



THE THREE KINGDOMS

THE CAO WEI

CRISES ON THE ORIENT

GRAND CRISIS MANAGER: WILLIAM YANG GOODWIN '25

CHAIR: KINYUAN WONG '26

CO-CHAIR: JACK FRUTKIN '26

CRISIS DIRECTOR: JAYDEN NG '25



TABLE OF CONTENTS

LETTERS

FROM THE GRAND CRISIS MANAGER	3
FROM THE CHAIR	4
FROM THE CO-CHAIR	5
FROM THE ASST. CRISIS DIRECTOR	6

REGULATION

CRISIS GUIDE	7
- Committee-Specific Mechanics	13
HISTORICAL CONTEXT	17
TERMS TO KNOW	20

BRIEFING ROOM

STATE OF THE DYNASTY	22
CHARACTER PORTFOLIOS	24
QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER	27
WORKS CITED	28



LETTER FROM THE GRAND CRISIS MANAGER

Dear Delegates,

I'm excited to present to you all the first three-way Joint Crisis Committee in BC High Model UN's history. I'm proud to serve as the Grand Crisis Manager for this committee, and am honored to be working alongside my good friends Lucas Silaj, William Remley, Rhodes Lee, KinJia and KinYuan Wong, and once again with Junior Martins on this extraordinary committee. These fine gentlemen have been hard at work for the last few months to bring to everyone a truly amazing crisis experience.

This JCC may differ slightly from a more standard crisis committee, and I hope that you all take this into consideration while doing your research and thinking about strategy before the conference begins. For the purposes of these differences, we have written guides and overviews of expectations, which you can find listed in the document below or contents above.

About me: I'm a senior at BC High, a member of Romero House, and I have been involved in BC High Model UN since I was in seventh grade. I was a Crisis Assistant as a freshman and sophomore under the then-Crisis-Director Zain Khan '24, and last year a Director for an advanced committee. Outside of MUN, I'm a varsity skier and sailor, a member of the Dever Players, and the President of Dungeons and Dragons club. Outside of school, I'm an avid reader, aspiring writer, and an inchoate practitioner of the Kunwu *jian* and related martial arts (some of which served as inspiration for aspects of this JCC.)

My goal here is to create an engaging crisis situation, testing and pushing your creativity, strategy, and adaptability in the backroom while maintaining an air of calculated thoughtfulness, well-spent intention, and pro-Dynastic cunning in the front room. I want to help you all dive into your interests, develop your characters' arcs, and watch everyone develop throughout the day as delegates.

I'm excited to see you all in March to reshape, rethink, and reimagine ancient China's history. And, I urge you to remember as you prepare for the JCC— **there are no limits to what you can accomplish.**

Here's to a great conference,

William Yang Goodwin '25

Liaison Officer

Grand Crisis Manager

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LETTER FROM THE CHAIR

Greetings Delegates,

Welcome to BC High MUN 33! My name is KinYuan Wong, and I am excited to serve as your chair and acting Emperor for our first threeway Joint Crisis Committee along with my friends in the JCC. I am a junior here at BC High and I have been doing Model UN since my freshman year. Although this is my third BC High conference, this is my first time chairing as I have served as crisis director my freshman and sophomore year. Outside of Model UN, I love building things (FRC 3958 Robotics and drones), running Cross Country, taking photos, and graphic designing.

My first experience with Model UN was SJMUNC 29. It was my first committee ever and it was a crisis committee. More precisely it was a Star Wars committee and I was master Yoda. Although I was more self reserved than I am today, this conference got me to really open up. Whether it was R2-D2 running off with Anakin's money, or the kidnapping of a fellow delegate, everyone was having a good time. This conference would really teach me the importance of enjoying things in the moment. This mentality has personally allowed me to take away much more from a committee, such as making new friends, learning new things, and much more.

I look forward to seeing you all this upcoming March! If you have any questions, or want help on your position/research paper, feel free to reach out. I encourage you all to collaborate with each other and to make your words intentional. Most importantly, let's all have a good time

KinYuan Wong '26

Communications Director

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LETTER FROM THE CO-CHAIR

Hello Delegates,

I would like to welcome all of the delegates to the royal court of the Wei Kingdom! My name is Jack Frutkin, class of 2026 at BC High and I am excited to be your co-chair. This is my first time co-chairing, however I was in the backroom staff last year during the China-Taiwan JCC. I have been involved with Model UN since the beginning of sophomore year and have gone to countless meetings and events. My most memorable Model UN conference was in November, when we went to UCLA for a weekend. In addition to Model UN, I do chess club and political debate club at school.

I joined Model UN because I was interested in the problem-solving components. Model UN has given me countless memorable experiences and life skills such as public speaking and debate.

I am excited to be involved in this committee, especially due to how interested I am in the 1qmechanics of the situation. First of all, it is a three-way JCC, making it extremely unique. Delegates will need to think of strategies to either beat or outsmart their opponents. Collaborating is key, as a divided kingdom would be useless in defending against the other two. Depending on your position, you have a different role in this collaboration. With that in mind, there are many ways to strategize both in the committees and crisis center. Remember to be careful and methodical when writing your notes to the crisis center, to clear up any confusion on their end which could be detrimental to you, your committee, or the whole JCC. I will act as the regent to the emperor in this committee, if needed.

Best of luck delegates! May the Wei Kingdom claim their rightful place!

