate counterpart, Pirouz prepared to defend his realm against the Muslim hordes, wall points sprung up around every major city within the Empire. (Some after they had expanded in size, such as Marussia's Gift (3), Kangan (8), Assur (8), Ardabil (5), Erech (7) and Baku (2)). In addition, several citadels were built into the city walls of Baku, Kangan, and a new port city, Batumi, in Abasigia. In the north, Sassanid missionaries completed the conversion of the Armenian and made slow, but significant headway in Shirvan. The Eddessans remain stubbornly Orthodox, however. A diplomatic trip to Armenia revealed that although the local ruler was perfectly happy recognizing Sassanid supremacy in the area, he was equally content rendering similar recognition to the Byzantines as well, and produced a copy of the agreement, which had apparently been worked out in secret some time ago.

Pirouz' dragoman also relayed to the Shah (the latter being very busy on campaign and all) a rather long list of complaints from the local Zoroastrian clergy regarding the increasing worldliness of the upper echelons of the ZCR leadership. *The Church should concern itself with the struggle against A rhiman in the spiritual realm only! One complaint began, the people are annoyed that the Dhigans seem more concerned with carving out temporal Empires and with acquiring material goods. A re we a Church, or a flock of grubby merchants and soldiers?*

THE SCYTHIAN WAR

The Sultanate of Scythia versus the Sassanid Empire and the ZCR

Initial Hires: Well, the Scythians got the services of Aziz (who had no problem working for the other side), but the ZCR got the other mercs.

Initial Knife-work and Dirty Tricks: a great deal of ineffective assassination attempts on various individuals. Only one of the Persian leaders in Sarif, Ataxerxes, was slightly wounded, and he then later died of the flu, so that hardly counts...

Wow, talk about anticlimactic! To start the ball rolling, Rholah dispatched Aziz with 1000 points of cavalry north into Selucia to raid and pillage. Upon entering ZCR territory, he was met by a delegation of *Dinghans* and assorted flunkies, who gave him a great deal of money and asked him to leave. Aziz, not known for his idiocy,

immediately took the cash and left, leaving everything untouched.

Score:
Zoroastrians: 1
Muslims: 0

Meanwhile, back in the south, Rholah dispatched the *Bashars* Omar and Kadar, along with 12,000 troops back into Zufar with orders to crush *the fire-worshipping scam in Sarif*. Unfortunately, upon approaching the settlement, it was discovered that the Zoros had fortified the town with some not inconsiderable mason walls, which now swarmed with over 11,000 defenders. Like Aziz, Omar was not an idiot. An assault would be suicidal, a blockade impossible without a fleet. Frustrated and annoyed. The Scythians withdrew.

Score:
Zoroastrians: 2
Muslims: 0

Trying to salvage something of the situation; Rholah sent Omar north, his force supplemented by 13,000 *fedayeen*. Upon arrival in Asir, Omar stopped to wait for the second wave of *jihadi*s to join him next turn. He was also heartened to hear news that the Abyssinians had marched on to Madina and were gathering the various tribes to their banner.

EASTERN EUROPE

Mercenaries	Minimum bid listed in [x].
Condotierri	80c, 27hc, 55i, 15s, 20w [1gp each]
Captains	None
Quality Ratings	C4, i4, w2, s2

THE EASTERN ROMAN EMPIRE (Constantinople in Constantinople)

Leo, Emperor of the Eastern Roman Empire

DIPLOMACY Chalcedon, in Paphlagonia (+5 YfC)

Justinian died in late 838, leaving the throne to his son, Leo, who was currently watching the Persian border. Leo soon declared his own son, Stavros, his heir. This announcement did not go over very well with Justinian's remaining male offspring: Theophilus, commander of the forces in the Balkans; Nicephorus admiral of the navy; and Adiel, a rather n'er do well administer in the capital (Justinian's last child, Constantine was only two when this happened, so his feelings aren't recorded). Consequently, there was a lot of

muttering going on at Court, although this abated somewhat upon the death of Theophilus, the following year.

