

RUS

AGE OF THE VIKINGS



2-5 Players Playing time: 60-120 mins

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INTRODUCTION

Who will you be: Bulgar? Slav? Lithuanian? Khazar? or Rus?

How will you rise to become the overlord of Viking Russia? Will you gain territory by warfare and diplomacy, or will you trade with your rivals to increase your political and cultural influence? Are you savvy enough to judge when it's most advantageous to switch command to one of the new emerging kingdoms?

You have only one goal: to become Czar of Russia by being the first player to score 8 Victory Points. But be aware: the random appearance of the Black Death can end your struggle for dominance and finish the game.

Simulating the history of the kingdoms of the Rus, there are various paths to victory - conquering territory; foreign alliances or cultural supremacy - all can be combined to achieve success.

GAME COMPONENTS

- 1 Game Board
- 5 Kingdom Cards
- 5 Player Mats with Tech Tree & Envoy Chart
- 8 sets of 40 Army Markers
- 10 Teuton and 10 Viking Army pieces
- 8 sets of Resource tiles
- 5 double-sided QRF Sheets, with Settlement, Combat & Production on one side / Action Round Summary on the other side.
- 9 Politics Cards including 3 Emerging Kingdoms Cards
- 9 Action Round Cards
- 30 Tactics Cards
- 15 Town pieces
- 10 City pieces
- 5 Fortress pieces

The text in the sidebar clarifies the rules and offers information and helpful hints for beginners.

Overview

The game is played over at least 5-6 turns, with 6 Action Rounds within each turn. Every player selects an Action Round to be the Lead Player, gaining a Bonus action to complete. The other players then follow, using the All-Player action for that round until it is completed, then the next Action Round is begun.

The winner is the first player to gain EIGHT Victory Points at the end of a turn. The revelation of the Black Death card in the Politics deck forces the end of the game at the end of that turn.

SETTING UP THE GAME

The **Kingdom Card** holds all the information about a Kingdom's starting territory, resources and objectives. Whoever holds the card is deemed to be playing that Kingdom.

An 'Army' counter:



It is used to control territory and record various things within the game.

A Town:



A City:



The 'home area' is the first area listed, marked **in bold** on the Kingdom Card.

Basic Resource tiles act like currency:



The VP Track records a player's progress throughout the game. It will rise and fall with the fortunes of the Kingdom(s) they play.

If there are **fewer than 5 players**, any Starting Kingdoms which are not taken become **Neutral Kingdoms** at the start of the game. Place their card face-up to one side of the board.

Place **TWO** pieces of an unused set of army markers on each of their starting territories and **THREE** in the capital. These Kingdoms are immediately available in the Politics Round as **Neutral Kingdoms**.

IF THIS IS YOUR FIRST GAME OF RUS, TURN TO p.18 AND READ THE INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE LEARNING GAME BEFORE SETTING UP THE GAME.

Place the game Mapboard on the table.

SELECTING KINGDOMS

Each player chooses one of five Kingdoms to command. The Kingdom card indicates where to set out their starting position of settlements and armies on the Mapboard. Most Starting Kingdoms begin with Victory Points and Resource tiles as well. The Kingdom card should be placed on the Player Mat.

Starting Kingdom	Starting Army positions (capital in bold)	Starting Settlement positions	Starting Resources Tiles	Starting Victory Points
BULGARS	Bulgar , Volga, Ufa, Vladimir & Vyatka	1 Town in Bulgar	2 Livestock & 2 Timber	0 VPs
LITHUANIANS	Lithuania , Latvia, Polotsk & Turov	1 Town in Lithuania	1 Grain & 3 Timber	0 VPs
KHAZARS	Saray , Azov, the Volga Plain & the Turan Steppe	1 Town in Saray	1 Grain & 3 Livestock	1 VP
RUS	Kiev , Ukraine, Crimea & Pecheneg	1 Town in Kiev	1 Livestock & 3 Grain	2 VPs
SLAVS	Novgorod , Estonia, Kola & Vladimir-Suzdal	1 City in Novgorod	3 Money	3 VPs

Each player should:

- Choose a colour and place 40 Armies of that colour next to their Player Mat.
- Choose 2 of the 4 basic C&T Techs listed on the Player Mat (AGRICULTURE, HUSBANDRY, FORESTRY & MINING) and place an Army marker in the top right corner of these.
- Place 1 Army in each of the starting areas listed on the Kingdom Card.
- Position any starting Town or City in the Kingdom's home area, highlighted in bold on the Kingdom Card.
- Take the starting Resource tiles listed on the Kingdom Card.
- Lay 1 Army on the VP track, at the starting amount of VPs given for the Kingdom.
- Take 1 **FRONTAL ASSAULT**, 1 **STAND/SIEGE** and 1 **FLANK ATTACK** Tactics Card.

Place the 9 **Actions** face up in a line beside the board.

Separate out the **Resources** into their 8 types and place each pile face-up beside the board.

Isolate the **Black Death** card from the rest of the **Politics Deck**. Shuffle the remaining 8 Politics Cards and deal 5 face down on top of the Black Death Card. Place the remaining cards unseen back in the box, they will play no part in the game. Place the Politics Deck next to the Action Track.

You are now ready to play the game.

ДРОУИНА THE GAME БОДЯД

Limited C&T Record Track

Players must place an Army Marker on these C&T Abilities to show that they have been taken. If they do not, the C&T can be stolen from them.

Victory Point Track

An Army counter records the progress for each player on this track.

The initials **M**, **V** & **GH** on the corner of certain map areas alert players that these territories may rebel in favour of Moscow, Vladimir and the Golden Horde (if the relevant Politics Card is activated).

Place the **Politics Deck** next to the Action Track

Action Track

Place the 9 Actions here, face up and in a line.



Foreign Powers

Every Foreign Power has a menu of Resources and the exchange rate at which it is willing to sell and looking to buy. The trade route(s) that link to them is a red dotted line.

Foreign Invasion Markers

These symbols warn that a Foreign Invasion might enter through here. Place 10 Foreign Army Markers on the area specified when the event is triggered.

Place the **Neutral Kingdom Cards** by the side of the board as and when they appear.

Territories in Harvest phase produce:

- TAIGA** (Hatched) areas produce LIVESTOCK or TIMBER for every 2 areas being harvested
- STEPPE** (Light green) areas produce LIVESTOCK
- MOUNTAIN** (Purple) areas produce ORE
- FOREST** (Brown) areas produce TIMBER
- ARABLE** (Yellow) areas produce GRAIN

Resource Tiles: Place face-up and separated into 8 groups

Basic Resources - gained thru Harvest



Commodities - converted from Basic Resources



PLAYING THE GAME

Action 1 (Politics) is played first, followed by Action 2 (Diplomacy) etc.