Jack Frutkin '26

Co-Chair

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LETTER FROM THE CRISIS DIRECTOR

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T R Y P A S T I N G T H E B A R C O D E
A B O V E I N T O Y O U R B R O W S E R



CRISIS GUIDE

A General Guide to Model UN Crisis Committees

Model UN Crisis Committees differ from traditional General Assembly (GA) simulations by introducing fast-paced, dynamic scenarios requiring quick thinking, diplomacy, and most importantly, adaptability. This guide provides an overview of how to approach crisis committees, including a run-down of the structure, along with some strategies and skills needed to succeed.

What is a Crisis Committee?

A Crisis Committee simulates a high-stakes political, economic, or military situation where delegates represent specific characters or countries, often within smaller groups. These crises evolve rapidly, with new events, problems, or developments being introduced in real-time, which require immediate action. Unlike GA sessions, where discussions are slow-paced and consensus-based, crisis committees focus on quick, decisive moves and seizing the initiative.

Key Elements of a Crisis Committee

- **The Crisis Itself:** A real or fictional scenario (e.g., a war, political upheaval, or natural disaster) that forms the central problem to resolve. Unlike a GA, each delegate has powers of their own, called "Personal Powers" or "Portfolio Powers."
- **Committee Structure:** Smaller groups with 10-20 delegates, each representing a unique position. This can be a country, or in our committee, a single person.
- **Crisis Updates:** Frequent updates from the backroom (people running the crisis behind the scenes) that alter the scenario. These could be unexpected events designed to throw you off, but most of the time they will be updating you on the happenings of the other committees.
- **Directives:** Delegates submit "directives," which are formal written instructions to handle the crisis. These directives can be individual or collective and can cover diplomatic, military, economic, or political actions. Directives will be covered in more depth later.
- **Personal Crisis Arcs:** Individual characters may have personal goals or ambitions that affect their actions and influence how they interact with the crisis.



THE STRUCTURE OF A CRISIS COMMITTEE

Overview

The procedure in crisis committees varies from other types of committees you may be used to. There are some key differences in the committee, which will go through different crisis steps in debate. It is important to note that this is only an overview with general guidelines and that chairs/co-chairs have the right to make any procedural changes they see fit during the committee.

General Debate

- I. Debate will always open with a roll call; to which all delegates respond “present” or “present and voting”.
- II. Crisis committees are generally less uniform in debate, with NO motions for speaker’s lists.
- III. Rather, the primary forms of debate in crisis committees are round robins, moderated caucuses, and unmoderated caucuses.
- IV. Due to the nature of a smaller-sized committee, delegates can offer a point of inquiry, without permission from the chair, as long as someone else is not speaking.
- V. Speeches are usually much briefer (20-30s), so it is not recommended to yield your time to other delegates.

Moderated/Unmoderated Caucuses

- VI. Moderated caucuses are formal debates, and the chair will individually recognize delegates to speak by raising their placard.
 - A. When motioning for an Unmoderated Caucus, you must clarify the topic, total time, and speaking time.
 - B. If there are not enough speakers, delegates can speak multiple times in a single moderated caucus.
 - C. If there are no other points or motions, the debate defaults to a moderated caucus of the chair’s discretion.
 - D. Example: “Motion for a 5 minute moderated caucus with a 30 second speaking time on XYZ” (Colloquially, a “five-thirty.”)
- VII. Unmoderated caucuses.
 - A. Traditionally the total time of Unmoderated Caucuses ranges from 5-10 minutes at a time.
 - B. Crisis Committees have less unmoderated caucuses than General Assemblies.
 - C. During the time allotted during an Unmoderated Caucus, delegates are allowed to freely walk around and collaborate with other people.
 - D. Unmoderated Caucuses are normally used to write, and merge directives.
 - E. Example: “Motion for a 10 minute Unmoderated Caucus”

Round Robins

- VIII. Round Robins are typically used as an alternative to the speakers list.
- IX. In a round robin, every delegate has the chance to speak, and the order is determined by where you are sitting around the room.
- X. Speaking times are generally limited to 30 seconds or less.



- XI. Round robins can be found most useful after a major crisis event/update, in which they will often be looked upon favorably by chairs.
- XII. Example: "Motion for a 30 second round robin".

Directives:

Committee Directives: Submitted on behalf of the entire committee and requires collaboration from multiple roles. They can range from military actions to diplomatic solutions. **In a BCHMUNC XXXIII crisis committee, a Directive requires a minimum of 3 sponsors and a maximum of 5.** The other specifics are left to individual Chairs' discretion. The Portfolio Powers of a directive's Sponsors will be considered regarding the directive's execution, but Directives differ from Personal Directives in the fact that a Directive alone may carry the weight of the committee, or in our case, the resources and **will of the Emperor**.

Personal Directives: Submitted individually by delegates, these are often actions like espionage, moving troops, etc., but can be anything possible per your portfolio powers. Best used to progress your own goals—known as your "crisis arc". Examples of effective Personal Directives and common mistakes delegates often make are listed below, in the **Writing Effective Notes** subsection.

Joint Personal Directives: The bread and butter of experienced crisis delegates, a Joint Personal Directive (JPD) is a way to write a Directive without needing it to be brought to a full committee vote. This is best used when two or more delegates need to combine their personal powers to achieve something, ie. a joint military maneuver, outfitting an army with new gear, or taking out an opponent with one-two combo in one fell swoop.