On a slightly related note, Justinian's eldest surviving daughter, Candice, impressed her tutors with her acumen and sagacity. After a series of letters between the Capital and the frontier, Leo (knowing talent when he saw it), quickly had her put to work assisting the administrative apparatus of the Empire. Here, she performed well, especially in comparison to her brother, Adiel, who was a complete duffer.

And much indeed was accomplished: a new port, Sinope, was raised on the Black Sea coast in Kuban and Caesarea increased to a level two city. The Royal road between Phrygia and Pamphyla was finished and a new link between Galatia and Vaspurakan was also built. Donatist missionaries were also active; being seen as far north as Atelzuko and Cuman and in the east in the barren wastes of Kul'sary, spreading the word...

CHURCH OF CHRIST (Durazzo in Epirus)
Mark, The "Pilgrim", Legate of Durazzo, Rock of the Church of Christ, Pontiff of the Holy Sea, Keeper of the Keys of the Kingdom of Heaven

DIPLOMACY Corsica (ch), Brasus, in Spoletto (ab), Campania (ab), Phillipi, in Macedonia (ab), Thrace (ab), Constantinople, in Thrace (ab), Dobruja (ch)

No recent pontifications

The Church continued to grow at a somewhat more subdued rate. One reason for the slackening was the death of Bishop Leo in Illyria, before he could even begin consulting with the local clergy about laying the foundations for a new monastery there. Another reason is that the Church doesn't have a big fat Sugar Daddy LIKE SOME BUDDHIST PRIMATES WE COULD MENTION.

Mark continued to keep a studied silence regarding events in France and Germany.

THE KINGDOM OF KUR (Vilnius, in Kur)

Prebich, King of Europe, Prince of Kur

DIPLOMACY Lithuania (f)

Life continued at a fairly bucolic pace despite the death of King Pyotir. The prince of Lithuania was married into the Kurite Royal Family, an event that was the cause of some celebration. Other than that, that was about it.

THE AESIR (Valaskjalf in Kirivitch)

Boris, High Priest of Odin, Grand Legate of the A esiri

DIPLOMACY: Kirivitch (ab), Impavaara, in Polotsk (ab), Johioburg, in Chernigov (ch), Pereaslavl (ch), Kur (ch), Vilnius, in Kur (ch)

Boris and his priests put renewed efforts into reinforcing the network of churches and assorted holdings in the Orsha region between the Dniepr and Dvina rivers; although the Kurite lands weren't neglected either. Despite increasing success in founding new sites, the influence of the Church has been steadily waning in the various Russian Courts. Boris resolved to rectify the situation presently.

THE KINGDOM OF KIEVAN RUS (New Kotka in Kiev)

Roman, Czar and Boyar of Kiev

DIPLOMACY No effect.

Thierry died in the middle of the usual diplomatic wrangling with the Pechenegs, who, despite their conversion to Odinism, seemed no more inclined to deal with him than before. He was succeeded by his son, Ramon, who had the dubious privilege of witnessing even more ineffective Kievan diplomacy at work in Cuman.

Note: when doing diplomacy on Allied regions, the target leader can do nothing except defend/ react while he listens to the diplomats spiel. Even though the diplomacy attempt is made against the regions resistance value, the allied leader must also be present.

Despite these setbacks, one positive development was the construction of a great fortress, named Mjollnir, in central Kiev to assist in the defense of the province.

THE OSTROGOTHIC EMPIRE (Vysehrad in Moravia)

Adalbert, Emperor of the Ostrogoths

DIPLOMACY Jal, in Poland (f following allied leader death)

Adalbert, somewhat reluctantly, provided men and material to support the Arian cause, raising some 5,000 troops and placing them under the command of his brother, Prince Vlacav. That worthy immediately spent the next six months waiting in Vysehrad to be joined by 9,000 Polish and Lithuanian religious troops. Their story is continued in the war narrative below.