The Action Track is the driving force of the game and allows players to perform the individual functions of the game. For example, players must Harvest and Trade Resources so they can buy Settlements, Armies or Culture & Technology abilities. This will allow them to conquer territory or gain cultural supremacy and so win VPs.

In addition, the Politics Action allows players to use Foreign Invasions to damage their opponents and to gain VPs for themselves. Other Politics Cards provide other ways to earn VPs or gain additional advantages. The Player of the Politics Action is immune from the adverse affect of any Politics Card played.

Players should note that the counter-mix is limiting. No Kingdom may have more than 40 pieces in play at any time. If a player wants to do something that requires more pieces, they must first use the Recruitment Action to remove Armies from the mapboard, freeing them up for use elsewhere. See p.12.

CHOOSING ACTION CARDS

The game is played in a series of turns, each of which has SIX rounds in it. Each player chooses to be the Lead Player for one (or more) particular Action Round in that turn, by placing an Army Marker onto the Action they are choosing.

<u>Action Rounds</u>	<u>Bonus for Lead Player:</u>	<u>All Players:</u>
1. POLITICS	Activate any Event(s) on the Action Card.	May switch Kingdom, if a Neutral Kingdom is available.
2. DIPLOMACY	Freely annexe a neighbouring area.	Either place an Envoy with a Foreign Power <u>or</u> form/break one alliance with another player.
3. INFLUENCE/ TRIBUTE	Take control of any <u>one</u> Neutral Kingdom and play it in addition to your own for the rest of the turn.	Kingdoms may then demand Tribute from their Vassal States, which may rebel.
4. HARVEST	Draw an extra Basic resource of <u>any</u> type.	Draw <u>one</u> Basic resource Resource of each type that your territory generates. Certain Cultural & Technological (C&T) Abilities increase the amount and variety of Resources that can be Harvested.
5. TRADE	Engage in Foreign Trade with any <u>one</u> Foreign Power that hosts your Envoy at an exchange rate of 1:1.	May offer trades to all other Player Kingdoms and trade with Foreign Powers that host your Envoys.
6. CONSTRUCTION	Spend 1 less Resource to build or maintain <u>one</u> single settlement.	<u>Must</u> spend one Grain or Livestock to maintain each pre-existing City/Fortress. You may also spend Resources to build new settlements.
7. RECRUITMENT	Get <u>one</u> free Army.	Place 1 free Army on each of your settlements and spend Resources to recruit Armies.
8. CAMPAIGN	Gain +1 CBT this turn.	Invade neighbouring territory and strategically redeploy your Armies. Foreign invasions are conducted at the <u>end</u> of this round.
9. CULTURE & TECHNOLOGY	Spend one less Resource on <u>one</u> single advance.	Spend Resources to buy any number of C&T advances you can afford (but only one VP advance).

Everyone plays in every round but the Lead Player gains a bonus when their action is played out. Players choose new Actions at the start of each turn. The Politics deck is shuffled first and one Politics card is revealed and placed face-up on the Politics Action. This is one of the Action Rounds that can be chosen by any player as their selection.

The player with the FEWEST VPs chooses first and, after all other players have chosen an Action card, the first player(s) get to choose a second Action card. Any tie-break will be broken in the following order:

BULGARS; LITHUANIANS; KHAZARS; RUS; SLAVS;
GOLDEN HORDE; MUSCOVY; VLADIMIR

In a 5-player game, only the first player gets an extra Action.

In a 4-player game, the first & second players get an extra Action

In a 3-player game, all players get an extra Action.

There are nine choices of Action Rounds but only SIX are played in any one turn. If an Action is not chosen it is ignored on that turn and a Money Resource tile is placed on it. This is collected by the player when the Action is next chosen in a future turn. If there are no Money tiles left, place any Basic Resource tile on it. A player may choose to redeem this tile for ANY Basic Resource tile when the associated Action is eventually chosen.

PLAYING ACTIONS

The Actions are played out in numerical order, as shown by the numbers at the top of the cards. The Lead Player goes first, carrying out the Bonus Action AND the All-Player Action shown on the card. Then all players play the All-Player action only.

The Army counter on the Action is returned to its player when the Round is completed by all, then the next Action in the numerical sequence is played out.

The Bulgars generally start at a disadvantage, which is why they are Kingdom 1.

In most Action Rounds, all players can carry out their actions simultaneously. However, if any player opts to invoke playing order, it starts with the Lead Player and continues in a clockwise sequence round the table from there.

THE POLITICS ACTION

Lead Player Bonus: Activate the event(s) on the Politics card.

The top Politics Card is always revealed at the beginning of a turn and placed face-up on the deck. It remains there, along with any other revealed Politics cards until Politics is selected by a player as their Action Round selection, when ALL revealed cards are activated.

Most of the actions on the Politics cards are self-explanatory. However six cards need further explanation:

EMERGING KINGDOMS CARDS - THE GOLDEN HORDE, MUSCOVY AND VLADIMIR

When any of the three Emerging Kingdoms cards appears, place it face up beside the board next to any Neutral Kingdom cards. The new Kingdom has the potential to emerge and rebel against any Kingdom controlling its territory. It will only emerge if it is adopted by a player, having abandoned his original Kingdom, until then it remains inactive.

Changing Kingdoms

During the Politics Action, any player can choose to abandon their current Kingdom and switch to another available Kingdom. A player

DRAW A POLITICS CARD AND PLACE IT ON THE POLITICS ACTION

Politics simulates the historical events that affected the growth of Russia during the Medieval Era.

The Politics cards are events which affect the political well-being of the state.

Only refer to these rules sections when the GOLDEN HORDE, MUSCOVY, VLADIMIR, VIKING or TEUTONIC INVASION and THE BLACK DEATH CARDS are drawn.

For Stacking Rules see p.12

A Kingdom is allowed to have one overstack of double the stacking limit in its territory: see p.12

C&T represents the Cultural & Technological advances that Kingdoms can buy during the Culture & Technology Action Round.

For ease of gameplay, an abandoned kingdom is considered as going into decline and therefore loses all of its C&T Abilities (see p.17). If it is adopted by another player, the new player gets to choose a new slate of C&T Abilities .