Press Releases: Public announcements that can be used to influence other delegates or the direction of the crisis. In our JCC, this can be an important way to communicate with the opposition, as **Press Releases are broadcasted to the other committee(s) and to the general public.**

Key Skills for Success

In general, strategies good for a GA are good for a crisis committee. But the next few are especially important.

- **Adaptability:** Unlike traditional MUN, crisis committees shift rapidly. You need to be flexible and able to adjust your strategies as new information is revealed.
- **Creativity:** Think outside the box. We reward bold, innovative actions.
- **Diplomacy:** Even though crises are fast-paced, diplomacy is still at the heart of every MUN committee. Make alliances, maintain relationships, and know when to compromise.
- **Management:** handle pressure well, and be able to make quick decisions that balance both your personal arc and the greater needs of the committee.



WRITING EFFECTIVE DIRECTIVES

Be Specific: Clearly outline the goal of the directive, the steps necessary to achieve it, what personal powers are contributing, and your best-case ultimate end goal of the directive.

Coordinate with Allies: When submitting directives, the more people the better. Working closely with other delegates to ensure your directive gains the necessary support.

Anticipate Countermoves: Be strategic by thinking ahead. How might the opposition respond to your directive? Consider crafting backup plans in case your initial strategy fails, and outline those in your directive as well.

Keep Things Close: **Your personal powers should be some of your closely guarded secrets.** It can make for a powerful negotiating point if they are revealed, but doing so could allow someone else to know your weakness and begin to tear down your arc.

Writing Crisis Notes

Notes are the main component which separate traditional committees from those with crisis elements. You receive one or two notepads at the start of the day, in which you write plans, actions, questions, plots, etc. Think of this as writing to your private secretary who is able to act on your behalf outside the committee.

The dais will periodically collect these notepads and forward them to the backroom to respond to your note. If you use your notes effectively, you'll be able to promote your private interests, build alliances, use or even expand your portfolio powers, and obtain new resources for the committee.

Ultimately, notes build your importance and power in committee. With a series of well written notes, you can take the spotlight of the committee. The next "crisis break" can be about you and your plans, which is a good goal to have. When your notes are causing crisis breaks, you become more influential in the decisions of the committee.

Remember the following when writing notes:

The Three Rs: Resource, Request, Reason.

(credit: University of Chicago, <https://munuc.org>)

- I. **Resource:** All you need to do is state a reminder of what you already have. While this does not need to cover everything, it should be relevant to the next part of the note.
 - A. "I would like to access my granaries and *tael* reserves in Chengdu."



- II. **Request:** Keep requests small for the most part, these are more likely to be granted. Ask for anything which is an extension of your current resources. In addition, notes should **not** be addressed to the crisis staff. They instead should be addressed as a letter might: to a character, such as a secretary, servant, or general, within the simulation setting.
 - A. “Recruiters should be hired with the silver, and they should attempt to rally two armies of spearmen.”

- III. **Reason:** This final part is the most important in your note. It provides a justification for your request and gives the dais more insight into your ultimate strategy.
 - A. “One army of spearmen will rendezvous with Ma Teng, the Unyielding Tiger of Liang, at our border with the Wei, and join his armies there. The other army will be left in reserve in Chengdu, defending the city and training the skills.”

Example Note A

It hits all of the points above!

Dear Secretary Ming,

I would like to access my granaries and *tael* reserves in Chengdu. Recruiters should be hired with the silver, and they should attempt to rally two armies of spearmen. One army of spearmen will rendezvous with Ma Teng, the Unyielding Tiger of Liang, at our border with the Wei, and join his armies there. The other army will be left in reserve in Chengdu, defending the city and training their skills.

General Yao, (any other parties involved)

How the Backroom Might Reply

Not only did the request get approved, you even received an additional option to strengthen your soldiers.

The recruiters were hired using two units of our *tael*, leaving seven in the treasury. The soldiers were received by the Unyielding Tiger at the border, and the other army is training outside of our capital, Chengdu.

The commander of the army commented to the messenger that his novice recruits are having trouble with poor weaponry and armor—and is requesting the lord three *tael* to outfit his men. If you do so, their power will surely increase!



Example Note B

It is missing all the above!

To Crisis,
I would want to attack the border of Wei quickly and swiftly, and please execute our emperor to put myself on the throne.

How the Backroom Might Reply

The request went through. but you got severely punished for the lack of specifics and reason for your actions.

You have sent three armies of trainee infantry on an expedition to the Wei border. Your men ran into armies led by your ally Ma Teng, the Unyielding Tiger of Liang, but began fighting them, confusing them with the enemy. One army was obliterated by the general's defending forces, while the other two, fleeing, suffered heavy losses due to illness and hunger.

You hired an assassin off the farmer's market, promising him one grand *tael* upon completion of the task. The attempt on the emperor's life went unnoticed, as his attempt to poison the emperor with extra salted pickles left him uncomfortable—but not dead.

Tips, and Common Pitfalls to Avoid

Tunnel Vision: Don't become so focused on your personal arc that you ignore the broader crisis. You need to keep one eye on the larger committee while advancing your individual plans.

Overcomplicating Directives: While creativity is important, overly complex directives can slow down the committee or confuse the crisis staff. Keep your ideas clear and actionable.

Acting Too Quickly: While crisis committees reward fast action, acting too quickly and rashly can lead to poor outcomes. Take time to assess the situation before acting: slow is steady, and steady is fast.



COMMITTEE-SPECIFIC MECHANICS

Due to the nature of this committee, there will be a number of mechanics designed by the Crisis Staff that will be in each frontroom in order to ease the burdens on the delegates' minds.