NORTHERN EUROPE

Mercenaries	Minimum bid listed in [x].
Condotierri	40c, 50i, 5s, 3w [1gp each]
Captains	None
Quality Ratings	C2, I5, w3, s3

THE VARANGIAN EMPIRE (Starja in Novgorod)

Einer, Emperor of Varangia, Ruler of the Slav and Norse

DIPLOMACY None

No Orders

THE DANISH EMPIRE (Jutland in Denmark)

Snorri, Emperor of the Danes

DIPLOMACY Control of Kopparburg, Fjordane and Bergen relinquished. Franconia (+4YfC), Frankfurt, in Franconia (+6YfC)

Snorri deciding that the Saxons were finished (or at least would only require some mopping up, poured money and manpower into building a postal road between Augsburg in Bavaria and Frankfurt in Franconia. Snorri's generals wondered if the King knew something they didn't: was he supremely confident or utterly insane? More exasperating was his decision to put old general Grunvald out to pasture, giving the man his private fief in Alsace and sending Prince Ovald off to Franconia to try to wow the local nobility. *And what of the Saxons?* Snorri's advisors asked incredulously. *Oh, they're well in hand, well in hand,* Snorri breezily replied, before returning to his wife and attempting to sire an heir.

He was quite wrong of course...

WESTERN EUROPE

Mercenaries	Minimum bid listed in [x].
Condotierri	10c, 40i, 15s, 40w [1gp each]
Captains	None
Quality Ratings	C4, i4, w3, s4

THE EMPIRE OF WESSEX (Southampton in Wessex)

Ethelred, Bretwalda of Britain, Emperor of Wessex and King of the English

DIPLOMACY Vallon, in Normandy (a, see war results below)

Ethelred decided to get involved in all the fun and games in France (a lot warmer than Scandinavia, after all, see below).

Back at home, the Royal Heir, Wulfgar was pleased to report on the successful transition of the English economy from an Agrarian one to one based on craft guilds and the rising artisan class within the towns. Bad news was soon to follow though, as Wulfgar died of consumption in early 839.

KINGDOM OF THE FRANKS [DEAD]

Pepin, King of the Franks

DIPLOMACY None

Pepin dug in, built up the walls of Arras and sent out leaders to mobilize the masses of crusading troops against the hated Donatists (see below).

THE GRAND DUCHY OF SAXONY

Otto I, Grand Duke of Saxony

DIPLOMACY None

Mobilizing every available man who could bear arms, Johann raised a staggering 20,000 fresh troops and prepared to take the war to the perfidious Dane (see below).

THE CHURCH OF ARIUS (Arras, in Flanders)

Robert, Prime Hierarch of the Arian Church

DIPLOMACY Holland (mn)

THE PROCLAMATION OF ROBERT

Any Arian that raises hand in war against another Arian nation will face the wrath of GOD and be required to answer before HIS Throne. Rome and the Preacher of the Triple Headed god seek the destruction of the believers of the ONE TRUE GOD. Nations have the right to defend themselves – but see what has come to pass when one Arian seeks advantage over other Arians through war: the followers of the Tripartite god prevail. Let it be known that the ONE TRUE HOLY MOTHER CHURCH will not tolerate any further warfare between Arians.

Methinks, the Prime Hierarch is a mite...peevd at recent events. And probably even more so that none of his co-religionists seem to be listening to him.

THE WESTERN ROMAN EMPIRE (Rome in Latium)

Cato Gaulophygon, Augustus of Imperial Rome, Dictator of the Romans.

DIPLOMACY Syracuse, on Sicily (a)

Cato rolled up his sleeves and determined to finish the job. He also issued the following Edict.

THE EDICT OF LUTETIA

The Following Laws pertain to the Activities of the Arian Priesthood within the lands of Reclaimed Gaul

- 1) *All Arian priests will be registered and forbidden to travel from their parishes without the permission of the Proconsul of Gaul or the Donatist Bishop of their district.*
- 2) *Practice of the Arian faith is Protected and Tolerated by Roman Law, though Arian church properties will be taxed as if they were privately owned.*
- 3) *All previous land-holdings will be respected, save for those held by nobles or merchants who have raised arms against Rome.*
- 4) *Estates or Properties confiscated from rebellious elements will be apportioned amongst retired soldiers (if tenantless) or to those currently working the land.*

THE GREAT NORTHERN WAR
Saxony, and the Frankish Kingdom versus Denmark and The Western Roman Empire

(with Wessex and Aragon jumping in opportunistically; on screen appearances by Moravian Crusaders and the Arian Church desperately trying to get out of everyone's way)

Initial Hires: Well, someone totally uninvolved in the War hired the Western European Mercs, so there, nyah!