Vassal Status is a neat way of preventing stronger military Kingdoms from attacking you. For more details, see p.15.

A Viking Army piece:



A Teuton Army piece:



may switch to a Kingdom that has just been abandoned by a player before them in the same turn.

The Lead Player has first option to switch Kingdoms, then every other player in turn has the option, going clockwise round the table. The cost of changing Kingdoms is 1VP.

To change Kingdom a player should:

1. Place their current Kingdom Card face-up next to the other available Kingdoms and take a new Kingdom Card. Discard the old counter mix and take up the new Kingdom's counter mix in its place. Replace any markers on Action Cards with ones of the new colour.
2. Place the full stacking limit of Armies into each area listed on the new Kingdom's card. If the Kingdom has never been played before and its starting areas are controlled by other Kingdoms, they rebel and the Armies change colour to that of the newly Emerging Kingdom. They do not rebel if the Kingdom already has pieces on the board (it is not emerging).
3. Add Armies to the new Kingdom's capital (the first area shown in bold on the card) at a rate of 1 Army marker for every Politics Card that has been revealed so far in the game, up to the maximum overstack allowed in the area. If there is no settlement in this area, place a Town.
4. Discard all Resources in store and draw 1 Money for every area the new Kingdom currently controls. If there is not enough Money available, the player chooses any Basic Resource instead.
5. Clear all Army markers from the Player Mat and return them to their respective stocks, *except* for +1VP markers, which remain with the *player*.
6. Collect the Basic Abilities (Agriculture, Husbandry, Mining and Forestry). Choose 1 extra C&T Ability or Envoy for every Politics Card that has been revealed so far in the game. These must progress along the C&T track, following the rules in regard to the NEEDS of each Ability. A player *may not* collect a C&T Ability which is worth 2VPs.
7. Add up the number of VPs the new Kingdom currently controls, together with all +1VPs on the Envoy Charter and subtract 1 VP as the cost of starting a new Kingdom. Record the total on the VP track.

A newly active Kingdom can immediately choose to become the Vassal State of any *one* Kingdom it is adjacent to, so long this Ruling Kingdom has more VPs than it has.

FOREIGN INVASION – THE VIKINGS and THE TEUTONS

Either of the two Foreign Invasion Cards in the Politics Deck (**Viking Invasion** and **Teutonic Invasion**) trigger an invasion which takes place at the *end* of the Campaign Round in the turn they are activated. The Lead Player of the Politics Card activates the invading Armies and can choose where they will go. The Lead Player's Kingdom is allied to the Foreign Invaders for the invasion turn only. Place the Foreign Invasion Card by the side of the board next to the corresponding Foreign Power with 10 Viking or 8 Teutonic Armies on it.

At the end of the Campaign Action (regardless of whether Campaign was selected or not), these Armies will Invade (see **Foreign Invasion** at the end of **CAMPAIGN** p.16).

THE BLACK DEATH

This Politics Card forces the game to end at the completion of the turn in which it is activated. The person with the highest number of VPs at the end of the turn wins. In the event of a tie-break, it is broken as follows: the Kingdom with the most territories; the Kingdom with the most settlements; the highest Kingdom number.

At the end of the Black Death turn, every Kingdom must remove 1 Army piece or 1 step of Settlement for every Politics Card that has been revealed throughout the game. If this leaves the area empty, the Kingdom will lose control of that area.

THE DIPLOMACY ACTION

Lead Player Bonus: Freely annexe a neighbouring area.

ANNEXING TERRITORY

At the start of the Diplomacy Round, the Lead Player has the option to annexe a neighbouring neutral area.

To annexe an area, the Lead Player takes an Army from their stock and places it on any neutral area adjacent to their own, removing any Neutral Armies that were occupying it. That area immediately becomes part of their territory. Players cannot annexe a Neutral Kingdom's capital (the area marked in bold on its card).

Missionaries

Instead of annexing Neutral territory, a Player with a Christian Religion C&T Ability can use the Lead Player Bonus of Diplomacy to convert another player-run Kingdom's territory into their own. This works similarly to annexation, but all armies occupying the area change colour. Missionaries can only be used by the Lead Player, and can only convert an area that does not contain a settlement.

Diplomacy represents the diplomatic and political actions a Kingdom takes part in to consolidate its position and establish relations with other Kingdoms.

Missionaries simulate the religious struggles which went on during the rise of the Rus.

Missionaries can convert the area of an Allied Kingdom, changing it to their own. This does not count as a hostile act.

ENVOYS and FOREIGN ALLIANCES

Once the Lead Player has completed their action, all players (including the Lead Player) can choose whether to send an Envoy to a Foreign Power or to Ally/break an Alliance.

An envoy can be sent to a Foreign Power to develop trade links or to an active (ie. player-run) Kingdom to establish an alliance. Neutral Kingdoms do not have the capability of hosting envoys.

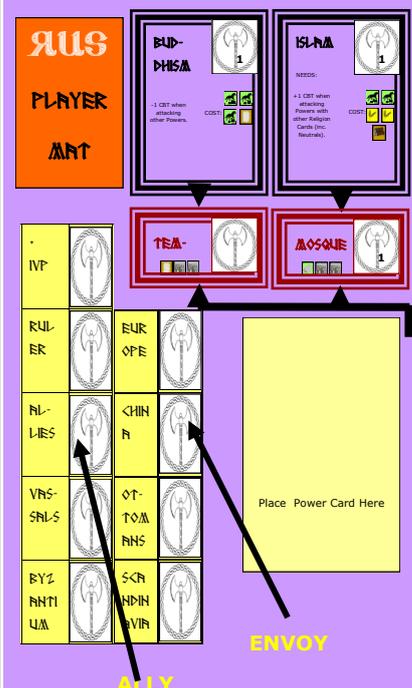
Only one Envoy can be moved once per Diplomacy Round. If an Envoy is removed from a Foreign Power or an Alliance is broken, a new Envoy trade link or Alliance cannot be formed in the same round.

Playing an Envoy

If a player chooses to send an Envoy to a Foreign Power, they indicate this by placing one of their Army markers onto the Envoy Chart on the Player Mat. They can now trade with that Foreign Power in the Trade Round until it is moved.

Alliances

Instead of sending a Foreign Envoy, players have the option to make or break one alliance with another active Kingdom.



To break an alliance, simply state that you are doing so, take back your Army marker from your ally's Envoy Charter and return your ex-ally's marker to their stock.