After all, the Three Kingdoms is a period of war, and this JCC is first and foremost a simulation of how that war could have gone. For this purpose, each Delegate will have command of their represented character's portfolio powers.

You can find your portfolio powers at the end of this document.

IMPORTANT!

This committee will be fast paced. In the interests of time, crisis notes may be **emailed** to the backroom staff. For more information regarding this, or general pre-committee questions, email the Grand Crisis Manager of the Three Kingdoms and the Crisis Director of the Conference at w.yang-goodwin25@students.bchigh.edu and kj.wong26@students.bchigh.edu.

Portfolio Powers

Portfolio powers are the public powers and resources your position has. For example, a general might have command of an army of soldiers. These troops' movements and activities would be up to the sole discretion of the general commanding them. Or, a governor of a certain area would have the ability to levy taxes on the population or requisition food from the peasantry to add to their own coffers. Or, a lord of a city would have great influence over the local economy, thus giving him the ability to raise, train, reinforce, or bolster an army of its own.

Of course, limits apply. A division of soldiers trained in a city would only obey their City Lord so long as they remained close to the city, fed and happy. To go further, for instance, a proper general would be needed to keep the men in line. Yet at the same time, these generals would be helpless if their armies were to go hungry—perhaps as a consequence of getting on the wrong side of a Governor—without provisions—if the City they hailed from is conquered.

The portfolio powers that your positions hold are not detailed in this Background Guide; they will be provided to you at the start of committee. However, general information about each position's powers are provided at the end of this document, in the "Character Portfolios" section.

Your portfolio powers are your greatest strengths, and potentially your greatest weaknesses. It is hereby advised that you keep your powers secret from everyone, be they friend or foe.



Resources

A nation's resources form the cornerstone of its ability to sustain its people, defend its borders, and expand its influence. While many aspects of a nation's economy could be considered, for simplicity, we focus on two key resources: Money and Food. These serve as the dual pillars of survival and growth, influencing every facet of governance, diplomacy, and war.

MONEY

"Money makes the world go round."
- Matshona Dhlwayo

Measured in *tael*, money represents the economic power of a nation. It is a versatile and critical resource, serving purposes that extend far beyond simple trade. A healthy treasury ensures the smooth operation of a nation's Cities and provides leverage in the political arena.

Functions of Money:

- Urban centers rely on money to fund services, maintain public order, and sustain infrastructure. A City without funding becomes a breeding ground for unrest, crime, and decay.
- Soldiers demand wages, and mercenaries expect timely payment. Without money, morale plummets, desertion rises, and loyalty wanes.
- Bribes, tributes, and gifts can often open doors that swords cannot. Many officials, in order to do their duty, may demand a "gift."
- Investments in technology, infrastructure, and education rely on a steady flow of currency, enabling a nation to stay competitive. These advances allow for the training of better-equipped and stronger soldiers.

How to Gain Money:

- A City Lord or a Governor may impose taxes on their citizens. This money includes many sources: profits, merchants' bribes, property, food, etc.
- The Capital province, as an economic hub, produces an extremely large amount of money that is stored in national coffers, able to be accessed as a part of a Committee Directive.
- A General may pillage or sack an enemy City or Province, and receive resources from their defeated foes.



FOOD

"If you keep your armies out in the field for a long time, your supplies will be insufficient. When your forces are dulled, your edge is blunted, your strength is exhausted, and your supplies are gone, then others will take advantage of your weakness and rise up."

- Sun Tzu, *The Art of War*

Food represents the agricultural and logistical backbone of a nation. It sustains the population, ensures the productivity of laborers, and supplies armies during campaigns. Unlike money, which is highly flexible, food has a more direct and immediate impact on survival.

Functions of Food:

- A well-fed populace is a happy and productive one. Food shortages lead to famine, which can cause unrest, migration, and even rebellion.
- Soldiers in the field require consistent rations to maintain their strength and morale. A poorly supplied army is more likely to lose battles, even against inferior foes.

To Gain Food:

- Provinces under the control of a Governor grow staple crops, and fish in nearby rivers/oceans.
- A General may raid an enemy Province, and receive Food from the villages and towns that they plunder.

Balancing Money and Food

A prosperous nation finds equilibrium between these resources. Excess wealth without adequate food leads to hunger and instability, while an abundance of food without money stifles growth and limits military or diplomatic options. In order to secure victory in conflict, leaders must strategize to ensure that neither resource is neglected.

- Sustained military campaigns require both a steady stream of gold *tael* to pay soldiers, and a surplus of food to keep them fed.
- A Province or City can focus its effort on *either* Money or Food, but not both. An exception is the Capital, which produces Money as a city does and Food as a province.

Effective resource management is not just about accumulation but distribution, preparation, and foresight. A wise ruler understands that the true strength of a nation lies in the careful stewardship of its resources.



ARMIES

"The strength of a nation lies not in its wealth but in the mettle of its warriors."
- Zhizhi Tongjian

Armies are the backbone of a nation's power, a projection of its will on the battlefield and beyond. They safeguard borders, enforce sovereignty, and serve as instruments of conquest or defense. An army's strength, morale, and discipline can determine the fate of a nation.

Functions of Armies

- Protection and Defense: Armies are the first line of defense against external threats. They secure borders, protect vital cities, and ensure the safety of trade routes.
- Instruments of Expansion: A well-maintained and strategically deployed army can claim new territories, crush uprisings, and impose a nation's influence on its rivals.
- Maintainers of Order: Soldiers may also serve as enforcers of law and order, suppressing rebellion, quelling riots, or imposing martial law when needed.