Initial Knife-work and Dirty Tricks: several bungled assassination attempts against Pepin of France, Hierarch Robert, and Otto of Saxony.

836 AD

THE VULTURES GATHER

We Begin in the far north, where Ethelred loads over 43,000 troops aboard a fleet of at least 350 ships. The English depart Kronenburg soon after. In Saxony, Otto and his troops start systematically pillaging both the province and the city of Berlin. Otto than begins appealing to the people that they're only hope is to undertake a great *Volk erwanderung* a migration. He spends the rest of the year buttressing his claims. **Note: you can't just assume you get the cash just because it's your Homeland, it does take action points and 1/2 of the swag should go to the troops lest they mutiny.** To the northwest, Prime Hierarch Robert sails up to Holland via the Channel and begins working on the foundation of a new Monastery there.

Meanwhile, in Arras, Pepin and his commanders build up the walls of the city and wait to be attacked. A few thousand French "crusaders" join him, their small numbers totally revealing just how anemic the Arian Church is. Cato does not oblige them, being content to sit in the ruins of Paris and wait for the Franks to make the first move.

Other Roman armies are active however. The *Dux* Scipio Tyrolius leads 7,000 light troops off to the southwest. Destroying Arian primate sites in Normandy, Maine, and the city of Tours. Vallon, recently refortified, is bypassed. The Caesar Gordianus, with another 13,000 troops, razes the Arian Church in Lyonnais before moving into Anjou and conquering that place, as well as the town of Bourges. He is joined there at year's end by the Donatist Bishop Domitius, who brings another 11,000 troops with him. In Burgundy, Publius Varus arrives to assist the Caesar Tertullian in command of his forces.

In Germany, the Danish *Jarl* Gunnerson marches his 9,000 troops into Lorraine and quickly capture both it and the city of Cologne. Years end sees him crossing into Friesland. The *Jarl* Bjorn is

also busy, ferrying over 14,000 troops across the Rhine and into Champagne. A new general, Erik, patrols the Rhine with a fleet of nearly 200 warships.

Finally, far to the south, the Aragonite host; over 21,000 strong and marching under the banners of *Rey Antonio* advances into Navarre and begins crossing the Pyrenees.

837AD

AN INTERESTING DEVELOPMENT, TO SAY THE LEAST

In France, Cato finally begins to move, marching into Vermandois at the head of over 50,000 troops. The Frankish general Bernard, after hesitating initially, reacts out of Flanders with 40,000 troops of his own. The resulting battle of **Villers-Bretonneaux** is an absolute disaster for the Franks. Cato ably assisted by the *Magister Militium* Aetius and some killer BA die rolls utterly smash the Frankish host, driving it back into Flanders in rout. As the survivors regroup, Pepin ruefully concludes (again) that the Roman machine cannot be withstood in the field. Manning the walls of Arras with the survivors, the King determines to sell himself dearly.

To the south of this, Scipio Tyrolius continue to make life for the Arian Church hierarchy miserable, torching sites in Anjou (including the city of Bourges) and Limousin. In Burgundy, The *Caesar* Tertullian, joined by the Legate Varus, march into Champagne with over 22,000 troops...and encounter Bjorn and the Danish troops mopping up. Taking ship with the Danish fleet on the Rhine, the Romans cross into Alsace.

In Orleans, Bishop Domitius marches into the independent region of Nivernais and conquers the place; while Caesar Gordianus marches his 13,000 troops into Maine and subjects it to similar treatment.

In the south, Antonio forces the Aquitanians to pay tribute to the Aragonese crown, and then dies at the end of the year. His son and heir, traveling with the army, vows to continue. In the north, Ethelred's vast armada heaves to off the Norman coast and begins to disembark troops. Meanwhile, Hierarch Robert finishes founding the new Monastery then crosses the Channel to Anglia.