To form an alliance, both Kingdoms simply declare that they are doing so and place an Army marker from their stock onto the 'Ally' section of their ally's Envoy Chart. A Kingdom must have a free Army available to do this. Both Kingdoms will remain Allied until the alliance is broken in a subsequent Diplomacy Round.

Allied kingdoms cannot attack one another, but they can launch a campaign from an ally's borders (see sidebar in **Campaign** p.13). It is not possible for Allies to score a joint victory. Allied Players never combine VPs.

A Kingdom may Ally to any number of Kingdoms, but can only make or break one alliance per turn. Alliances can only be broken by a Diplomacy Action.

THE INFLUENCE/TRIBUTE ACTION

Often, during the history of the Rus, an emerging power would use a proxy state to do its dirty work for them; while a weaker power would pay tribute to a more powerful neighbour to avoid confrontation.

The Influence/Tribute Action simulates this by allowing players to take temporary control of a Neutral Kingdom for their own purposes and demand tribute from Vassal States which have submitted to them in previous turns.

Lead Player bonus: Can take control of any one Neutral Kingdom and play it in addition to your own for the rest of the turn.

After the Lead Player has used their bonus, all Kingdoms with Vassal States can demand Tribute from their Vassals. Vassals also have the option of rebelling against their Ruler at this time (see **Vassal States** p.15).

Influencing a Kingdom

At the start of the Influence Round, the Lead Player names the Neutral Kingdom which will be Influenced. During all subsequent Action Rounds for the rest of this turn, the Neutral Kingdom is played to all intents and purposes as if it was an extension of the Lead Player's Kingdom. It can Harvest, Trade, Construct, Recruit, Campaign and buy C&T, all under the guidance of the Influencing player, and has all the C&T abilities of its Influencer for that turn only.

For the purposes of spending, the resources of the Influenced Kingdom are combined with those of its Influencer, to spend on either Kingdom. However, unspent resources stay separate — an influenced Kingdom never donates resources to its Influencer's stock, instead its unused resources are discarded.

The Influenced Kingdom can also Submit to an invading Kingdom and declare Vassal Status (see pp. 13 & 15), but it cannot submit to the Kingdom which is Influencing it. It counts itself an Ally of the Influencing Kingdom for this turn only.

For the purposes of Influence, any Teutonic or Viking Kingdoms on the board are automatically deemed to have Agriculture, Husbandry, Forestry and Mining, as well as the Cavalry and Metallurgy C&T Abilities. The Teutons are also Catholic.

During Campaign, both Kingdoms move simultaneously, but they cannot combine their Armies in the same area. The player running the Influenced Kingdom can only maintain 1 overstack, either in their own Kingdom or in the one it is Influencing.

Demanding Tribute

Any Kingdom can demand Tribute from some or all of its Vassals (see **Vassal Status** p.15) who must choose either to pay the tribute or to declare a rebellion. The price of Tribute is one single Resource of the Vassal's choice (if the Vassal has one).

Neutral Kingdoms will automatically demand Tribute from all their Vassals when this Action is activated.

Rebellion

During the Tribute Round, existing Vassal States can choose to rebel by declaring independence from their Ruling Kingdom & returning the 'Vassal' Envoy.

Vassals which hold more VPs than their Ruling Kingdom must rebel if the Tribute Round is activated.

Tribute is the price a Vassal must pay for being immune to attack from its Ruling Kingdom.

If the Vassal has no Resources, it does not have to pay Tribute or rebel.

Note that you do not take back the +1VP marker lost when you submitted to Vassal status. This is retained permanently by the player you submitted to.

THE HARVEST ACTION

Lead Player bonus: Draw an extra Basic Resource of any type.

During Harvest, players gather Resources in clockwise order, starting with the Lead Player. The Lead Player also draws one extra Basic Resource of any type (even one their Kingdom does not produce), before all other kingdoms Harvest. If a Resource has run out before a Kingdom's turn to Harvest, that Kingdom cannot Harvest the Resource this turn.

At the end of the Harvest, every player may only hold a maximum of 10 Resources unless they have the Warehouse C&T Ability when this limit doubles to 20.

Resources are divided into two types: Basic Resources & Commodities. Commodities are converted from Basic Resources when a Kingdom holds certain C&T Abilities.

BASIC RESOURCES

Each type of territory on the board generates a Basic Resource during Harvest:

	ARABLE	(Yellow) areas produce GRAIN	
	STEPPE	(Light green) areas produce LIVESTOCK	
	FOREST	(Brown) areas produce TIMBER	
	MOUNTAIN	(Purple) areas produce ORE	
	TAIGA	(Hatched) areas produce <u>one</u> LIVESTOCK <u>or</u> TIMBER for every 2 areas harvested	

Taiga

The Taiga is the vast belt of wild, frozen forest that stretches across Siberia below the Tundra belt. It is so difficult to manage that a Kingdom must control 2 Taiga areas before anything can be Harvested from it. However, for each Taiga zone that can produce anything, a player has the choice of harvesting either Livestock or Timber.

If in doubt: Harvest!

Harvest is possibly the most important round in the game. Without Harvest, players cannot gain Resources, and without Resources they cannot pay for anything.

REMEMBER!

A Kingdom without Warehouses can only hold 10 Resources in its store each turn.

At the start of the game, each Kingdom can only Harvest 1 Resource of each TYPE that its territory generates (ie. 1 piece only per colour). However, as the game progresses, they can purchase C&T Abilities such as Agriculture, Husbandry, Forestry & Mining that enable them to Harvest more Produce.

Taiga's production can be increased by holding the C&T Forestry & Husbandry Ability, as if it were Forest or Steppe.

Basic Resources are converted into Commodities when you have the relevant C&T Ability to convert the relevant Produce into the relevant Commodity during Harvest.

If you have the relevant C&T Ability, you may still create a Commodity even if the Basic Resource it is converted from has technically run out (eg. you can create 1 Paper even if there is no Timber available).

If Money is not available at any time, the Kingdom receiving the Money has the option to choose one Basic Resource in its place.

COMMODITIES

Holding certain C&T Abilities allow kingdoms to convert a Basic Resource into a more sophisticated Commodity during Harvest:



MONEY is produced by ALCHEMY with Ore



CLOTH is produced by WEAVING from Livestock



PAPER is produced by PULPING Timber



BUILDING SUPPLIES are produced from Ore with ARCHITECTURE (to construct sophisticated stone structures) or by CARPENTRY with Timber (to construct advanced wooden buildings).