Maintaining Armies

To maintain an effective fighting force, leaders must address several key considerations:

- Recruitment: Soldiers are drawn from the populace, trained to fight, and organized under the leadership of skilled generals. A nation's ability to recruit depends on the quality of its Cities, which each may muster a *Standing Army* of a size listed in the table below.
- Equipment: Armies require weapons, armor, and siege equipment. A poorly equipped army is vulnerable, even if its numbers are vast. Investment in armories and technological advancements improves the efficacy of soldiers in battle.

Mobilizing Armies

A General, Governor, or Regional Advisor may call upon troops under their command to mobilize for war or defense. Armies can be a part of a City or Province's *Standing Army*, dispatched to respond to immediate threats on the home front, or sent on campaigns with a General to achieve long-term objectives.

The Power of Leadership

A great army without capable leadership is like a blade without a hilt. Generals and commanders shape the destiny of battles through tactics, strategy, and charisma. Victory often depends on their ability to outmaneuver opponents, inspire troops, and adapt to unforeseen challenges.

An army is both a nation's shield and its sword, a symbol of strength and resilience. To wield it wisely is to secure the future; to misuse it is to invite ruin.



HISTORICAL CONTEXT

“It is a truth universally acknowledged that an empire long united will fall apart.”

Chinese Civilization has long stood the test of time. Beginning around 2100 BCE, the mythical Xia Dynasty brought on and established the dynastic tradition that has, until very recently, held firm. However, as with many systems, it is fraught with peril. This cycle is powered by court culture; court culture arises from child emperors and regencies. When an Emperor dies with a young son, the son is unable to rule on his own. As such, power is given temporarily to court **eunuchs**, who acted as **regents** in those days. These regents often would also use their power corruptly: accepting bribes in exchange for government positions, allowing political infighting within the court, and conspiring to increase personal influence to the detriment of subject and sage. Weaknesses in these dynasties from infighting and exploitation of the population led to the destruction of many such, including the Xia, Shang, Zhou, and Qin—which preceded the Han.

The Han (206 BC - 220 AD) was put into power after the overthrow of the bloody Qin Dynasty following the Warring States period (475 - 221 BC). Many advancements were made in the first centuries of Han rule, leading many to believe it as the onset of a great Chinese Golden Age. Despite this, corruption in the government was rampant. Dissent among the nobility led to the assassination of officials like *Han Gaozu*, exploitation of the common people led to famine, hunger, and death in the countryside—and after four centuries, unrest finally became rebellion.

The Yellow Turbans’ revolt in 184 AD—fueled by peasant unrest and the rhetoric of **Taoist** leader *Zhang Jue*—shattered the empire through the heartland. The peasants amassed into war-bands tens of thousands in size, and in the capital, the massacre of court eunuchs in 189 AD left the child-emperor himself vulnerable. Regional warlords like *Cao Cao*, *Dong Zhuo*, and *Sun Jian* rose to prominence in what would become the Wei, Shu, and Wu kingdoms, respectively. The central authorities, puppeted by tyrannical eunuchs relied on them and their standing armies to suppress rebellion. Wielding power far beyond the reach of **Luoyang**’s long arm, they began to vie for dominance amongst themselves.

And, in the late second century, there was another issue of transition. The Han’s strength had long been eroded by the time of the Yellow Turban revolt—the only thing keeping them in power was the continued presence of their “**Son of Heaven**.” But, without the military might, economic wherewithal, or political capital to protect him: in an analogy first used by *Han Gaozu*, “the deer was loose.” He holding the **Mandate of Heaven** had left his cover, and now the chase was on.

The first to begin the hunt was *Dong Zhuo*, the **Gansu** warlord who had been observing events from outside of the capital with relish. Receiving word on the emperor’s movements,



he intercepted the fleeing boy and his retinue. Plotting to instate himself into power, before a year had passed, *Dong Zhuo* had browbeat all of his opposition and commenced a nighttime regime shift. With the city burning, he seized the opportunity and immediately declared himself as the new regent. The original Emperor, *Shaodi*, was deposed, carted out of Luoyang, while his younger brother *Xiandi* would reign as *Dong Zhuo*'s puppet.

The new child-emperor remained under *Dong Zhuo*'s control even as turmoil swept through the kingdom. Massive droughts and famines killed thousands, and nomadic raiders pillaged many villages and towns. The government officials and regional leaders still in power began overtaxing the peasants, worsening the disaster. "Bandits and rebels had sprung up everywhere," say the records of the **Zhizhi Tongjian**, some armies of which boasted numbers approaching 50,000.

Such bandits, though, were insignificant when compared to the great lineages and noble factions who, while protesting loyalty to the Han, resented *Dong Zhuo* and began to mobilize against him at the end of the second century AD. With power bases in the outer provinces, and the economic strength to attract able scholars and mighty generals, these clans regressed into archaic states that drew their roots from the **Spring and Autumn** period almost half a millenia ago. In order to gratify their territorial ambitions, they gathered behind the banners of the Shu, Wei, and Wu kingdoms, and openly declared that they would be aimed at claiming for themselves the title of *ba*, or "**hegemon**," over the **Middle Kingdom**.