In Champagne, Bjorn secures the region and begins crossing in Hainaut. Further east, Gunnerson and his 9,000 cavalry march into Friesland and liberate it. He then advances into Saxony and catches sight of Otto and his generals still getting the population ready to travel. **Note:** the Saxons, NOT being Seafaring, cannot just uproot their population which is what the player

seems to infer in his orders, Nope you have to plea, conjoin and wheedle. Fortunately, ole Otto's CHA is quite good and the people are frightened. So much easier to persuade them when they're frightened, heh, heh, heh... By the way, the Danes are now Cultivated, so no more easy *Vdkerwanderungs* for them either.

Where was I? Oh yes, the Danes entering Saxony, seeing big Saxon army uprooting the local populace. Gunnerson took one look at the over 20,000 Saxon troops and immediately beats it back into Friesland. After getting his people ready to march (the wagon train is gigantic), Otto follows in pursuit (or as quickly as you can pursuit with over 100,000 camp followers), enters Friesland, and finding that the Danish army is not in attendance; begins to systematically wreck the place. Utrecht is also sacked. He then marches north through Holstein and into Denmark and begins plundering that place as well. Finally, far to the east, Prince Vaclav of Moravia, at the head of over 14,000 Moravian, Polish and other East European Crusaders leave Jal in Poland and starts marching south.

838 AD

THE NORTH AFLAME

The Romans continue to dictate events. Cato and Aetius now press into Brabant, occupying the region and spending the rest of the year reducing the walls Antwerp. (Wow! a French city that had...glory be, fortifications! Actually, Pepin had them built this turn, amid much grumbling about his predecessors disinterest in such things). Elsewhere, Tyrolius completes his destructive Anabasis and ends up in Ile de France, having left the Arian church holdings in Orleans, Burgundy and Nivernais in ruins. He is joined in the ruins of Lutetia (nee Paris) by Bishop Domitius and Caesar Gordianus, all having completed their respective errands of death and destruction.

Within the Empire itself, the peace and serenity of the relative backwater of Bakony is rudely shattered in early spring when Vaclav and his lads storm into the region and begin torching the local Donatist churches, reducing the castles and converting people to the Arian creed at sword point. The *Dux* Cassius Longinus reacts with a scant 3,800 troops and manages to give 14,000 Moravians a collective bloody nose. **Ref's Note:** I didn't think this was possible, but there were several factors. 1) Cassius is a really good leaser while Vaclav is only average. 2) The Romans had the benefit of field forts in the region, and 3) their AQRs are really good while the Moravians are only average. It was still pretty hard to believe.

Stung by this reversal, Vaclav headed for points south, crossing over into Croatia. In Normandy, Ehtelred, not being in much of a hurry, secures the region and invests Vallon, content to try to starve the defenders into submission. In England itself, Robert preaches the faith to the Anglicans, who prove receptive. He than moves south into Sussex and repeats the Arian doctrine there. Down in the south, Antonio's forces force the Gascons to pay tribute to the Aragonese crown and then subject Limousin (and Vienne) to similar treatment.

In Alsace, Gunnerson is joined by Bjorn; fresh from conquering Hainaut, and the Roman troops under Tertullian. They than prepare to react to any Saxon threat. Which doesn't immediately materialize as Otto and his people are still wrecking Denmark and than marching back into Holstein and subjecting the locals to the same treatment. Years end finds them re-crossing Friesland and entering Westphalia.

839 AD

KATASTROPHE IM TEUTOBURGERWALD

Having reduced and captured Antwep, Cato' marches his great host into Flanders and the kill, quickly securing the region and setting up siege lines around the city of Arras. The remaining Roman armies in France go onto react. As do the Spanish forces in the south. In Normandy, Ethelred continues to patiently wait out the defenders of Vallon. The latter, apparently having some agro stocked, are prepared to be just as patient. To the southeast, Vaclav and his Crusaders enter Croatia, subdue it, and begin converting the locals to the Arian faith at sword point.

In Germany, things start to get hot. Otto and the Saxon *Volk* *erwanderung* (27,000 troops and 100,000+ camp followers) is in the process of Liberating Westphalia from the hated Danes when they run head on into a 41,000 man mixed Romano-Danish reaction force under the *Jarl* Bjorn and the *Dux* Publius Varus who have other ideas. The resulting slugfest at **Teutoburgerwald** ends in a major Saxon victory and the first major defeat for Roman arms in this war. Over 15,000 troops lay dead in the fens and copses of the wood, most of them the hard-fighting Roman infantry, who held nearly to the end. Among the dead are Varus and the *Jarl* Gunnerson. *Jarl* Bjorn (wounded) and the *Caesar* Tertullian pull back to Alsace, where the latter dies at the end of the year. Flushed with victory, Otto than systematically plunders this place as well (as well as Hannover) and then begins making his pitch to the Westphalians to join the great migration.

