



# Order of the Dragon

*LOST EMPIRES & SINISTER CABALS OF THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY*

DESIGNED BY W. ALEX RONKE

GAME RULES V.1.0 (MARCH 2020)

Order of the Dragon (OOD) is a *Diplomacy* variant for ten players set in the 15<sup>th</sup> century.

OOD incorporates more advanced features such as Diplomacy Points (DP), Heirs, Minor Neutral Powers, Thrall Powers, and Vassal Powers. Many of these features were introduced in another variant, *Saga of the Nine* (Ronke & Helwig), and much of the rules text is identical. For those unfamiliar with *S9*, OOD is comparable in complexity to *Ambition & Empire* (Von Powell, Kase, & Ronke), the variant that originated the Diplomacy Points mechanic (DP).

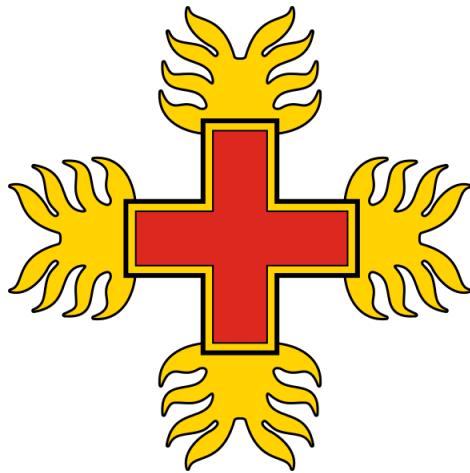
All standard rules of *Diplomacy* apply, except where explicitly contravened by these rules.

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# 1.0 – Core Concepts

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So th' one for wrong, the other strives for right;  
As when a Gryfon<sup>o</sup> seized of his pray,  
A Dragon fiers encountreth in his flight,  
Through widest ayre making his ydle way,  
That would his rightfull ravine rend away;  
With hideous horror both together smight,  
And souce so sore that they the heavens affray:  
The wise Soothsayer seeing so sad sight,  
Th' amazed vulgar tels of warres and mortall fight.

- Edmund Spenser, *The Faerie Queene. Book 1, Canto V.*

## 1.1 - Major, Minor, Thrall, & Vassal Powers

**Major powers** are the standard powers normally seen in *Diplomacy*. Each major power is controlled by a single player. Each major power controls two home centers at the game's start, one of which is a Capital city (§ 5.6).

**Minor powers** are neutral powers that each possess a single unit and occupy a single neutral SC. A minor power's army or fleet differs from their normal counterparts in that they are **stationary** (§ 7.2); their units will never occupy any space other than where they started. No single player controls the orders performed by minor powers' units. instead, their orders are determined each turn via secret DP allocations (§ 9.0).

**Thrall powers** (§ 10.3) are similar to neutral powers. They also occupy a single SC, their units are also stationary, and their orders are determined via DP allocations. However, Thrall powers are indirectly "controlled" by a single player whose DP allocations are valued higher than other players'. The Thrall's SC also counts toward the player's SC total (for victory purposes only).

**Vassal powers** are jointly created and controlled by a pair of players, both of whom count the Vassal's SC total towards their own for victory purposes. Vassal's are created through the marriage of two players' Heirs (§ 10.4). Like minor and thrall powers, their orders are determined by DP allocations, though such allocations are limited to the two joint-controlling players. Unlike minor and thrall powers, Vassals are mobile. They can capture supply centers and build further units in their Capital cities.

## 1.2 - A Brief Introduction to Heirs

Major powers possess armies and fleets as well as a new unit type: **Heirs** (§ 7.1). Heirs are represented on the map by small rectangles. Heirs are always attached to a supply center, signifying that supply center's status as a Thrall, as the Capital of a Major power, or as the Capital of a Vassal power. They do not participate in combat adjudication, but they provide the following strengths and weaknesses:

1. Heirs increase a player's per-turn DP total (§ 9.2).
2. Heirs can be married to Minor powers to create new Thrall powers (§ 10.3).
3. Heirs can be married to other players' unmarried heirs to create new Vassal powers (§ 10.4).

4. Heirs can be killed (§ 10.1) when the SC they are attached to is captured. This can lead to a player's early elimination from the game.

## 1.3 - Elimination

In Order of the Dragon, a player can be eliminated in two ways:

- **Normal Elimination:** the player loses control of all their major power's directly-controlled SCs.
- **Early Elimination:** The player loses control of their Capital City (§ 5.6) and has no living Heirs.

Further details about the specific timing and adjudication of Early Elimination can be found in section 3.3.

## 2.0 - Starting Year & Turn Structure

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In standard *Diplomacy*, phases of a turn are labeled according to the seasons of a year: Spring Orders, Spring Retreats, Fall / Autumn Orders, Fall Retreats, and Winter Adjustments / Fall Builds. OOD preserves nearly the same turn structure and naming conventions, but what would normally correspond to one game-year in classic Dip instead corresponds to a Cycle of 5 years.

Thus, the first “year” of the game (what would be 1901 in classic Dip) is referred to as either the First Cycle or 1405. The second “year” of the game is referred to as the Second Cycle or 1410.

## 2.1 - Autumn Census

After Autumn Retreats have processed, but before the Winter Adjustments phase begins, OOD adds a phase: Autumn Census. The Census is not *actually* a new phase so much as a formal label for an existing set of standard game bookkeeping tasks; it does not require any player interaction and can be handled entirely by a human GM or automated adjudicator.

During the Autumn Census, SCs occupied by powers other than their current owners change hands. SCs are counted to evaluate victory criteria, pending builds, and pending disbands. Additional actions related to the rules for Heirs and early power termination also take place during the Census.

## 3.0 - Victory Criteria & Game Length

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There are 48 supply centers (SCs) on the OOD map. At the game's start, 20 SCs belong to Major power, 6 are Thralls, and the remaining 22 are Minor powers. There are no Vassals on the map yet.

Solo victory is achieved when a single player controls a total of **18 SCs** at the end of the Autumn Census. That player must **also** have the highest total of SCs of any player, with no other players tied for highest total.

The game may alternatively end in a draw, with house rules determining how draws may be constructed, proposed, and voted upon. House rules also determine whether a draw is considered “equally shared” by all surviving players or not, particularly if a scoring system is to be applied to the game's result.

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Example 3.0.1: Two Players Tied for 16 SCs

At the end of an Autumn Census, England's player has a total of 18 SCs, Hungary's has 18 SCs, the Mamluk player has 12 SCs, and all other players are eliminated. In this scenario, neither England nor Hungary have achieved solo victory, and the game continues to the next Cycle.

When playing with a **cycle cap**, were this the final cycle of the game (§ 3.1), then the game would immediately terminate in a **draw** that includes England, Hungary, and the Mamluks.

### 3.1 – Supply Center Totals

The SCs occupied by a player's controlled Thrall powers count toward that player's total for *determining victory criteria only*. Likewise, SCs held by Vassal powers, which are controlled jointly by two players, count toward *both* controlling players' SC totals for victory criteria only.

Neither Thrall powers nor Vassal powers count toward a player's SCs for their Major power when calculating pending Winter Adjustments, as each Major, Thrall, and Vassal power handles builds and disbands separately.

### 3.2 - Cycle Cap (Recommended)

Because of its added complexity, Order of the Dragon recommends instituting a timing mechanism prior to the game's start. After the designated number of cycles played, if a solo or other draw has not yet been achieved, the game should end in a draw that includes all surviving players. The recommended number of cycles for OOD is **ten**, though a GM can set this higher or lower.

If following this recommendation, at the end of the 10th Autumn Census (1450), if no player has achieved Solo victory, then the game ends immediately in a draw that includes all surviving players.