Threatened, *Dong Zhuo* decided to abandon Luoyang. He would retreat to the old capital of **Chang'an** in the Wei valley, a fortress city nearer to his own homeland. As he fled, however, Luoyang was ransacked and burnt to the ground again, its population of 500,000 herded west at sword-point. Dissent claimed thousands of lives along the way and, finally Chang'an too was plunged into chaos when, in 192 AD, *Dong Zhou* was struck dead by his own bodyguard, creating a power vacuum.

The next decade brought no respite from bloodshed, as Chang'an was repeatedly sacked by avenging armies and ravaged by famine. The emperor in turn was passed back and forth between handlers, then married to an empress, and finally offloaded back to the ruins of Luoyang. From there, he was whisked off east to Xu—a coastal region near **Shandong** dominated by the wily *Cao Cao*. As of 196 AD, *Han Xiandi* was under the Cao family's protection, and would remain so until his death in 234.

The young Emperor bestowed upon *Cao Cao* the title of duke of Wei in 213 AD and prince of Wei in 216, officially endorsing what would come to be known as the largest of the Three Kingdoms. When *Cao Cao* died due to an illness, his son, *Cao Pi*, took control. *Cao Pi* quickly forces the emperor to abdicate the throne in 220 AD, declaring himself emperor of the new Wei Dynasty. After such a handover, they could reasonably claim to be in possession of the Mandate of Heaven, and thus the sole legitimate successors of the Han.



Much of the same could be said for the founders of the other two kingdoms of the period, however. From the east, *Sun Cei* had contested *Dong Zhuo*'s 189 AD claim for Han succession. Then *Sun Quan*, his near-invincible brother and successor, reconstituted the region of Wu in the lower **Yangtze** basin as the second of the Three Kingdoms. Appointed king of Wu by *Han Xiandi* and later declaring himself the legitimate emperor, Sun Quan extended his Wu dynasty's authority to all China below the Yangtze, even including parts of northern Vietnam.

The third and final kingdom to emerge during this tumultuous era was Shu, established in the rugged lands of Sichuan. *Liu Bei*, a distant relative of the Han imperial family, styled himself as the righteous protector of the Han legacy, though his claims to power were no less self-serving than his rivals. With the aid of his brilliant strategist *Zhuge Liang*, *Liu Bei* secured the western provinces and declared himself emperor of Shu in 221 AD. Despite its lofty ideals, Shu was the smallest of the three kingdoms, hemmed in by mountainous terrain and plagued by limited resources, which left it at a strategic disadvantage compared to the Wei and Wu.

Though each kingdom professed allegiance to the *legacy* of the Han, they were locked in relentless conflict over supremacy. The era of the Three Kingdoms (220–280 AD) became one of the most legendary periods in Chinese history, filled with tales of cunning strategy, heroic warriors, and high politics. The period, in truth, epitomized the chaos and splendor of dynastic China at its zenith. It was not until the rise of the Jin dynasty that these kingdoms would be reunited, but the legacy of the Wei, Wu, and Shu live on.



TERMS TO KNOW

Eunuch (宦官)

A castrated man who typically served as an official in the inner palace, often holding significant political influence in Chinese imperial courts.

Regent (摄政者)

A person appointed to govern in place of a monarch who is a minor, absent, or otherwise unable to rule.

Yellow Turban Rebellion (黄巾之乱)

A major peasant revolt against the Han dynasty in 184 CE, inspired by Taoist beliefs and dissatisfaction with corruption and famine.

Luoyang (洛阳, *homonym*, “setting of the sun”)

The capital city of the Eastern Han dynasty, serving as a political and cultural hub for centuries. During the Three Kingdoms period, the capital of the Wei.

Taoism (道教, *lit.* “study of the way”)

A Chinese philosophical and religious tradition emphasizing harmony with the Tao (the Way), nature, and the universe.

Abdicate (退位)

(For a monarch) To formally renounce or relinquish the throne or authority.

Son of Heaven (天子)

A title used by Chinese emperors to signify their divine right to rule as intermediaries between heaven and earth.

Mandate of Heaven (天命)

The divine right or approval believed to be granted by heaven to a just ruler, which could be revoked if the ruler became despotic or ineffective.

Gansu (甘肃, *lit.* “sweet solemnity”)

A province in northwestern China, historically important as part of the Silk Road and for its military significance during the Three Kingdoms period.



Zhizhi Tonjian (资治通鉴)

A comprehensive Chinese historical text, compiled in the Song dynasty, covering the period from the Warring States to the Five Dynasties (403 BC – 959 AD). Used as a source for this document.

Spring and Autumn Period (春秋时期)

A period in Chinese history (770–476 BC) during the Zhou dynasty, characterized by political fragmentation and the emergence of regional states.

Hegemon (霸, or ba)

Also translated as “overlord.” A dominant leader or state that asserts control or influence over others.

Middle Kingdom (中国)

A term used to describe China. In ancient days, China was considered above the Mortal realm but below the Heavens: thus, the Middle Kingdom.

Chang'an (长安, lit, “extended peace”)

An ancient city in what is now Xi'an, significant as a political and cultural center during the Late Han. Used as a stronghold by Dong Zhuo as he fled Luoyang.

Shandong (山东, lit, “east of the mountains”)

A coastal province in eastern China, under the control of the Cao family. Used as refuge for the boy-emperor Han Xiandi in the last years of the Late Han.

Yangtze (长江, lit, “long river”)

The longest river in Asia, running through central China, vital for trade, agriculture, and transportation. Control of the Yangtze River was strategically important during the Three Kingdoms period.