Only one of *each* Basic resource can be converted into its respective Commodity by each Kingdom during a Harvest action.

Money

Money is the most useful of the Commodities, as it can be used freely in place of any Basic Resource (ie. Grain, Livestock, Timber or Ore) when paying for anything during the game, replacing the Basic resource at a 1:1 ratio. However, it cannot be used to replace a Commodity.

THE TRADE ACTION

Trade simulates the complex web of economic interdependence between the kingdoms of the Rus and their neighbours.

Players can only trade Resources during the Trade Round. They can trade freely with any active Kingdom but can only offer trades to Foreign Powers that host their Envoys.

Trading players can mix & match the Resources they trade with a Foreign Power, so long as they hand over the amount & type of Resources the Foreign Power requests (eg. you can give China 1 Ore + 1 Timber in exchange for 1 Grain).

Lead Player bonus: trade Resources with one Foreign Power that hosts your Envoy, at a 1:1 ratio.

FOREIGN TRADE with CHINA, EUROPE, SCANDINAVIA AND THE BYZANTINE EMPIRE

Players can only trade with a Foreign Power if it hosts one of their Envoys. Every Foreign Power has a charter of Resources that it is willing to sell and looking to buy (found on the Mapboard). The exchange rate for transactions is invariably in favour of the Foreign Power (ie. most Foreign Powers trade Basic resources at 2:1 in their favour).

TRADE BETWEEN PLAYERS

Players can freely trade with all other active kingdoms.

To offer a trade, the player states the amount and type of Resources they are willing to sell and receive in return.

Players may haggle with one another, and if the buyer accepts the trade, the players exchange Resources.

THE CONSTRUCTION ACTION

Lead Player bonus: Spend 1 less Resource to build or maintain 1 settlement.

There are 3 types of settlement, with different construction costs and advantages:

TOWN: Cost: 1 Grain + 1 Timber
 Produces 1 free Army during Recruitment
+1 stacking limit in area
Grants Defenders the use of the **TOWN BARRICADES** Tactic in the Campaign Round

CITY: Cost: Town + 1 Grain + 1 Timber + 2 Ore
 Gain 1 VP
Produces 1 free Army during Recruitment
+2 stacking limit in area
Grants Defenders the use of the **CITY WALLS** Tactic in the Campaign Round
Maintenance Cost: 1 Grain/Livestock

FORTRESS: Cost: City + 1 Timber + 1 Ore + 1 Building Materials
 Produces 1 free Army during Recruitment
Inherent garrison of 1
+2 stacking limit in area
Grants Defenders the use of the **FORTRESS BASTIONS** Tactic in the Campaign Round
Maintenance Cost: 1 Grain/Livestock

To build a settlement, a player states where it is to be placed and pays the cost to the bank.

Towns can be upgraded into Cities, and Cities can be upgraded into Fortresses. A City cannot be built unless there is a Town already in the area, nor can a Fortress be constructed unless a City is already in place. A player cannot build a Town or City and immediately upgrade it to the next status level within one turn, even if they hold the Resources.

Maintenance

At the end of the Construction Round, all Cities or Fortresses built in previous turns must be maintained at a cost of 1 Grain or Livestock per City/Fortress. If these are not maintained, they are reduced by 1 status level: a City becomes a Town and a Fortress becomes a City, so losing its garrison.

Construction represents the urban growth of the Rus as their land prospered and developed during their history. During the Construction Round, players have the opportunity to build settlements within their Kingdom's territory. At the end of this Round, players must maintain cities built in previous turns or have them reduced in status.

Settlements give your Kingdom advantages during Recruitment and Campaign, but their effects are not cumulative: ie. a City only recruits 1 extra army, not 2; and a Fortress has a +2 stacking limit, not +5.

A Fortress retains the VP gained when the settlement became a City. The player does not lose the VP when a City is converted into a Fortress.

The Lead Player can use their Resource discount to Maintain 1 City/Fortress.

THE RECRUITMENT ACTION

Recruitment simulates the raising and organisation of armies for a prolonged campaign.

This was often sporadic — influenced by the harvest and other external circumstances — which is why it is a deliberate Action which must be chosen rather than automatic.

	Arable	3		Town +1
	Steppe	3		
	Forest	2		City +2
	Mountain	1		
	Taiga	1		Fortress +2

The inherent garrison of a Fortress counts as an Army for the purposes of controlling an area, but NOT for stacking purposes. In other words, an area with a Fortress does not need a spare Army to garrison it and always contains 1 Army more than the number of Armies stacked within it.

Lead Player bonus: gain 1 free Army at the start of the Recruitment Round.

During the Recruitment Round, players can raise new Armies to garrison their territory or go on Campaign. Areas can only support a certain number of armies (see Stacking, below)

In each Recruitment Round, every player may recruit 1 free Army for each settlement on the map. These must be deployed in the same area as the recruiting settlement.

Additional new Armies can be raised at a cost of 1 Grain or 1 Live-stock and may be placed anywhere in the recruiting Kingdom's territory. A player cannot recruit more Armies than they are capable of maintaining in their areas (see Stacking below), although a Kingdom may maintain one overstack during the turn. Once all a player's Armies are used up, they cannot continue to recruit.

If a Kingdom has no settlements and no Resources with which to Recruit, it may raise 1 solitary Army and place it anywhere in its territory.

Stacking

Each area can only support a certain number of Armies:

ARABLE & STEPPE land can support up to 3 Armies.

FOREST can support up to 2 Armies.

MOUNTAIN & TAIGA can only support 1 Army.

TOWNS increase the stacking limit of any area by 1.

CITIES or **FORTRESSES** increase the stacking limit of any area by 2.

A Kingdom can maintain one overstack of twice the number of Armies allowed in a single designated area. Any Armies in excess of these limits are removed from the board at the end of every Round.

Kingdoms must continuously maintain a garrison of at least one Army in every area they control. If the area loses its Army, it is immediately classed as neutral territory and must be reconquered.

A Kingdom can never voluntarily move its last Army out of an area.

Countertermix

The countertermix is limiting. No Kingdom/Player may have more than 40 Army pieces in play at any one time. If a Kingdom requires more pieces to use elsewhere (eg. for C&T) it must use the **Recruitment** Action to disband Armies, removing them from the board. This costs nothing other than the Action, **and is the only time that a Kingdom can relinquish control of an area!**

Kingdoms can also use the **Diplomacy** Action to recall redundant Envoys, but they can never remove a **C&T** marker once they have learned the ability, unless the player dumps the Kingdom for a new one.