### 3.3 - Early Power Elimination Rules

During the Autumn Census, if a player has no living Heirs (§ 10.0) and has lost control of their power's Capital City (§ 5.6), then that player is immediately eliminated. Likewise, if a major power controls no SCs of its own, that power's controlling player is also eliminated. Follow this procedure to convert that player's remaining Supply Centers into Minor neutral powers.

1. Any remaining units belonging to the eliminated power are immediately disbanded.
2. Any supply centers belonging to the power (i.e. those not already captured) are converted into Neutral supply centers. Each of those centers becomes a new Minor power of its own.
3. During the subsequent Winter phase, each of the new Minor powers will build the unit type that was present in that center at the start of the game, as per the build rules (§ 8.2).
4. If the player controlled any Thrall powers, they are converted to ordinary Minor powers.
5. If the player jointly controlled a Vassal power, and that Vassal's other controlling player has not yet been eliminated, then that other player may continue to control the Vassal on their own (§ 10.4) but must still allocate DP to set that power's units' orders.

A Vassal power will be eliminated early during Autumn Census if its Capital city is captured. Likewise, a Vassal power will also be eliminated if its two controlling players are both eliminated. In either case, the Vassal

power's supply centers should likewise convert to new Minor powers using the same procedure described in steps 1-3 above, with its units disbanded and rebuilt by said Minor powers during the subsequent Winter.

## Optional Rules for Handling Dropped Players

At the GM's discretion, if a player drops out or is kicked out of the game for NMRs or other unsavory behavior, and a replacement player cannot be found to take over that player's position, the GM may elect to force that player's Major Power to undergo the Early Elimination procedure. This must occur during an Autumn Census phase. The exact timing and specific parameters for invoking this option should, if possible, be spelled out in the GM's house rules.

## 3.4 - Alternate Endgame Criteria

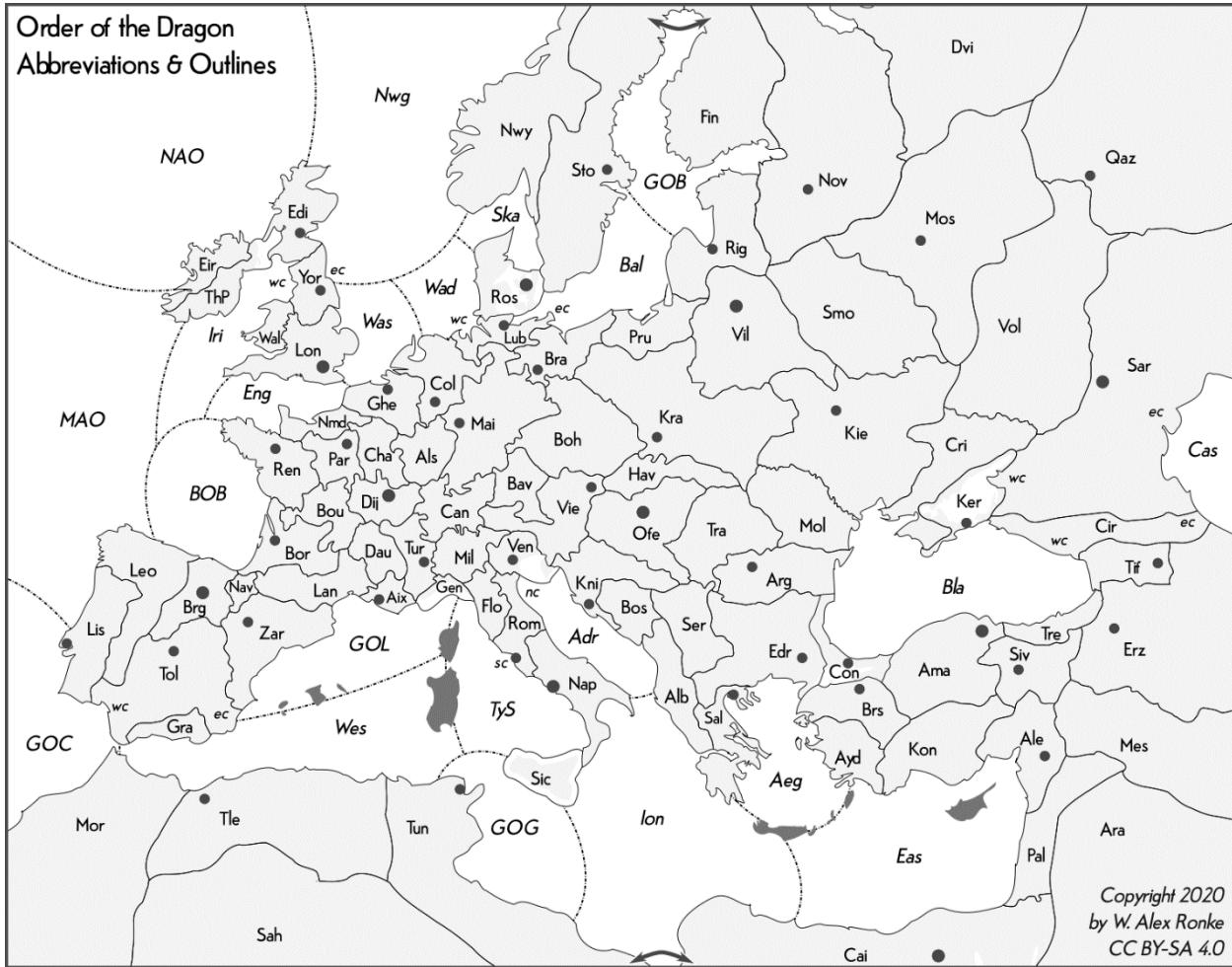
In OOD, Solo victory can also be achieved when exactly **one** surviving player remains at the end of the Autumn Census.

However, if **no** surviving players remain at the end of Autumn Census, then **all** players have lost the game.

## 4.0 - Maps

The following are maps and visual reference materials for Order of the Dragon.