Yellow River (黄河)

Known as the "Cradle of Chinese Civilization," this river is central to China's earliest history and culture. Flooding of the basin was a common occurrence for most of China's history, until construction of the Sanmenxia dam began in the twentieth century with help from the Soviet Union.



STATE OF THE DYNASTY

“He who does not forget the past is a master of the present” – Sima Qian, Shiji

A few weeks ago, I, Emperor Cao Pi, received the Mandate of Heaven from Han Xiaodi, the previous Emperor of the Han Dynasty. We, the Royal Court of the Wei Dynasty, are the legitimate overseers of the nation of China. Thus, it is our duty to reclaim, preserve, and protect our rightful lands; subsequently, our subject's livelihood must be one of our top priorities. Time has shown how the population of the lands can either strengthen a nation beyond all others or bring it down to its knees. As courtier to the Royal Court, it is your job to ensure the prosperity of our lands and our subjects.

As of now, Cao Pi of the Wei Kingdom and the other two kingdoms have declared themselves the true successors to the Han Dynasty. Many problems have arisen within each kingdom, from both inside and outside the court.

A few days ago, a man broke into the imperial palace wielding a knife. Guards quickly killed him with a volley of arrows in the courtyard, but many questions remained unanswered. Not much is known about the man himself. At first some believed he was simply drunk or crazy, others thought that this was an attempt to steal riches from the palace. After an investigation, not much information was uncovered. Some scholars from the Royal palace believe that this man belonged to an underground society preluding a rebellion against the Emperor. However, this is up to interpretation, as no evidence for any secret groups exists. This incident has shown that the emperor and the Royal Court are less safe than they previously thought.

Just a few hours after this, a less-publicized event occurred; a Royal Court eunuch was found dead in an alley after being slashed many times by unknown assailants in the capital. His guard detail was distracted by four beggars in the street, when a group of attackers ran into the alley with knives in hand, and slashed the eunuch many times, running away to leave him to bleed out all alone. The attackers also took the man's coin pouch and some jewelry. His guards attempted to save him, but he had lost too much blood. Under suspicion that they were involved, the beggars were taken into a jailhouse, but were found dead in their cells from unknown causes hours before their questioning. Some theorists believe that this is an organized attack against the government, but an investigation has not been conducted.



Within the Royal Court, the emperor Cao Pi deals with internal struggle. He has many rivals who wish for his downfall. Smaller regional vassals wish to increase their own power, and many people within the kingdom also wish to take the emperor's position. Many members of Cao Pi's close and extended family wish to claim the throne, going to extreme lengths to do so. The Royal Court plays a large role in influencing the emperor and his family. The Royal Court may help Cao Pi keep his position, or side in favor of a claimant family member who may better the kingdom. **(Be cautious: the replacement of your emperor could have unforeseen consequences.** Emperors can also naturally die or be assassinated and be succeeded by their heir).

Two other outside kingdoms falsely believe that they are also destined to reunite China. Due to this, border conflicts have arisen in a vie for influence over the lands. Some smaller border conflicts have all but ensured war. We will need to balance our food resources and military might, as well as monetary reserve resources in order to defeat the other two kingdoms. **Each soldier has a family who will miss them when they die, causing unrest if we lose too many battles.** Losing many military operations will make the Royal Court unpopular.



CHARACTER PORTFOLIOS

Regional Advisors

Regional Advisors serve as Governor-type figures. They each oversee multiple cities composing one region. Each region under your influence can produce money or food. If all of your cities produce the same resource, the total amount increases. In addition, all lands conquered by your Dynasty must be placed under an Advisor's control.

Man Chong - You are the Regional Advisor of the Yan Province. You defended the city of Hefei from a series of invasions by Wei's rival state, the Wu. Thus you fell in favor with the War Lord, Cao Cao who appointed you as the region's advisor. Your region is in the far north, close to the Korean Peninsula, and so direct invasion by the other two kingdoms should not be a concern.,

Xun Yu - You are the Regional Advisor of the Chu Province. As a former army comandante, you fell into the favor of Cao Cao, who appointed you the Regional Advisor of the Chu Province. You are regarded as a prestigious man from a prestigious family, and you are thus concerned with keeping your reputation. Your province directly borders the rival Wu Kingdom, and so their possible invasion is always on your mind. You would do anything to protect your own province and the Kingdom itself.

Chen Qun - You are the Regional Advisor of the Qin Province. You formerly served in the army of Lu Bu, but were incorporated into the newly formed Wei Kingdom when he was defeated. A scrutinous , you never put your trust into anyone, as past experiences have taught you. Your province borders the Shu Kingdom, one of the enemies of the Wei. A Shu invasion is always possible, so you work to protect your own province.

Peng Ming - You Are the Regional Advisor of the Han Province. Born into a peasant family, you care about the commoners of your region. Starting off as a minor officer, you worked your way up through society in a rags-to-riches fashion. A relatively small one, your province is the last line of defence before the capital province, which is directly north of your province.

Inspectors

Inspectors serve at the city level. They are mayoral type figures . Cities are economic centers, producing Money, but also are important rallying points for the armies of a Dynasty, where a military may be recruited and trained. All present Inspectors belong to the Wei Province.

Chun Ai - You are the inspector (and protector) of Jingchen. As an unsung defender of the Wei people, you know how to lead. While your proficiency in ranged weapons is bested by none, your



true weapon is your tongue. You have an innate ability to put a mind at ease, creating time to resolve conflict peacefully, or through blood.