840 AD

TROPHE [COLLAPSE IN GREEK]

In Arras, the hour of reckoning has come! The great *Onagers* and *Ballistae* begin a steady pounding of Arras' wall, while the Legionaries approach either riding siege towers with *naphtha* projectors or on foot in *testudo* formation. The defender's, fuelled with the desperate courage that terror brings respond with catapults of their own, as well as large rocks and pots of boiling oil or heated, semi-molten sand (the latter a particularly nasty weapon, especially if it gets between the chinks of one's armor). For two days the Romans reduce the walls before a breach is made. Once this occurs, it's all over. Cato's troops storm into the great gap created in the walls, Pepin and his generals ride out to meet them head on, where they perish, fighting bravely, but overwhelmed.

For two weeks, the city is ruthlessly sacked, all Arian property is meted out for special treatment and is virtually obliterated. While no slaves are taken, the city population is scattered to the four winds. Of the Frankish royal family, only Anna Comnena (Pepin's wife and Cato's sister) and her nephew, Thiudebert are found alive. They are immediately placed under the Emperor's protection and whisked off to the south. Once Arras has been systematically stripped, Cato orders it to be torched. Thus the Frankish state collapses in flaming ruin.

To the west, Ethelred continued to patiently wait out the defenders of Vallon, when word reached the English camp of the fate of Arras and the Frankish state. After relaying this news to the defenders within and a short wait. The fortress commander, the *Duc* of Vallon emerged and agreed to transfer his allegiance to Ethelred's cause. There was some rejoicing.

Down in Croatia, Vaclav finished converting the locals and put his seal on his conquest by torching the Donatist abbey there. *Hah! See how those Tripartate-loving Pseudo-Idolotrous, Neo-Pagans in Catholic dathing WANKERS feel about that!* He said. (he talks like that a lot, the prince does).

Finally, in Thuringia, Otto completed his spiel and the locals were quite keen on the whole "migrating" thing, so the Saxon host marched hence into Thuringia, which was liberated at turn's end. Where will Otto and his people go next? Keep watching...

CATHOLIC KINGDOM OF ARAGON (Zaragosa, in Aragon)

Antonio III, Prince of Aragon, Follower of the Niccan Creed

DIPLOMACY: None

Antonio called a temporary halt to the main effort of his campaign against the Andalusians to concentrate on the splendid opportunity raised by the disintegration of Frankish power to the north. Ordering General Miguel and Princess Josephine to continue their ancillary drives against the enemy, Antonio started marching his troops north (see the war news above for those details).

Meanwhile, General Miguel continued to secure the north, compelling Galacia and Estremadura to pay tribute at sword point without undue difficulty. To the south, Josephine got over her earlier hesitancy and ordered an active siege of Malaga, which also fell fairly easily. The prince of Talavera, seeing which way the wind was blowing, went independent.

On the domestic front, the royal road link between the capital, Zaragosa and Navarre was finally completed.

CATHOLIC KINGDOM OF AND-ALUS [DEAD]

Ferdinand I, King of Andalus, Follower of the Nicæan Creed

DIPLOMACY: None

Ferdinand built up the walls around Seville and hunkered down to defend his patrimony. After a short time and the continued absence of the Aragonese, the King began wondering what was up. His bewilderment soon came to an end (see below).

NORTH AFRICA

Mercenaries	Minimum bid listed in [x].
Condotieri	10c, 7i, 5s, 3w [1gp each]
Captains	None
Quality Ratings	I3 w3 s3 c3

THE IMPERIAL VANDAL EMPIRE (Carthage in Tunisia)

Abraham, Emperor of the Vandals

DIPLOMACY No effect.