### 4.1 - Greyscale Map, Abbreviations & Outlines Only



Full resolution copy: <https://imgur.com/ue5Unml>

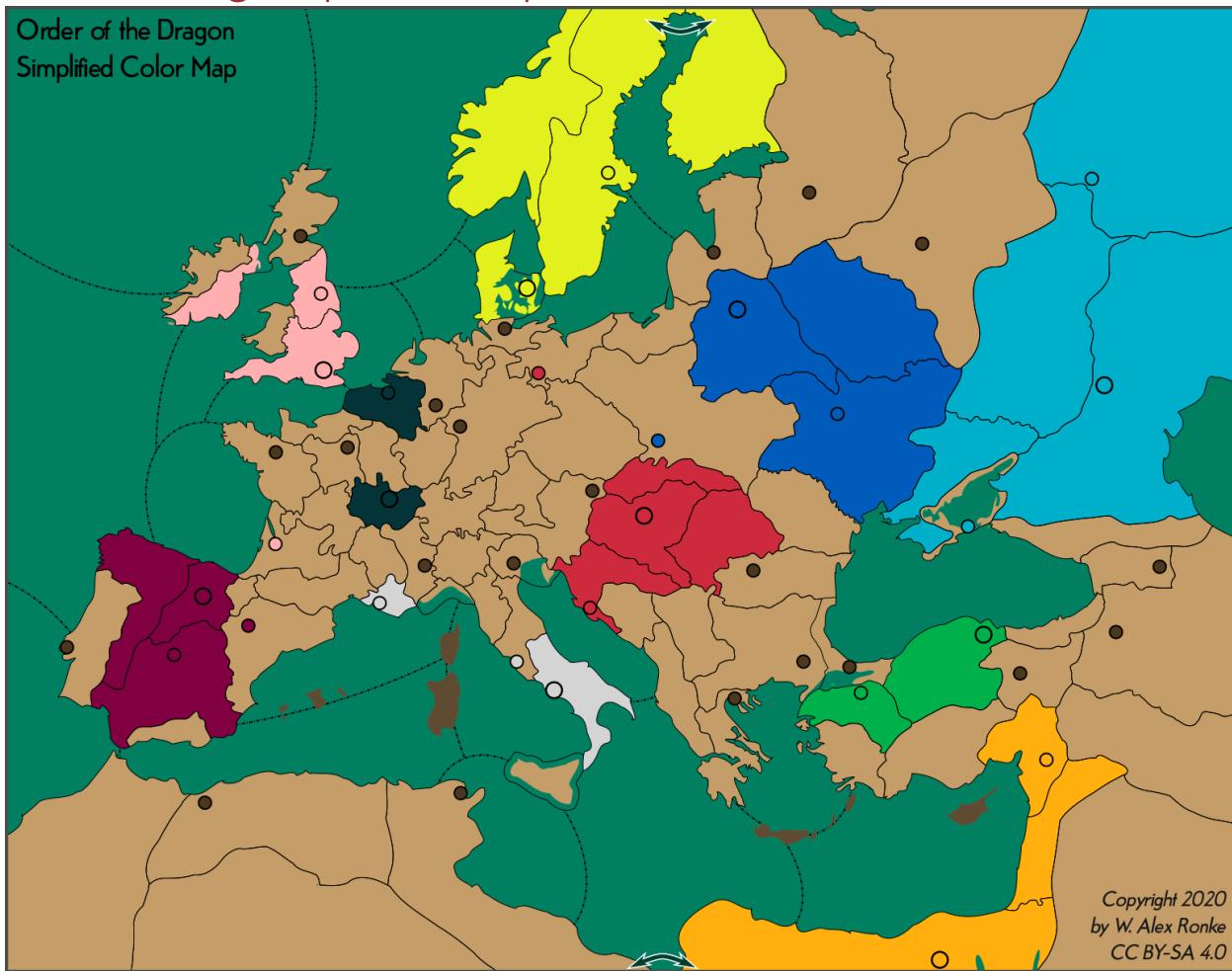
## 4.2 - Full Starting Map



Full resolution copy: <https://imgur.com/WKtLYGJ>

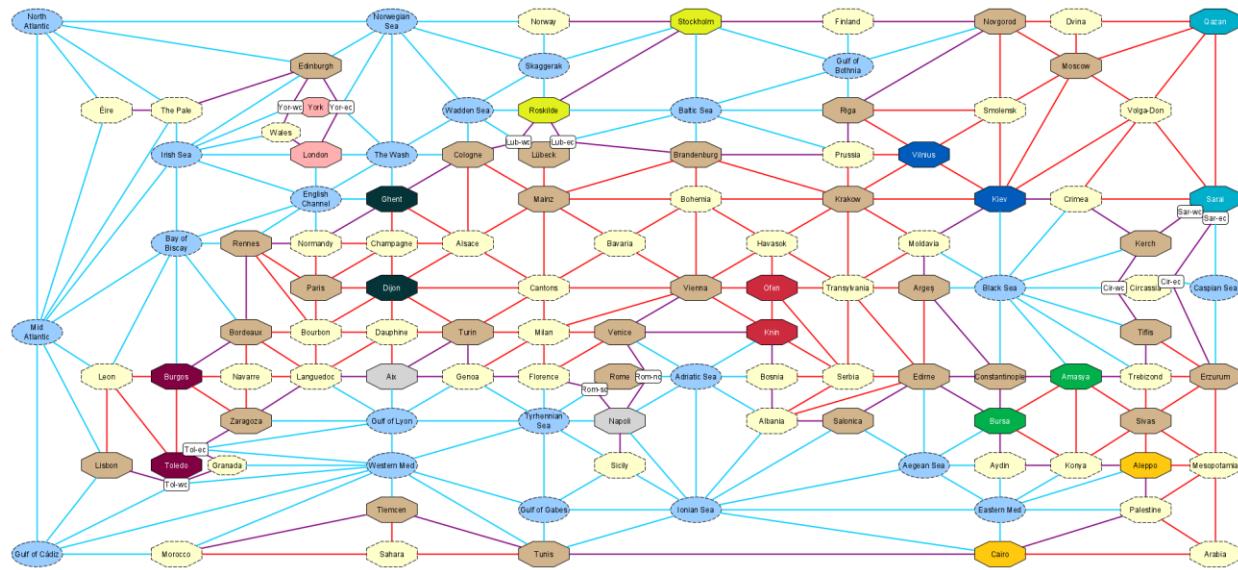
On this map, hexagons represent Armies. Triangles with curved top edges ("sails") represent Fleets. Small rectangles with dashed borders represent Heirs.

## 4.3 - Starting Map with Simplified Colors



Full resolution copy: <https://imgur.com/PYkCvig>

## 4.4 - Adjacency Diagram



Full resolution copy: <https://imgur.com/56DNIJg>

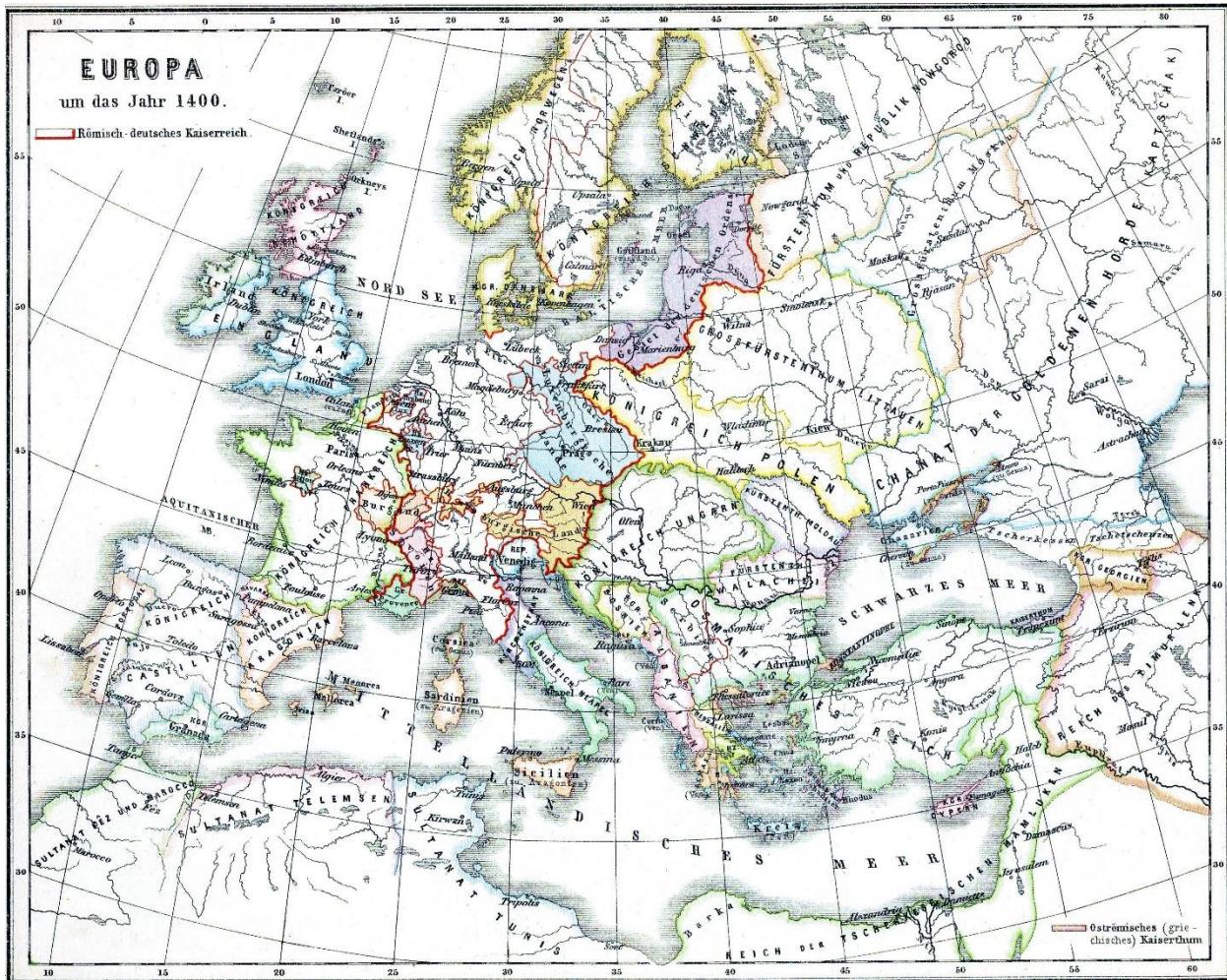
The above diagram shows lines of adjacency between locations in Order of the Dragon. Line blue ovals with dashed outlines represent water spaces.