Jie Hua - **You are the inspector of Zhongshan.** As a content individual, you are happy with your position. You do not seek a higher social rank, you just wish that things stay the way they currently are.

Tian Li - **You are the inspector of Donglai.** Born to one of the richest families in the Han Dynasty, you have always lived a life of extravagance. Though many may doubt your skills due to your youth, you are dedicated to proving your worth through diligence and hard work, although some may perceive you as wasteful of public resources.

Xu Huang - **You are the inspector of Xuzhou.** As a humble and simple man, you are loyal to the emperor. Starting off as a small officer in the Han Dynasty tasked with stopping rebellion, you were promoted to Major General when the Wei Kingdom took over. You recently retired from the military and were given your role as Inspector of the City of Xuzhou.

Wang Lang - **You are the inspector of Jingzhao.** After being invited to the Wei's royal court and promoted to the rank of Inspector, you dedicated yourself to matters of security and anti-espionage. You have the unofficial role of stopping hostile plans against the stability of the kingdom.

Yu Jin - **You are the inspector (and protector) of Linzi.** Originally serving the Wei Dynasty as a General, you are able to lead people in times of crisis. Your harsh and unforgiving reputation allows you to strike fear into the hearts of others. In retirement, you were commissioned as the "General Who Stabilises Distant Lands" to lead the wealthy Linzi.

Generals

Generals are tasked with leading forces of soldiers to defend their Dynasty's interests, though the means they do so may vary. Not only can they command their own bannermen, by Directive, a General may marshall the forces of the Imperial Wei itself.

Deng Ai - You are known as "The Trapmaster" by your soldiers. **Your ambush expertise is unmatched.**

Hua Xiong - "You are a stalwart man of fierce mien, lithe and supple as a beast. You have the strength of a tiger and the shoulders of an ape". -Romance of the Three Kingdoms. **You excel at the front lines. In combat, no mortal is your equal.**

Sima Yi - You are the Iron Sentinel of Wei. **Your unyielding fortitude in the face of danger inspires all who follow you.**



Zhang He - You are the General who Brings Peace to the State. **Your skill in horsemanship is tremendous, and your soldiers are inspired by your presence, boosting their performance.**

Zhong Hui - **You are a thinker and philosopher, and your traits rub off on your soldiers.** You excel both in high society and out, and are an expert in exchanging barbs made of both words and steel.

Specialist

Specialist roles encompass all who do not fit into the traditional roles outlined above. Whether this be a crafty prince or cunning princess that controls capital politics, to priests and shamans that claim to spread vicariously the will of the divines, to mighty warriors and wise sages whose deeds seem almost magical, they are listed as a Specialist.

Princess Dongxiang - **You are the daughter of Wei emperor Cao Pi.** Even though you are not allowed to inherit the throne both on the grounds of gender and legitimacy, you still have a lot of influence within the Wei Kingdom. She had a strong family-oriented philosophy, as her royal father was her only connection to any form of influence in society.

Zhang Jue - **You are the former leader of the Yellow Turban Rebellion.** In your very old age, you were pardoned by Cao Cao, the first leader of the Wei Kingdom. Due to your influence, you were permitted a seat in the Wei court. You still proclaim yourself as a Taoist wizard, although even you doubt your own mystical "powers". You might still have some supporters among those who supported the Yellow Turban Rebellion.

Cheng Guo - **You are the head of the Wei Kingdom's (not so) Secret Police.** While you are outwardly loyal to the Emperor of the Wei dynasty, you are an ambitious man. You have spies, informants, and agents in many walks of life, from the lowest walks of life to those of the wealthy class. You hold immense power, being the one who is in charge of holding both the civilian and military sectors of the government accountable for their actions. You are known to "disappear" people who are unloyal to the government, and quash uprisings against the Wei. You can and have arrested people and put them on trial for their disloyalty to the state. However, be careful of those you anger, as the head of the Secret Police is never a popular figure.

Mugulü - **You are a legendary warrior and clan leader from what is now Mongolia.** After your travels through the Gobi Desert, you and your horde of tribal warriors arrived at the Wei court and made a deal with the emperor and his advisors. In exchange for a seat in the Wei Royal Court and influence in the diplomacy of the situation, you agreed to use your clan's resources, including warriors, to help defeat the other two kingdoms. Although you are able to engage in battles when needed, you are most effective at raiding unguarded provinces for loot.



Jangsu - **You are an emissary of Goguryeo, the largest Korean Kingdom.** Goguryeo has created a formal alliance with the Wei Kingdom, and your task is to help the Wei by petitioning the King of Goguryeo for help, including sending money or soldiers. There are certain drawbacks, as you will need to wait for the soldiers to arrive from across the Wei Kingdom, requests may be denied, and language barriers make it difficult for your soldiers to serve alongside Chinese troops or under Chinese generals.

Notes: Some positions are not historically accurate. This allows us to create an engaging committee for all delegates. Follow the background guide's lore over online sources.

Some positions are not even real! For example, Jie Hua was fabricated during a late night call. Finding information about a time that wasn't fully recorded is hard! Some places have significance, but we simply could not find their corresponding people. For the sake of everyone's sanity, all fake characters have been underlined.

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

1. How will the Wei Kingdom deal with the two other pretending kingdoms?
2. How can we enforce peace within China?
3. How will we keep our citizens happy and our kingdom prosperous throughout the conflict to ensure stability?
4. How will you balance the happiness of your people and the military needs of your area?

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