THE CAMPAIGN ACTION

Lead Player Bonus: Gain +1 CBT this turn.

In the Campaign Round, players may use surplus Armies to invade neighbouring territory, then Strategically Redeploy their Armies to defend their own lands.

Kingdoms can only move Armies if the Campaign Action has been played.

There are three parts to this Round: Invasion, Battle and Strategic Redeployment. Starting with the Lead Player, each player performs all three parts before the Action passes to the next player clockwise from the Lead Player.

INVADING TERRITORY

To invade an area, the Kingdom must move enough Armies from its territory into the target area to overwhelm the defenders:

- Armies may only move 1 area, until their Kingdom develops Cavalry.
- Kingdoms holding the Cavalry C&T Ability can trace a *line of campaign* of up to 3 areas from the Kingdom's initial borders. If the line of campaign passes through an unconquered enemy area, that area must be conquered in Battle before any areas beyond it can be invaded.
- Kingdoms must maintain a garrison of at least 1 Army in every area they control.

The Campaigning Kingdom moves all of its Armies before resolving any battles. Cavalry must simply invade the *first* area in its Line of Campaign.

The invader can stack any number of Armies into an area it is invading, but must move any surplus Armies out of that area during Strategic Redeployment.

Submission

At any stage of a Campaign, but *before* Tactics Cards are revealed in Battle, an invaded Kingdom has the option to Submit to its invader and declare itself a Vassal. If it submits, one of the invading Armies is placed on the Ruler section of the Vassal's Envoy Charter, and the Vassal must place an Army marker from its stock onto *both* the Vassal and the +1VP sections of its new Ruling Kingdom's Envoy Charter. A Vassal cannot be attacked by its Ruler (see **Vassal States** p.15).

A Kingdom can only submit to an invader that will hold as many or more VPs as itself after the submission has occurred.

BATTLE PROCEDURE

To conquer an area, the Attacker must invade it with a Basic Combat Strength (CBT) that exceeds the Basic CBT of the Defender by at least 1.

Medieval warfare was very hit & miss — reliant on good weather, reconnaissance, troop reliability and a host of other factors.

To simulate this, the game makes it a deliberate Action. A King may have raised an army, fed it, armoured it and given it all the latest weaponry; but unless he actively chooses to go to war, he cannot be certain that the army will march when he wants it to.

Even victorious Armies take casualties, so triumphant armies will reduce in size during Battle.

Cavalry allows a Kingdom to move its Armies farther and to prolong a Campaign, but they are at a distinct disadvantage in the northern forests of Russia.

A Kingdom is allowed to start its Campaign from the borders of an Ally or Vassal, as long as the Ally/Vassal has territory bordering onto that Kingdom. The Armies are deemed to have massed on the Ally's borders for the Campaign.

Submission is designed to prevent the larger, more militaristic Kingdoms from simply rolling over the weaker Kingdoms on the board. It gives the aggressor +1VP, but prevents him from attacking his weaker neighbour.

CBT = Combat Strength. It is generated by the number of Armies, terrain and the C&T Abilities of the Kingdoms involved in the battle.

The game is designed to make its early expansion phases very simple, as:

- 1 infantry Army will automatically take unoccupied Arable, Forest or Steppe land with no loss.
- 2 Armies will take unoccupied Mountains at the cost of 1 casualty.

Once players are all used to the Tactics Cards, we suggest that you institute a 30-second rule when choosing cards:

Players have 30 seconds to choose a tactic. If they fail to do so when the 30 seconds are up, they automatically default to Stand/Siege.

This significantly speeds up playing time, preventing delays caused by analysis paralysis.

The Basic Combat Strength of a force is the number of Armies in the area adjusted by the following CBT Modifiers:

- +1 if the player chose the Combat Action Card.
- +1 if Metallurgy is held.
- +1 if defending Mountains.
- +/- for certain Religions in some circumstances (see religions in the C&T area on the Player Mat).
- 1 a force with the Cavalry C&T Ability invading Forest or Taiga.

The battle is resolved slightly differently, depending on whether the invader attacked a Neutral area or an area under player control.

Attacking Neutral Areas

If the area is not under the direct control of a player, it is automatically conquered as long as the Invader has 1 surviving Army in the area at the end of Battle.

The victorious Invader loses a number of Armies equal to the CBT of the neutral area invaded.

Attacking Player-controlled Areas

If the area is under player control (inc. Neutral Kingdoms controlled by the Influence Action), both sides secretly choose a TACTICS CARD; place it facedown; then reveal it simultaneously.

All players begin the game with the basic Tactics: ~~FRONTAL ASSAULT~~, ~~STAND/SIEGE~~ and ~~FLANK ATTACK~~. They can gain additional Tactics from certain C&T Abilities.

Players compare the Tactics they have chosen and adjust their Combat Strength accordingly:

1. Find the Tactic played by the opponent listed on your own card.
2. Adjust your own CBT by the modifier listed.

The victor is the side which has the highest final CBT.

Both sides lose one Army for every 2 points of final CBT their opponent scored.

Any defeated Armies that survived must retreat into an adjacent area that is friendly to them, otherwise they are eliminated. If this area is allied (or vassal) territory, they will pass through it to the nearest area controlled by their own Kingdom and stop there.

If the CBT is equal, both sides lose 1 Army and the Invader decides whether to attack again with any remaining forces.

Besieging Settlements

Whenever an area containing a Settlement is invaded, the Defender temporarily gains an additional Tactics Card:

- TOWNS may construct ~~TOWN BARRICADES~~
- CITIES have ~~CITY WALLS~~
- FORTRESSES have ~~FORTRESS BASTIONS~~

These Tactics work well against most Tactics, except **SIEGE** and **BOMBARDS**.

If **SIEGE** is played successfully against the settlement, the Defender has the option of retreating behind the settlement's defences rather than into an adjacent area. If it does so, the Attacker must decide whether to prolong the siege with another round of Battle, or withdraw. This is the only time (other than a draw) when 2 or more Battles will be fought consecutively in the same area.

Cavalry Campaign

Once an invader with the Cavalry C&T Ability has won a Battle, it has the option of continuing the campaign by moving the cavalry into another area, *so long as* the cavalry still has some of its movement allowance left (a cavalry unit can move up to three areas from its starting area) *and* leaves at least 1 Army behind to hold the newly conquered territory.

If it does so, it moves into the next target area and fights a Battle.