Red lines connect locations that only Armies may treat as adjacent. Blue lines connect locations that only Fleets may treat as adjacent. Purple lines connect locations that either unit type may treat as adjacent. Where purple lines connect to split coastlines, assume that fleets may travel to the specific coast while armies travel to the base node.

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For example, a purple line connects Lisbon (Lis) to Toledo's west coast (Tol-wc). This means that fleets treat Lis and Tol-wc as adjacent, while armies treat Lis and Tol as adjacent.

## 4.5 - Reference Map, *Europa um das Jahr 1400*



The above map is credited to H. Kiepert in 1879. It approximates national and dynastic borders in Europe circa 1400. The map contains several historical errors (e.g. Albania's borders), some of which were preserved in Order of the Dragon. The map also uses a defunct alternative system of longitude.

[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Europa\\_1400.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Europa_1400.jpg)

## 5.0 - Map Notes

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This section details geographic features of the map for Order of the Dragon.

### 5.1 - Names & Abbreviations

The following is a table of all space names and abbreviations in OOD.

| <b>Name</b>       | <b>Abbrev</b> |                      |     |
|-------------------|---------------|----------------------|-----|
| Adriatic Sea      | Adr           | English Channel      | Eng |
| Aegean Sea        | Aeg           | Erzurum              | Erz |
| Aix               | Aix           | Finland              | Fin |
| Albania           | Alb           | Florence             | Flo |
| Aleppo            | Ale           | Genoa                | Gen |
| Alsace            | Als           | Ghent                | Ghe |
| Amasya            | Ama           | Granada              | Gra |
| Arabia            | Ara           | Gulf of Bothnia      | GOB |
| Argeș             | Arg           | Gulf of Cádiz        | GOC |
| Aydin             | Ayd           | Gulf of Gabes        | GOG |
| Baltic Sea        | Bal           | Gulf of Lyon         | GOL |
| Bavaria           | Bav           | Havasok              | Hav |
| Bay of Biscay     | BOB           | Ionian Sea           | Ion |
| Black Sea         | Bla           | Irish Sea            | Iri |
| Bohemia           | Boh           | Kerch                | Ker |
| Bordeaux          | Bor           | Kiev                 | Kie |
| Bosnia            | Bos           | Knin                 | Kni |
| Bourbon           | Bou           | Konya                | Kon |
| Brandenburg       | Bra           | Krakow               | Kra |
| Burgos            | Brg           | Languedoc            | Lan |
| Bursa             | Brs           | Leon                 | Leo |
| Cairo             | Cai           | Lisbon               | Lis |
| Cantons           | Can           | London               | Lon |
| Caspian Sea       | Cas           | Lübeck               | Lub |
| Champagne         | Cha           | Mainz                | Mai |
| Circassia         | Cir           | Mesopotamia          | Mes |
| Cologne           | Col           | Mid Atlantic Ocean   | MAO |
| Constantinople    | Con           | Milan                | Mil |
| Crimea            | Cri           | Moldavia             | Mol |
| Dauphine          | Dau           | Morocco              | Mor |
| Dijon             | Dij           | Moscow               | Mos |
| Dvina             | Dvi           | Napoli               | Nap |
| Eastern           |               | Navarre              | Nav |
| Mediterranean Sea | Eas           | Normandy             | Nmd |
| Edinburgh         | Edi           | North Atlantic Ocean | NAO |
| Edirne            | Edr           | Norway               | Nwy |
| Éire              | Eir           | Norwegian Sea        | Nwg |
|                   |               | Novgorod             | Nov |

|           |     |                 |     |
|-----------|-----|-----------------|-----|
| Ofen      | Ofe | The Wash        | Was |
| Palestine | Pal | Tiflis          | Tif |
| Paris     | Par | Tlemcen         | Tle |
| Prussia   | Pru | Toledo          | Tol |
| Qazan     | Qaz | Transylvania    | Tra |
| Rennes    | Ren | Trebizond       | Tre |
| Riga      | Rig | Tunis           | Tun |
| Rome      | Rom | Turin           | Tur |
| Roskilde  | Ros | Tyrrhennian Sea | TyS |
| Sahara    | Sah | Venice          | Ven |
| Salonica  | Sal | Vienna          | Vie |
| Sarai     | Sar | Vilnius         | Vil |
| Serbia    | Ser | Volga-Don       | Vol |
| Sicily    | Sic | Wadden Sea      | Wad |
| Sivas     | Siv | Wales           | Wal |
| Skagerrak | Ska | Western         |     |
| Smolensk  | Smo | Mediterranean   | Wes |
| Stockholm | Sto | York            | Yor |
| The Pale  | ThP | Zaragoza        | Zar |

## 5.2 - Split Coastlines

Six provinces in OOD have split coastlines. As in classic Dip, players should take care to specify the coast desired when moving fleets to these provinces, especially when such a move could be ambiguous.

### Circassia (west & east) & Sarai (west & east)

Circassia and Sarai each have west and east coasts. The east coasts of these regions are adjacent, but the west coasts are not. Fleets on the west coast of Sarai may only treat Kerch as adjacent (§ 5.3).

### Lübeck (west & east)

The west coast of this province corresponds approximately to the city of Bremen.

**Possible Ambiguity for Moves from:** Roskilde

### Rome (south & north)

The borders of Rome approximate those of the Papal States as a whole, with the north coast corresponding roughly to the city of Ravenna.

**Possible Ambiguity for Moves from:** Napoli

### Toledo (west & east)

These correspond approximately to the cities of Seville and Cartagena.

**Possible Ambiguity for Moves from:** Granada and Western Mediterranean Sea

## York (west & east)

The west coast of York corresponds roughly to Liverpool.

**Possible Ambiguity for Moves from:** Edinburgh

## 5.3 - Canals

Several land spaces on the map also function as canal spaces. These spaces operate like Constantinople or Kiel in standard Diplomacy. Fleets may travel through and along those canals as they would coastlines, but fleets located in those canal spaces may not convoy armies. The exact connections those canals provide are detailed in the Adjacency Diagram (§ 4.4).

Some canals and coastlines are atypical or may be difficult to read on the map.

## Burgos, Navarre, & Bordeaux

Burgos and Bordeaux have adjacent coastlines that both border the Bay of Biscay. Navarre is inland and has no coast.

## Bursa, Constantinople, & Edirne

In classic Diplomacy, fleets can travel from the Black Sea and Aegean Sea over the course of two moves (via Constantinople). However, in OOD, fleets require at least three moves to travel from Bla to Aeg (or vice versa). A path from Aeg to Bla, for instance, must first pass through either Edirne or Bursa *and then* through Constantinople.