Abraham's fortunes were decidedly mixed, on the plus side, the Royal road link between Carthage and Baida was completed while a new one was begun between Fez and the unfinished city of Rabat in Idjill (if you can call trying to survey a route while being harassed by nomads, desert flies and thirst as "begun"). In addition, it was decided to move the entire governmental apparatus (lock, stock and barrel) down the road from Carthage to Tangiers, the better to manage the whole bloody thing.

In foreign affairs, things were downright messy, although they started well enough. General Antharic, commanding a force of 15,000 troops (13,000 of them mercs, that's were the Western

European Merc Pool went) and 40 ships, was able to bring the Spanish War to a speedy end by successfully starving Seville into submission (Observers report that Ferdinand expressed relief at being captured and not having to fight anymore). Unfortunately, mercenaries can't be used to garrison places and the average Spaniard was not Ferdinand. *Better the boot of the Aragonese than that of the Infidel* the sentiment ran, and as soon as the mercenaries demobilized, the locals rose in revolt. Athanaric lost control of the countryside completely and only by nature of press-ganging sailors to help guard the walls was he able to hold Seville itself. The unfortunate general died in late 839 from ulcers and overwork.

Worse news was to come from the south. Not only were Vandal missionaries totally alienating the local populations of Idjil and Arguin, thus potentially threatening communications with the south, but a botched uprising in Gambia was brutally put down by the Songhai, who produced quite a passel of Vandalic *agent provocateurs*. Needless to say, Miso is mightily pissed...

THE YIGHUT EMPIRE (Yighut in Egypt)

Stephen, Emperor of Yighut, Beloved of Elchim

DIPLOMACY Kassala (f)

Emperor David died in late 836. As part of his funeral oration, his son and successor, Stephen, took the opportunity to announce the culmination of a set of political and fiscal reforms which had been in the works for some time and probably didn't get too much press here as the ref was **too zonked out from resolving the movement of various heavily armed bands of thugs running amok across Europa! \$*%&# &!!!!**

Ahem...

Anyhow, Stephan announced that he was creating a Council of Elders; intended to assist the Emperor in running the realm by giving him some idea of the will of the common folk (and a far cry from the *I will chastise you with scorpions!* stated by another not-so-famous Hebrew monarch). In addition, the new Emperor also announced that the old crafts guilds would have to open their doors to anyone regardless of family (the only requirement being talent) and that competition between all potential entrepreneurs would be encouraged.

In other events, a second Great Canal, linking the Gulf of Cyprus with the Red Sea was completed. As were the seaward section of the Sinai Wall. In addition, Great Sea Walls facing the Mediterranean were also constructed in Levant, Mansura and Egypt itself. The Levantine and Egyptian coasts are now the most fortified in the world. To the south, in Alwas, Hebraic

missionaries continue to make good progress among the pagans there, bringing the Word of Elohim to all and sundry.

WEST AFRICA

Mercenaries	Minimum bid listed in [x].
Condotierri	10c, 30i, 5s, 2w [1gp each]
Captains	None
Quality Ratings	I3 w2 s1 c3

THE SONGHAI EMPIRE (Mali in Songhai)

Miso III, King of Songhai

DIPLOMACY Takrur (a)

Miso's sense of domestic tranquility was disturbed by an attempted uprising in Gambia, which was utterly and ruthlessly ground to a pulp by general Tsemeris' Army of Occupation. Several of the ringleaders were arrested and confessed (before dying horribly) to being backed and funded by one Dinora, a Vandal princess operating just to the north in Senegal. Such discoveries roused Miso to fury: *How dare they... those stinking Nabobs... those* **EXPLETIVES DELETED.**

On the other hand, the presence of the Vandals in West Africa have led many of Miso's neighbors to sink their differences with the Empire and consider aligning themselves closer to the Malian Court.

THE KINGDOM OF KWARAFI (Unambo in Ife)

Brelus, Prince of Kwarafa

DIPLOMACY None (but not through any fault of theirs)

In what must be some kind of record, a combination of bad health, accident and bad food killed off not only Prince Kaasai, but also his heir Mustaf and his other children all within the span of two years. After consulting amongst themselves and listening to the complaints of the former Prince's wives (who were really rather fed up with dressing in mourning by this point); Kaasai's generals, selected one of their own, Brelus, to take up the mantle of Prince. Once enthroned, Brelus had the entire kitchen staff replaced. No rotten yams were going to do him in, by golly!