STRATEGIC REDEPLOYMENT

Once a Kingdom has finished invading territory, it may Strategically Redeploy by moving any of its Armies on the map 1 area within its own territory. Kingdoms with Cavalry can strategically redeploy each of its Armies up to 3 areas.

VASSAL STATES

A Kingdom can only become the Vassal of *one* Kingdom.

Any Kingdom can automatically Submit to an invading Kingdom before Tactics Cards are revealed in Battle, as long as the act of submitting means that it has as many or fewer VPs than the invading Kingdom. If a Kingdom submits, the *player* it submits to immediately scores 1VP, which is permanent and *cannot* be lost even if the Vassal rebels or if the Player discards that Ruling Kingdom. The Submitting Kingdom *permanently* places an Army onto the +1VP section of the Ruling player's Envoy Charter.

Vassal States are in an inferior alliance with a Ruling Kingdom and cannot attack *nor be attacked* by it. A Ruling Kingdom can invasions from its Vassal's borders, but the Vassal can only do the same from its Ruling Kingdom's territory if it is permitted to.

In some circumstances, it is possible for a Kingdom to be the Vassal State of another Kingdom that is itself a Vassal. In this case, the sub-Vassal is *not* a Vassal of its ruler's Ruling Kingdom.

A Kingdom *cannot* refuse to accept Vassal status from a Submitting Kingdom. However, if a Vassal State ever has more VPs than its Ruling Kingdom, it will automatically rebel during the INFLUENCE/TRIBUTE Action Phase.

CONQUERING A KINGDOM

Whenever a Kingdom's last remaining territory is captured by an opponent, it has been conquered and is removed from the game. The conqueror gains all the Resources in the conquered Kingdom's store plus any *one* C&T Ability of the conquered Kingdom.

Note that a siege only happens if **SIEGE** was played against **TOWN BARRICADES, CITY WALLS** or **FORTRESS BASTIONS**. Otherwise, the loser must evacuate the area.

This means that a stack of victorious Cavalry Armies can expand up to 3 areas from their starting territory.

The world of the Rus was a feudal society, in which Vassals paid homage to their more powerful overlords. Many of the great powers of the period began their history as Vassal States — most notably Moscow and Vladimir, whose bitter rivalry ultimately created the Medieval Russian state.

SUBMITTING CAN BE GOOD FOR YOU!

Vassal status is a way for weaker Kingdoms to prevent themselves being conquered by their more powerful neighbours. The downside is that it scores the Ruling Kingdom 1VP, and the Ruler may occasionally demand Tribute.

In the case of Kiev, Novgorod and Moscow, it is a clever way of preventing an opponent from taking the area away from you and losing you 2 VPs.

The minute a Foreign Army is placed in its territory, any Kingdom can choose to surrender to the invaders. This gives the player running the Foreign Invasion +1VP. Surrendering Kingdoms count as Vassals of the Foreign Invader. One Foreign Army that caused the surrender is immediately placed on the Ruler section of the surrendering Kingdom's Envoy Charter; the rest can continue the campaign.

Teutonic and Viking sub-Kingdoms are automatically deemed to have Agriculture, Husbandry, Forestry, Mining, Cavalry and Metallurgy. The Teutons are also Catholic. They can never have more than 10 Armies in play.

The Player of the conquered Kingdom continues in the game by automatically activating any available Kingdom Card that is face up beside the board at the end of the turn.

FOREIGN INVASION of VIKINGS or TEUTONS

If a Foreign Invader (Viking or Teuton) is activated during the Politics Round, its Armies will invade at the end of the Campaign Action this turn, regardless of whether the Campaign Round was played or not.

The invasion will be run by the player of the politics Action, and the Kingdom belonging to that player is Allied to the Foreign Invader for this turn only. The Foreign Invader can pass through its territory unhindered.

All invading Armies appear in the area they 'ENTER THROUGH' (marked on map with their own symbol and named on the Politics card). They move as Cavalry and will fight any opposing Armies in the area. Then any surviving Foreign Invaders can conduct a cavalry campaign and move up to 3 areas from that start point.

Both the Vikings and the Teutons have +1 CBT and can use <CAVALRY CHARGE> Tactics.

The Teutonic Knights are also Catholic and gain +1 CBT vs all Orthodox Kingdoms they attack.

Kingdoms invaded by the Vikings and Teutons can opt to submit to them and become their Vassal, regardless of the number of VPs they have. This will give the controller of the Foreign Invaders +1VP. The Kingdom becomes the Vassal of the Foreign Invaders, not the Kingdom of the Invaders' controlling player. The Foreign Invader can continue its campaign from the edge of its new Vassal's borders.

If the Foreign Invasion achieves the objective(s) listed on its Politics Card, the controlling player places one of their own Army markers on the +1VP section of their Envoy Chart. These VPs are permanent and are never lost (see Victory Points p.17).

If the objective is in a Vassal or Ally's territory, no VPs are gained.

The Foreign Invader's surviving Armies remain on the board at the end of the turn, forming a Neutral sub-Kingdom in the territory they captured. They control the territories they have conquered, but can only move again if Influenced. They are no longer Allied to any Kingdom.

OCCUPYING FOREIGN POWERS – The GOLDEN HORDE and EUROPE

The Golden Horde gains one VP for occupying Europe with ten Armies. To achieve this, they must connect their territory to Europe along one of its trade routes and remove the number of Armies required for the invasion from the map back into their stock. The Armies removed do not have to be able to reach the Foreign Power this turn: they must simply be able to trace a line of uninterrupted friendly areas from their territory into Europe. Place one of the Armies committed to the invasion on the +1VP section of the Envoy Charter to record these VPs.

THE CULTURE AND TECHNOLOGY ACTION

Kingdoms can purchase any number of C&T Abilities during this round, but can only purchase 1VP-gaining Ability per turn.

Lead Player Bonus: Spend 1 less Resource on one C&T Ability.

This privilege means that certain C&T Abilities can be free (eg. the Lead Player would not need to spend 1 Ore to get Metallurgy, but would still NEED Mining).

To buy a C&T Ability, the Kingdom must spend the Resources listed *and* have all the NEEDS required at the time of purchase. An Ability can be used as a NEED in the same Round it is purchased but its actual ability is only usable in the following turn.

C&T Abilities are listed on the Player Mat. Players keep track of their Kingdom's purchased C&T Abilities by placing a spare Army marker on the Army symbol in the relevant box of that Ability, to show that the Kingdom now has that Ability.

C&T Abilities are bought by the Kingdom, not the Player, and are lost if the Kingdom is discarded.