## Edinburgh, The Pale, Irish Sea, & North Atlantic Ocean

Irish Sea and North Atlantic Ocean are not adjacent in OOD. Instead, the patch of water between the northeastern coast of Ireland and southwestern coast of Scotland is treated like a canal that separates Iri and NAO. Therefore, Edinburgh and The Pale are adjacent canal spaces for game purposes.

## Kerch, Sarai, & Circassia

Neither Sarai nor Circassia are canal spaces; they each have split coastlines. However, the province of Kerch includes the Sea of Azov and therefore fully surrounds Sarai's small west coast. Fleets on Sar-wc may therefore only treat Kerch as adjacent. Accordingly, Circassia's west coast is considered adjacent to Kerch but not to Sarai.

## Roskilde, Stockholm, & Lübeck

Roskilde and Stockholm behave like canals analogous to Denmark and Sweden in classic Dip. However, no such canal exists in Lübeck; instead that province has a split coastline.

## Sicily, Napoli, Ionian Sea, & Tyrrhenian Sea

Like the water between Scotland and Ireland, the narrow strait between Sicily and the boot of Italy is treated like a canal belonging to the Sicily province. As such, Napoli and Sicily behave like canal spaces, and Ion and TyS are not adjacent.

## Turin, Aix, & Genoa

Turin has a very small coastline that is not adjacent to a water space in OOD. Fleets may pass between Turin and either Aix or Genoa, however. Aix and Genoa are likewise adjacent.

## Vienna, Venice, & Knin

The province of Vienna has a very small coastline (that corresponds approximately to the city of Trieste). The province of Venice, however, includes some portion of the water in its immediate vicinity, surrounding Vienna's coast. Fleets may therefore pass between Vienna and Venice.

Fleets may also pass between Venice and Knin, but Vienna's coast is not adjacent to Knin.

## 5.4 - Arrows

Arrows connecting two spaces indicate the two regions should be treated as adjacent for all purposes. There are two such arrows on the OOD map: one between Tunis and Cairo, and the other between Stockholm and Finland. Please check the Adjacency Diagram (§ 4.4) if there is any confusion.

Please note that in OOD, Norway is not considered adjacent to either Finland or Novgorod.

## 5.5 - Impassable spaces

Spaces without listed names are impassable, such as the islands of Crete and Sardinia as well as the sea space north of Novgorod.

## 5.6 - Capital Cities

Each of the ten Major Powers possesses one Supply Center that is also a Capital City. The Capital City is where Heirs are generated or initially placed. A player that loses control of their own Capital will not be able to generate new Heirs. A player that loses control of their Capital and has no living Heirs will be subject to Early Elimination (§ 3.3) during the Autumn Census.

Likewise, each Vassal power possesses its own Capital city (§ 10.4). Should it lose control of that Capital, it is also subject to Early Elimination.

Capitals are represented on the map with a slightly larger circle icon.

## 6.0 - Powers & Starting Units

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The following are the ten Major powers of Order of the Dragon. Each of these major powers is controlled by a single player.

### 6.1 - Burgundy (BU)

- **Color:** Slate
- **Capital:** Dijon
- **Starting Units / Home SCs:**
  - A Dijon
  - A Ghent
- An **Unmarried Heir** begins the game in Dijon.

---



The power of Burgundy represents the conglomeration of several territories politically controlled by the Burgundian dynasty at this period, including Flanders, the County of Burgundy, and the Duchy of Burgundy. The icon selected for Burgundy is based upon the heraldic lion rampant from the coat of arms of Flanders.

### 6.2 - Castile (CA)

- **Color:** Maroon
- **Capital:** Burgos
- **Starting Units / Home SCs:**
  - A Burgos
  - F Toledo (west coast)
- A married **Heir** begins the game in Zaragoza.
  - Zaragoza is a Castile Thrall.
  - It begins the game with an Army.
- Castile does not begin the game with an unmarried Heir.

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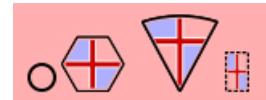


Castile represents the Crown of Castile. In 1406, the king of Castile (John II) was an infant, and Castile was *de facto* ruled by his mother and uncle. Because his uncle was also Ferdinand I of Aragon, OOD represents the dynastic connection between these kingdoms in the form of a Thrall.

## 6.3 - England (EN)

- **Color:** Pink
- **Capital:** London
- **Starting Units / Home SCs:**
  - F London
  - A York
- A married **Heir** begins the game in Bordeaux.
  - Bordeaux is an English thrall.
  - It begins the game with an Army.
- England does not begin the game with an unmarried Heir.

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OOD takes place partway during the Hundred Years War during a slight lull in direct English-French hostilities. In that time, France was a patchwork of factions, with different patches of land ruled by England, Brittany, Burgundy, the Bourbons, the Angevins, and others. England possessed the territories of Bordeaux and Bayonne (now within modern-day France), so Bordeaux encompasses these as a Thrall.

## 6.4 - Golden Horde (GH)

- **Color:** Teal Blue
- **Capital:** Sarai
- **Starting Units / Home SCs:**
  - A Sarai
  - A Qazan
- A married **Heir** begins the game in Kerch.
  - Kerch is a Thrall of the Golden Horde.
  - It begins the game with a Fleet.
- The Golden Horde does not begin the game with an unmarried Heir.

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At this point in history, the Golden Horde, which was itself a division of the earlier Horde of Genghis Khan, was starting to fracture further. For a brief period in the early 15<sup>th</sup> century, a significant portion of the Golden Horde was loyal to the Crimean warlord Edigu, who succeeded in re-asserting authority over Muscovy and Novgorod (though both are neutral in OOD). Surrounding the peninsula of Crimea and the adjacent Sea of Azov were a series of Genoese (and some former Byzantine) colonies that had established an agreement of vassalage with the Golden Horde to continue trading in the region. These colonies are collectively represented by the Thrall of Kerch.

## 6.5 - Hungary (HU)

- **Color:** Red
- **Capital:** Ofen
- **Starting Units / Home SCs:**
  - A Ofen
  - A Knin
- A married **Heir** begins the game in Brandenburg.
  - Brandenburg is a Hungarian Thrall.
  - It begins the game with an Army.
- Hungary does not begin the game with an unmarried Heir.



In this era, Hungary was ruled by a German: Sigismund von Luxembourg, the elector of Brandenburg and the “King of the Romans” (heir to the Holy Roman Empire). He would later rule as Holy Roman Emperor.

Because of this German domination of Hungary, the name “Ofen” is used to represent the Capital, rather than the more well-known Magyar name “Buda” (which would later merge with its neighbor to form Budapest). Sigismund’s political position in Brandenburg is represented in OOD as a thrall.

Sigismund was also the founder of the original “Order of the Dragon,” a chivalric organization initially formed to protect Hungary and Transylvania from enemies of the Roman Catholic Church, though its membership eventually extended to some Orthodox nobility as well. Wallachian nobles Vlad II Dracul and his son Vlad III Dracula (*a.k.a.* Vlad the Impaler) both took their nicknames from this organization.

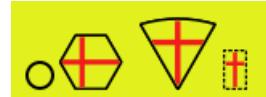


In part because of its connections to Dracula, as well as to serial killer Countess Elizabeth Báthory, the Order of the Dragon has gained some reputation as a secret, sinister cabal. As with other lost chivalric orders that straddled the spheres of military, faith, and politics (*e.g.* the Knights Templar), this reputation may or may not be entirely deserved; whatever evils committed on behalf of the Order may have been neither particularly secret nor particularly noteworthy.

However, it is this organization’s reputation, earned or otherwise, that sets the tone for *my* Order of the Dragon, as I expect that like other *Diplomacy* variants, scheming and secrecy will abound.

## 6.6 - Kalmar Union (KU)

- **Color:** Lemon Yellow
- **Capital:** Roskilde
- **Starting Units / Home SCs:**
  - A Roskilde
  - F Stockholm
- An **Unmarried Heir** begins the game in Roskilde.