When they weren't busy mourning the loss of their more prominent members, the people of Kwarafa were quite industrious, building a road link to the Kanem Imperial Highway at Gurma, thus increasing the amount of trade between the two state; and building a new port city, Abuja, on the Niger in Kafin. Finally, Unambo grew to a size seven city.

THE EMPIRE OF KANEM-BORNU (Ngazargumu in Kanem-Bornu)

Kulanganjovu, Emperor of Kanem-Bornu, Lord of Chad.

DIPLOMACY Rabak, in Kosti (un following allied leader death), Bubi (nt), Gorouol (f), Kurfei (t), Roonato, in Kurfei (a), Tessawa, in Hausa (ea), Salamat (c)

Kulanganjovu continued to expand his mighty realm. In a fit of urbanization, no fewer than thirteen (coun't 'em, thirteen) cities underwent an increase in size. They where (look! another table!):

Kurayama (in Axum)	3
Buran (in Darounga)	6
Daza City (in Daza)	6
Teohmie (in Gorouol)	4
Gurmatche (in Gurma)	9
Tessawa (in Hausa)	2
Hovo (in Jos)	6
Rabak (in Kosti)	4
Sarh (in Kreda)	5
Roonato (in Kurfei)	3
Benu (in Nupe)	10
Lamy (in Soro)	9
Air (in Wadai)	6

In addition, a Royal road link was completed between Soro and N'jimi. Finally, Anansite missionaries continue to make slow headway against the Copts in Kosti while the sudden independent-mindedness of the inhabitants of Rabak was a source of some concern.

EAST AFRICA

Mercenaries	Minimum bid listed in [x].
Condotierri	4i, 4s, 4w [1gp each]
Captains	None

Quality Ratings I5 w4 s3

THE EMIRATE OF ABYSSINIA (Majil, in Sennar)

Mossadeq, Emir of Abyssinia, Sword of Islam

DIPLOMACY See below

Reluctantly (for he was a peaceable fellow) Massadeq gave the local Imamate his conditional support for the Jihad against the Zoros. He would gladly send fighters for the faith against the diabolical Zoroastrian Church and the Persian satraps, he would not, however, condone or support any overt hostility against the Zoroastrians to the south. The *khadis* grumbled slightly but did not press the issue. To this end, Mossadeq raised 4,800 troops and dispatched them to Obock under the command of the *Bashar* Jamis, which were quickly ferried across the Red Sea into Aden.

Despite his disappointment at finding no mercenaries for hire, Jamis marched north into Madina where he managed to convince tribal elders of both Madina and Hijaz to join forces against the common foe. Jamis then asked his new allies to send word out to all the other tribes to send representatives to the site of Holy Mecca to discuss a common strategy. The response was quite satisfactory, many tribes showed up, some from as far away as Al'Riyadh, all united in their desire to punish the Fire-Worshippers but fearing to assail the Sassanid beast individually. Grimly satisfied, Jamis began knocking some kind of alliance together, while waiting for the second wave of religious troops from home.

THE KINGDOM OF ZANZIBAR (Podab on Socotra)

Mzilikaze, King of Zanzibar

DIPLOMACY Gorongo (f), Mombassa (+2 to YfC)

Mzilikazi took an active role in the various merchant activities within his realm, adjusting various shipping allocations to his liking. The king was also alert to any spilling over from the war in the north and ordered his soldiers and fleets in the Horn of Africa to keep a lookout for any hostile moves from the Abyssinians or Scythians. Money was poured into the defenses of both Herkhuf and Djibuti, the latter also receiving a citadel named Fort Vomis. Fortunately, the Jihadists apparently felt that the ZCR and their Sassanid "lackeys" were sufficient entertainment...for now.

On the domestic front, much rejoicing was made with the arrival of long awaited aid from Mzilikaze's co-religionists in the north: grain was shipped in from Persia, to supplement the local stockpiles. The ZCR also funneled huge amounts of gold and hundreds of laborers into the various cultivation projects throughout the Kingdom; one of which, Nyasa was completed.