The number on the Army symbol denotes how many times that Ability can be bought by all players throughout the game. Most Abilities can be bought by all 8 potential Kingdoms in the game, and therefore contain the number '8'. Certain Abilities, such as 'Academy' or 'Barbarian Horde' are Limited Abilities and can only be bought by 1 or 2 Kingdoms. They contain the number '1' or '2' to signify this.

If no Army Marker is available to mark the acquisition of a C&T Ability, then the purchase cannot be made.

C&T reflects the cultural and technological advances made by the Rus during this period. They are extremely important, as they are a route to victory as well as granting enhanced abilities to Kingdoms.

NEEDS are usually the existence of a settlement in its territory and/or prior possession of certain other C&T Abilities (eg. Metallurgy needs possession of Mining and costs 1 Ore).

When buying a limited Ability, the purchasing Kingdom must place an additional Army marker on the relevant section of the red 'Limited Abilities' Chart on the gameboard. If they fail to do so, that Ability can still be bought and stolen from them by another Kingdom.

VICTORY POINTS

The first player to hold 8 VPs at the end of a turn wins the game.

If no player has 8 VPs when the game is ended by the Black Death, the player with the most VPs wins — ties are broken in the following order of priority:

1. The Kingdom with the most Cities.
2. The Kingdom with the most areas under its control.
3. The Kingdom with the largest Kingdom number (eg. 7: MUSCOVY beats 4. RUS)

VPs can be gained in a variety of ways:

Possession of Territory: Certain areas on the map have a VP score printed on them. The Kingdom which controls this area gains the VPs for that area, *but only if it contains a settlement of some kind*. If they lose control of the area, they immediately lose the VPs.

Cities: A Kingdom gains 1 VP for every City or Fortress it controls. If the area is conquered by another Kingdom, the VP transfers to

On the BLACK DEATH turn only, waive the usual restriction on buying VP-earning C&T Abilities - players can buy more than 1 VP-earning C&T Ability in the final turn.

Any Kingdom which loses all of its pieces to the Black Death is wiped out and cannot score.

EG: Moscow is only worth 2VPs once someone has built a settlement there. Until then, it is worth nothing.

the conquering Kingdom. These VPs are lost if the Kingdom is abandoned or the City is reduced to a Town.

C&T Abilities: Certain C&T Abilities confer VPs on the Kingdom that buys them. These VPs are lost if the Kingdom is abandoned, but Abilities that 'Need' a City to gain them are *not* lost if the Kingdom later loses its only City (it still retains the kudos for building the first Academy, for instance).

Vassal States: Every time a Vassal State Submits, the *player* it submits to gains +1VP. This VP is permanent and is not lost if the Vassal rebels or if the player who gains the VP discards the Ruling Kingdom.

Kingdom Objectives: Some Kingdom Cards list specific objectives for which the Kingdom concerned can gain VPs. This is either for 'occupying' or for 'bordering with' a Foreign Power.

- To **occupy** Europe, The Golden Horde must remove 10 Armies from the board into Europe (see **Occupying Foreign Powers** p.16). The invasion can be scored once in the game by the Golden Horde Kingdom only.
- To **border** with a Foreign Power, the Kingdom must control at least one area that is directly adjacent to the Foreign Power's original border. This must be territory directly controlled by the Kingdom; it *cannot* be done through a Vassal State or an ally. These VPs are lost if the Kingdom loses its border link or is discarded by the Player.

Foreign Invasion: If the objectives of a Foreign Invasion are achieved, the VP(s) listed on the Politics Card are *permanently* earned by the *player*.

LEARNING GAME

Welcome to RUS.

If this is your first game, start here.

*This learning game is played without **Foreign Invasions** and without VLADIMIR and the GOLDEN HORDE as Emerging Kingdoms.*

However, new players should be aware that MUSCOVY will Emerge, and the areas around Moscow marked with an 'M' on the board will rebel if it is ever activated by a Player, converting any Armies occupying those areas into Moscow's colour.

For a simplified first game of RUS, find the deck marked '**Politics Cards**' and separate out the following cards: MUSCOVY, GOOD HARVEST, HARSH WINTER and FAMINE.

Shuffle these cards together, then take the BLACK DEATH Card and place it at the bottom of this pile. This is the **Politics Deck**.

Turn to p.2 and follow the Setup procedure with the following modifications:

- Each player places an Army marker of their colour on the following Cultural & Technology Abilities listed on their Player Mat: AGRICULTURE, HUSBANDRY, FORESTRY and MINING.
- Ignore the usual procedure for creating the Politics Deck.

The game will last until one player scores 8VPs at the end of a turn, or the BLACK DEATH Card is activated.

On the BLACK DEATH turn *only*, waive the usual restrictions on buying VP-earning C&T Abilities - players can buy more than 1 VP-earning C&T Ability in the final turn.

When adding up VPs at the end of the BLACK DEATH turn, give the Bulgars and the Lithuanians +1VP. This compensates them for the shortness of the game.

NB: YOU SHOULD EXPECT TO ADD AT LEAST AN HOUR TO YOUR USUAL PLAYING TIME WHEN LEARNING THE GAME

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RUS AS A TWO PLAYER GAME

It is possible to play RUS with two players using the following modifications.

Play as a 4-player game, with each player controlling 2 Kingdoms:

Player 1 controls the Khazars & the Slavs.

Player 2 controls the Lithuanians & the Rus.

A player's two Kingdoms are permanently Allied. They may Trade with each other, but must adhere to the following limitations:

- All Trades must *first* be offered to the opposing player. Only if that player refuses the Trade can it occur internally between a player's 2 Kingdoms.
- All internal trades must take place at an exchange ratio of 1:1.

If a player ever switches to a new Kingdom which borders directly onto the other Kingdom they are still playing, the *other Kingdom* immediately loses 1VP.

Victory requires *one* Kingdom to score 8 VPs.

LONG GAME VARIANT

RUS will usually last between 60-120 minutes, depending on the number and speed of players involved. For a longer game utilising all the Politics Cards, alter the Setup as follows:

Isolate the **Black Death** card from the rest of the **Politics Deck**. Shuffle the remaining 8 Politics Cards and deal 3 face down. Add the Black Death Card to these 3 and shuffle them together. Deal the remaining 5 Politics Cards face down on top of these 4 cards.

This will give you a variable length game of between 6-9 turns in which you do not know when the Black Death will occur. However, it can add at least an hour to your usual playing time.

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credits

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