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The Kalmar Union was a monarchical personal union in Scandinavia that encompassed the kingdoms of Denmark, Sweden, Norway, and their respective territories (Finland, Iceland, Greenland, etc.). Formed in 1397, it was intended to counter the commercial power of the nearby Hanseatic League. The power's icon is based upon the Kalmar Banner of the Realms.

## 6.7 - Lithuania (LI)

- **Color:** Vivid Blue
- **Capital:** Vilnius
- **Starting Units / Home SCs:**
  - A Vilnius
  - A Kiev
- A married **Heir** begins the game in Krakow.
  - Krakow is a Lithuanian Thrall.
  - It begins the game with an Army.
- Lithuania does not begin the game with an unmarried Heir.



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Under Władysław II Jagiełło, the Duchy of Lithuania and the Kingdom of Poland were united into a Polish-Lithuanian union that would last (in some form) until the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. In OOD, Poland and Lithuania are represented as a Thrall (Krakow) and Major power, respectively, with Poland providing some buffer between Jagiełło and Sigismund. The Two-barred cross icon in OOD is based upon the coat of arms of the Jagiellonian dynasty.

## 6.8 - Mamluks (MA)



- **Color:** Orange-Yellow
- **Capital:** Cairo
- **Starting Units / Home SCs:**
  - A Cairo
  - A Aleppo
- An **Unmarried Heir** begins the game in Cairo.

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In OOD, the Mamluks represent the portion of the Mamluk Sultanate surrounding the Mediterranean Sea (and north of the Red Sea). This Sultanate ruled over portions of modern-day Egypt, the Arabian peninsula, Sudan, Libya, and the Levant until the 16<sup>th</sup> century, when they were conquered by the Ottoman empire. The Mamluk icon in OOD is based upon an approximation of the Mamluk coat of arms.

## 6.9 - Naples (NA)



- **Color:** Pale Grey
- **Capital:** Napoli
- **Starting Units / Home SCs:**
  - F Napoli
  - A Aix (*a.k.a.* Aix-en-Provence)
- A married **Heir** begins the game in Rome.
  - Rome is a Neapolitan Thrall.
  - It begins the game with an Army.
- Rome does not begin the game with an unmarried Heir.

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The Angevin dynasty managed to rule various pockets of Europe during the Middle Ages, but not generally all at the same time. In the era of the crusades, for instance, they were the rulers of England (including the famed Richard “the Lionheart”) as well as the Kingdom of Jerusalem (whose cross adorns their icons in OOD). By the fifteenth century, their holdings had shifted, the largest of which was the Kingdom of Naples. In Order of the Dragon, the power of Naples is used metonymically to encompass the Angevin holdings in Naples and Provence.

Nearby Rome stands in for the Papal States. However, due to years of schism between two and sometimes three different competing popes in Rome, Pisa, and Avignon, the papacy’s power was not what it once was. The heir that is “married” to Rome is an abstract representation of the ascension of a Neapolitan-backed priest to the Roman papacy, a potential step toward healing the schism (as Naples’ rulers had previously backed the papal claims of Avignon).

A note about naming: in OOD, “Naples” and “Napoli” are both used to represent different concepts, though they are the same name in English and Italian. For this variant, the distinction is thus: Naples refers to the Major power while Napoli refers to the capital city.

## 6.10 - Ottomans (OT)



- **Color:** Green
- **Capital:** Amasya
- **Starting Units / Home SCs:**
  - A Amasya
  - A Bursa
- An **Unmarried Heir** begins the game in Amasya.

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In OOD, the Ottomans are not the Ottoman Empire; at least, not yet. In 1405, the Ottomans of Turkey were engaged in a civil war: the Ottoman Interregnum. Shortly before this time, the Turco-Mongol warlord Timur (*a.k.a.* Tamerlane) defeated and captured the Ottoman Sultan Bayezid I. After Bayezid's death, Timur confirmed Bayezid's son Mehmed Çelebi as the new ruler, but his brothers (İsa Çelebi, Musa Çelebi, Süleyman Çelebi, and Mustafa Çelebi) would not recognize that authority.

By the point at which OOD starts, Mehmed, who would eventually win the war and be crowned Sultan Mehmed I, has defeated most of the Anatolian opposition to his rule while his brother Süleyman controlled most of the Ottoman holdings in Europe.

The icon used in OOD is based on an old Ottoman battle flag adorned with a Zulfiqar, a two-bladed scimitar. This symbol may either predate or have been used in conjunction with the modern crescent-and-star emblem commonly associated with Turkey and the Ottoman Empire of a more contemporary era.

## 6.11 - Minor Powers & Starting Units

In addition to the six Thralls and ten Major powers, the game begins with 22 minor neutral powers, listed below alongside their unit types (A or F).

A Argeş  
A Cologne  
A Constantinople  
A Edinburgh  
A Edirne  
A Erzurum  
F Lisbon  
F Lübeck (east coast)  
A Mainz  
A Moscow  
A Novgorod

A Paris  
A Rennes  
A Riga  
F Salonica  
A Sivas  
A Tiflis  
A Tlemcen  
F Tunis  
A Turin  
F Venice  
A Vienna

## 7.0 - More About Unit Types

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In addition to the standard Armies and Fleets of *Diplomacy*, Order of the Dragon adds new mechanics for Heirs and stationary units.

### 7.1 - Heirs

There is one new core unit type: Heirs. Heirs are represented by small semi-transparent rectangles. Each player begins with one Heir in their Capital city.

Heirs are a totally nonstandard unit. They are not part of a player's unit count. They do not perform standard orders. They can co-locate with other Heirs and unit types. They do not participate directly in combat; neither can they defend themselves. Neglecting them can lead to a player's early elimination (§ 3.3 & 10.1). Heirs are only ever located in Supply Centers, and they can only be relocated through marriage.

An Heir may only be built by a major power in its own Capital city (§ 8.1), and only when that Capital city does not already contain an Heir. Since no power will ever control more than one unmarried Heir at a time, an Heir can be referred to *either* by its current location or its controlling power. For instance, the Kalmar Heir can be referred to as Heir Roskilde, Heir Kalmar Union, H Kalmar, or H Ros.

Only an unmarried Heir may be granted orders, and their only available order types are Hold or Marry. Section 10 will provide further rules about Heirs and Marriages.

### 7.2 - Stationary Units

Minor Powers and Thrall Powers possess only stationary units. The rules for stationary units should be familiar to anyone who has played a DP-based variant before, and it is recommended that the player familiarize themselves with the [Common Ruleset for DP-based Variants](#), a section of which is quoted below.

#### Stationary Units & Sortie Attacks

All Minor Powers' units are stationary. Stationary units can be given orders just like any other unit. They can be ordered to hold, support, move, or (when applicable) convoy. They can be ordered to move via convoy as well.

However, while stationary units can be ordered to move, they will never actually move. Instead, their moves will always bounce. This is called a Sortie. For example, a stationary unit's move order can be used to cut an adjacent unit's support or protect an adjacent empty province from a potential invader.

Because stationary units cannot leave their current locations, they cannot dislodge other units.

#### Stationary Units & Retreats

Stationary units cannot retreat. If a stationary unit is dislodged, it is always destroyed during the Retreat phase. If a stationary unit's move order bounces in an otherwise uncontested province, that province is not an eligible retreat location during the subsequent Retreat phase.

Please note that while the above quoted rules apply to Thralls as well, they do not apply to Vassal powers (§ 10.5), whose units are standard mobile armies and fleets.

## 8.0 - Build Rules

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In Order of the Dragon, a Major power may only build units in their original two home supply centers, as in standard *Diplomacy*. The following rules provide limitations and procedures for building Heirs and for building (or rebuilding) Minor, Thrall, and Vassal power units.

### 8.1 - Building Heirs

A player's Major power may build an Heir in their Capital city (e.g. "Build Heir London" or simply "Build Heir") during the Winter phase only if the following are all true:

- That player currently controls their own Capital.
- The Capital does not currently contain an Heir.
- That player did not build an Heir during the most recent prior Winter phase.

### 8.2 - Builds by Minor, Vassal & Thrall Powers

A Vassal power may only build in its Capital city. Its build orders are set by the players that jointly control the Vassal, with preference given to legal orders given by the Vassal's Dowry Giver (§ 10.5).

Should a Minor power or Thrall power enter the Winter phase with a controlled-but-vacant SC, that power will automatically build a unit of the type present in that SC at the start of the game. When applicable, the unit will be built on the coastline that unit type sat on at the game's start.

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A minor or thrall power building a unit in Toledo will build a fleet on the west coast. A minor or thrall power building a unit in or Lübeck will build a fleet on its east coast.

## 9.0 - Diplomacy Points (DP)

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Every neutral SC on the board begins the game with a neutral unit. Each of these initially belong to are "Minor Powers." The orders given for neutral units are determined through secret Diplomacy Point (DP) allocations.

Those unacquainted with Diplomacy Points should familiarize themselves with the [Common Ruleset for DP-based Variants](#). OOD uses a variation of these standard DP rules for setting the orders for Minor Powers, Thrall Powers, and Vassal powers. A section of that standard set of rules is quoted below.

### From the Common Ruleset for DP-based Variants

Diplomacy Points (DP) are the system by which players determine the orders of Neutral units. Each Orders Phase, every player receives an allotment of DP; the amount allotted varies by variant. That DP is use-it-or-lose-it; none can be stored or carried over into the next turn.

### Allocating & Adjudicating DP

Along with orders for their own units, players can submit potential orders for one or more neutral units. Each potential order must come with a DP allocation, and the total DP allocated by a player must not exceed their total allotment for that phase. The DP expenditures act like "votes" for that order. Other players may vote for that same order and allocate DP to it. A single player with 2 DP,

for instance, can potentially spend 2 DP on a single unit's order or allocate 1 DP each to two different units' orders.

At the time of adjudication, the GM analyzes all the submitted DP allocations for a given unit. The order that has the most DP spent is the one that will be given to the unit. If two or more orders tie for DP spent, or if no DP is allocated to that unit, it will be given a default order instead. Except where specified in the specific variant's rules, the default order for any neutral unit is Hold.

All DP allocations are kept secret. Only the "winning" orders will be known publicly but not which players (if any) allocated DP to those orders. For most variants, all DP allocations will remain secret until the entire game has completed.

## Limitations on DP Allocations

Individual variants tend to come with additional restrictions regarding who a neutral unit or Minor unit will attack or support, which players may spend DP on a given unit, and how much DP may be spent on a single order per turn. These restrictions tend to be customized to reflect the setting of the variant and the affiliations of the Minor Powers. However, one rule is nearly universal, particularly for stationary minor powers.

## The Attacking & Allocating Rule

**If a player's own unit is attacking (or supporting an attack on) a minor power, that player may not allocate DP to that minor power during the turn the attack or support is taking place.**

*This rule lessens some of the inherent "gullibility" of minor powers. Most commonly, it prevents a player from allocating DPs to a minor power for having the minor power unit move, thereby making it ineligible to receive support-to-hold during the player's attack on that minor power.*

## 9.1 - DP Allocation Specifics for OOD

The above rules apply in full for all non-Major power units, with the following changes:

- A. A Minor neutral power may also be ordered via DP allocation to **Marry** a player's Heir (§ 10.3), which if successful will create a new Thrall power. For combat adjudication purposes, treat a Marry order the same as a Hold order. *However, DP allocated to a minor neutral unit to Hold should not count as DP allocated toward a Marry order, nor vice versa; they are still two distinct order types.*
- B. For DP allocation purposes, Thrall powers can be considered identical to Minor powers, except that every DP spent on an order for a Thrall power by that Thrall power's controller is worth double its normal value (§ 10.3).

### Example 9.1.1

Hungary controls a Thrall power in Brandenburg. During an Orders phase, Hungary secretly allocates 1 DP to A Brandenburg, ordering it to move to Prussia (sortie). Meanwhile, Lithuania secretly allocates 1 DP to A Brandenburg, ordering it to support A Vilnius to Prussia. Provided there are no other DP allocations to this unit, A Brandenburg will move/sortie to Prussia, as that order effectively has the equivalent of 2 DP allocated to it.

C. Units belonging to Vassal powers (§ 10.4) are also ordered via DP allocation. However, Vassal powers' units are not stationary. Their move orders are not to be treated as sorties, they may retreat, and they are not subject to the **Attacking & Allocating Rule**. Also, the only players that may allocate DP to a Vassal unit's orders are the two players that jointly control that Vassal power.

## 9.2 - DP Totals per Player per Turn

Major powers receive a total pool of Diplomacy Points during each Orders phase that they may split between allocations to Minor, Thrall, and Vassal powers' units. These points, if not spent, are lost at the end of the turn and do not carry over into subsequent Orders phases.

The total DP each Major power receives is calculated as follows:

- +1 DP if the Major power controls its own Capital city
- +1 DP if the power's Capital city contains an unmarried Heir
- +1 DP for each controlled Thrall power
- +1 DP for each controlled Vassal power (both players that control a Vassal will receive this DP)

Accordingly, during the first Spring Orders phases of the game, each Major power will have 2 DP each to allocate. Each of the ten Major powers will receive one DP from their respective capitals. The other DP will come from either the power's Thrall or Unmarried Heir.

## 10.0 - Heirs, Thralls, and Vassal Powers

Heirs are not part of the standard unit count, they are not part of standard combat mechanics, and they only ever reside in Supply Centers. Heirs start in their controllers' Capital cities but may be relocated via marriage. Successful marriages create new Thrall powers and Vassal powers.

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Heirs' primary purpose is to act as a weakness. They provide means of more quickly eliminating players from the map. If we draw an analogy to a game of Capture the Flag, for instance, the Heirs and Capital are the flags. Marrying heirs spreads flags across the map. A player that never orders a successful marriage for their Heir will only ever have one such "flag" in their Capital city, and that Capital can be said to be that player's Achilles' heel.

### 10.1 - Building & Killing Heirs

Each Major power starts the game with one unmarried Heir in their Capital city. As seen in the build rules for (§ 8.1), a player may build a new Heir during a Winter phase only if:

- That player currently controls their own Capital.
- The Capital does not currently contain an Heir.
- That player did not build an Heir during the most recent prior Winter phase.

If the SC where an Heir is located is captured, the Heir is **killed** during the Autumn Census and removed from the board. This is true even if the Heir belongs to the player doing the capturing (i.e. if a Major power

captures its own controlled Thrall power or the capital city of a controlled Vassal power, the Heir is still killed).

During the Autumn Census (§ 3.3), if a player has no living Heirs and has lost control of their power's Capital City, then that player is immediately eliminated.

## 10.2 - Marrying Heirs

Heirs start unmarried and reside in the Capital city of their Major power. Only one unmarried Heir may reside in the Capital at a time. They can be relocated to other supply centers on the board using the **Marry** order. They may be married to the heirs of other major powers OR to any minor power on the board.

In order to be successful, Marry orders must come in pairs and must be given during the same Orders phase. The procedure differs on whether the marriage is between two Major powers' heirs or between a Major power's heir and a Minor power.

Once an heir is married, they may not remarry or divorce. Effectively, they will remain at the supply center where the marriage took place until the end of the game (or until they are killed).

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The genders of the Heirs are unimportant and left to the imaginations of the players. Likewise, the concepts of "heir" and "marriage" in OOD are intended to be abstractions of a variety of political connections. At the game's start, for instance, the Heir in the Thrall of Rome represents a Neapolitan priest who had recently ascended to the papacy.

## 10.3 - Marriage to Minor Powers: Thrall Powers

Marriages to minor powers may be issued in either spring or fall turns and create Thrall powers. The marriage requires the following:

- A. At the start of the applicable orders phase, the Capital city where the unmarried Heir currently resides must not contain a unit belonging to anyone other than that heir's Major Power.
- B. At the start of the applicable orders phase, the Minor Power must still possess an army or fleet at its location.
- C. The Heir must be given the order to Marry the minor power at the chosen SC.

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### Example 10.3.1

Ottoman Orders

Heir Amasya Marry Tunis

- D. The Minor power unit must be given a corresponding order to Marry the Major power's heir. As detailed previously (§ 9.1), this order is not set *directly* by any one given player but rather must be the succeeding result of DP allocations.

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### Example 10.3.2

Ottoman DP Allocations

2 DP to F Tunis Marry Heir Amasya

Naples DP Allocations

1 DP to F Tunis S Napoli - Ionian Sea

Resulting Order for Tunis

F Tunis Marry Heir Amasya

E. The Minor power's unit must not be dislodged during that orders phase.

If one or more of the above requirements are not met, the marriage fails, and the Heir remains at the Capital.

If the requirements are met, however, then the marriage succeeds! During the retreat phase that immediately follows the successful pair of Marry orders, move the Major power's Heir to the Minor power's supply center. That Minor power converts into a new **Thrall** power.

Thrall powers are "controlled" by the player whose Heir resides there, and that player may count the Thrall's SC toward their total for victory purposes. However, that control is indirect. The orders given by a Thrall power's unit are still set via DP allocations, though each DP allocated to a Thrall by its controller's is worth double its normal value (§ 9.1).

Thrall power units, like those of Minor powers, are stationary and may not retreat. They are also to be considered separate powers from their controller; a Thrall may cut their controller's support order as well as support a dislodging move targeting their controller. A Thrall power is eliminated (and the residing Heir killed) if any other power, including their controller, captures their supply center.

## 10.4 - Marriages between Major Powers: Vassal Powers

Unlike marriages to Minor powers, marriages between the Heirs of two Major Powers can ONLY occur during Autumn orders phases. If they succeed, they will create a new Vassal power during the subsequent Autumn Census.

In a marriage between two Major powers, the two players whose Heirs are to be matched must decide on a **Marriage Location** where the new Vassal power will have its own new Capital. This location must be a supply center belonging to one of the Major powers, and it may not be one of the starting Home centers of either Major power. This SC is the dowry (or bride price) for the marriage. For the rest of the game, or until the Vassal is eliminated, the player that donates this SC will be that Vassal power's **Dowry Giver**, and the other player in the marriage will be the Vassal power's **Dowry Receiver**.

The marriage also requires the following:

1. The two players seeking to marry their Heirs must not already share joint control of another Vassal power.

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Players may create multiple Vassals over the course of the game, but each pair of players can only share control of one Vassal at a time.

2. At the start of the applicable orders phase, neither Capital city where the two unmarried Heirs currently reside may contain a unit belonging to any power other than each heir's Major Power.
3. At the start of the applicable orders phase, the Marriage Location must not contain a unit belonging to anyone other than the Dowry Giver.
4. Each Heir must be given the order to Marry the other Heir. Each order must also include the Marriage Location (e.g. Heir Castile Marry Heir Kalmar at Cologne).
5. The Marriage Location may not be captured during that Autumn Orders phase or its subsequent Retreats phase. If it is, the marriage fails.
6. Neither of the two Major Power's Capital cities may be captured during that Autumn Orders phase or its subsequent Retreats phase. If either is, the marriage fails.

Assuming the above stipulations are all met, a new Vassal Power is created. At the start of the Autumn Census, control of the Marriage Location SC is transferred from the Dowry Giver to the new Vassal. Next, the previously unmarried Heirs of both Major Powers are relocated from their respective Capital cities to the Marriage Location.

The Marriage Location now becomes the new Vassal's own Capital city. If the new Capital contains no army or fleet, the Vassal power may build a new unit there during the subsequent Winter. If the Dowry Giver possessed a unit at that location, it converts to a unit of the same type belonging to the new Vassal. The two married Heirs residing in the Capital still belong to their respective Major powers, though they will be given no further orders and will remain there until they are killed (or the game ends).

At the GM's discretion, the players may optionally select a new name for the Vassal. References to that new power may be abbreviated as...

## vGR

...with the **G** above replaced by the first initial of the Dowry Giver and the **R** above replaced by the first initial of the Dowry Receiver.

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### Example 10.4.1

Assume Naples has captured Tunis on a prior turn and has a fleet there. Assume that both Naples and Castile have unmarried heirs in their respective Capitals. The following are orders that could lead to a marriage between their two heirs.

#### Castile Orders

Heir Castile Marry Heir Naples at Tunis

#### Naples Orders

Heir Naples Marry Heir Castile at Tunis  
F Tunis Hold

Assume the marriage succeeds. A new Vassal power, vNC, is created in Tunis during the Autumn Census. Tunis's SC ceases to belong to Naples and belongs to vNC instead. Likewise, the fleet in Tunis now belongs to vNC. Both players' unmarried Heirs are moved to Tunis.

For the rest of the game, or until the Vassal is eliminated, vNC's Dowry Giver will be Naples, and vNC's Dowry Receiver will be Castile. Tunis is now vNC's Capital city. If Tunis's SC is ever captured by any power, vNC will be subject to Early Elimination (§ 3.3).

## 10.5 - Vassal Power Orders & Gameplay

A Vassal power's units and controlled territories are represented by icons and graphics that incorporate the colors and/or symbols of the two players that jointly control the Vassal.

Unlike Minor Powers and Thralls, which cannot move their units, Vassal powers may move their units, retreat, and capture SCs. They may even capture SCs belonging to either of the players that jointly control them. It's even possible for a Vassal power to deliver the killing blow that eliminates either its Dowry Giver or Dowry Receiver.

Like a Major power, a Vassal power maintains a unit count of fleets and armies that corresponds to the total number of SCs it possesses. If that unit count permits, a Vassal power may build during Winter, but may only do so in their Capital city. Vassals may **not** produce their own new Heirs and may not engage in further marriages.

The SCs belonging a Vassal power count towards the victory condition for both players that control the Vassal.

If a Vassal power ever loses control of its Capital city SC, the two Major powers' heirs residing there are killed, and the Vassal power is subject to Early Elimination (§ 3.3).

### Orders Phases

Vassal powers' units' orders are still set via DP allocation (§ 9.0-9.1), similar to those of Minor powers or Thrall powers. However, Vassal powers' units are not stationary. Their move orders are not to be treated as sorties, they may retreat, and they are not subject to the Attacking & Allocating Rule (§ 9.0). The only players that may allocate DP to a Vassal unit's orders are the two players that jointly control that Vassal power.

### Retreat & Winter Phases

Either player may issue retreats or build/disband orders to the Vassal power without spending DPs (as DPs are not used during Retreat phases or Winter). However, if the orders of the two players conflict, the GM must give preference as follows:

1. If only one player submits orders, those orders stand.
2. If one player submits legal orders, and the other submits illegal orders, then the legal orders stand.

3. During a Retreat phase, if both players submit legal retreats (or both submit illegal retreats), then the orders given by the **Dowry Receiver** override those of the Dowry Giver.
4. During a Build phase, if both players submit legal adjustments (or both submit illegal adjustments), then the orders given by the **Dowry Giver** override those of the Dowry Receiver.

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