

ANCIENT EMPIRES 15

A PLAY BY MAIL GAME
FEATURING DIPLOMACY, PRODUCTION,
ECONOMICS AND CONQUEST.
VER 1.00

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1. THE GAME

Ancient Empires is a play by Email game. It is based on a pre-Roman economy and each new position has a few villages with basic craft industry. Military units are 100 men strong and at the start of the game very basic and ill trained. The map covers many thousands of square miles and contains around 200 separate locations, many of them at sea. Naval and land forces are represented as well as production, transport, siege and command units. Many aspects contribute to successful play and just some of these include trading, diplomacy, espionage, assassination, planning, logistics, morale, strategy, communication, propaganda, military formations, sieges, naval combat and much more. This game has a free play format that lets you try anything. Now is the time to take control of your Ancient Empire.

2. INTRODUCTION

Every country in Ancient Empires starts with just a few villages. At the start of the game, you will have under your command basic military units, A few hundred Irregular Infantry, the most numerous of the military units, skirmishers who are missile throwers and Irregular cavalry who represent basic mounted units. In addition to these fighting units you have a small number of production facilities. Workshops to build craft, the basis of all production, Hunting lodges to provide provisions to feed your people and troops. Stables to breed horses, and boat yards to build fishing boats and warships. From this humble beginning you can buy better, more efficient units, you may be able to open mines which will give you metal to work. You will have the loyalty of your army and people, at the moment. It is then your task to survive and prosper in a very hostile land using all the means at your disposal. Does this sound like your kind of game? If yes, read on. This is your key to the kingdom.

3. MOVEMENT

Movement in Ancient Empires is very simple. You can move 200 miles in any direction. However, you must start and end your movement in a village.

The scale of the map is 1 Inch (2.5 cm) = 100 miles.

All Military units move under their own power, but heavy weapons and commodities (such as craft) need to be carried in transport units such as carts . Each transport unit carries a set amount of weight and each unit that needs transporting has been given a weight for load purposes. ie. 1 cart unit will carry 400 Load Points. All land units can move 200 miles per turn. All ships can move 600 miles per turn.

4. ECONOMY

The economy is very important. It is important to get it right, so that you can prosper. The economy is based upon available manpower. Each village has an assigned size. From this size, a level of manpower is generated. The other parts of the village being the young, sick, women and the old.

Smaller newer villages tend to have a higher proportion of available manpower than larger villages. Manpower is allocated to the production facilities, and no facility can operate without an allocation of manpower.

Food production is the highest priority. Many things will make the growth of your kingdom more difficult. The first being weather, which varies from month to month.

Another factor is Rebellion. If you do not feed you people they will quickly become unhappy and reduce their work. Keeping the men and women healthy and educated is also important.

Food can be given in varying levels from starvation to double rations. It is not a good idea to starve the population, as they will leave for a better way of life. Low rations may be necessary, until better weather comes and the available food increases, but double rations will attract people faster.

Available manpower can be drafted in to the army to provide Infantry and cavalry. With a happy population, your village will soon fill with people. You do not need much

management to keep a village on the right track, but there are several settings to each village that control how the village reacts. These are:

Ration level (set by you)

Rebellion level (automatically set)

Manpower pool (automatically set)

Weather (automatically set)

The presence of other facilities keep the village operating.

5. PRODUCTION

Every unit has to be produced. The building blocks for units are called Craft and Metal. You start with a few workshops and a large stock pile of Craft, the building blocks of almost everything. Mines are found in certain parts of the map, and produce metal. Each unit has a fixed production cost.

ie, 1 hunting lodge costs 10 craft points.

1 Light Infantry unit costs 10 craft points and 2 metal points. New units are created by filling out the production sheet. On this form are spaces to specify the new units, as well as the cost to create them.

6. UNIT CONVERSION

As time goes by and your Kingdom advances you will need more and more powerful units. As you get these you will be able to upgrade units built at lower level of technology. There is a small cost and the table below outlines these. Ships cannot be converted.

| Unit Conversion | | | |
|--------------------|----------------|------------|------------|
| Old Unit | New Unit | Craft Cost | Metal Cost |
| Irregular Infantry | Light Infantry | 3 | 2 |
| Skirmisher | Light Missile | 3 | 2 |
| Irregular Cavalry | Light Cavalry | 2 | 2 |

7. THE MAP

The map shows a large area of land, and some sea areas. The scale of the map is 1" (2.5 cm) = 100 miles (160 km). There are a number of terrain types as shown below. Rivers can be crossed but mountains cannot.

8. TERRAIN EFFECTS

Village

A Village is a location that can be developed in the game. At the start they have NO defensive value, but fortifications can be added as the game progresses. The population level of a village is vital, as this dictates the quantity of artisan units that can be located at the village. Each village has an Rebellion level and potentials for the resources available in the area.

The Rebellion level is important as the higher it is the more it will reduce production. Potentials dictate the maximum potential production at the location.

Mountains

This represents very rough terrain which will prevent movement of all types of unit.

Rivers

Cargo Galleys and Light war galleys may use rivers. Rivers present no obstacle to ground movement. They also generate a small fishing potential at a village on the river.

Swamp

Swamp effects the potentials in an area. In a swamp area they are likely to be low. Units stationed in swamp areas may well have a steady decline in morale. Combat in a swamp is also very difficult. Mounted units and transport will have great difficulty in getting through a swamp area.

Forest

Forest has no effect on movement, but cavalry operations in wooded areas are extremely difficult. Some types of Infantry operate better in close terrain than others. This depends upon their weapons.

Sea

Sea areas are important for transport and fishing. Each Sea Area has a relatively high fishing potential that can be exploited by fishing boats. Movement along the coast can also be fast and efficient using ships, and control of coastal waters may be vital in any campaign.

9. ROYAL PROCLAMATIONS

Royal Proclamations are used to do anything that is not directly covered by the rules.

For example, to make your people think you are a good and caring leader you may order a clean up of the streets or attempt to improve the health of the people, or train your cavalry in open warfare.

You can also use a Royal Proclamation in a more sinister way as well. You may want to have a well trained assassin to hand to poison the food supplies of another country, or a spy in a foreign military headquarters. Many things are possible and you may try anything that comes to mind, evil or otherwise. However not everything will work. Actions might have repercussions later on in the game, or effect other aspects of your empire.

In order to carry out actions you must allocate manpower in the form most suitable for the job (e.g.. miners to improve mines) and points. (e.g. If you wanted to invent a code you should allocate Knowledge.) The more suitable resources you put into the action the greater the chance of a positive result. Royal Proclamations will be adjudicated by the GM whose decision is final.

10. REBELLION

The Rebellion Level is the measure of discontent at a location in the area of the country that you control. Rebellion is shown in each location, and ranges between fanatical loyalty and actual Rebellion. The further from Loyalty the population go, the less work they do in the production facilities.

If you do something that is really unpopular or fail to feed the population, this level will rise.

Several things have an influence upon Rebellion:

- Food shortages
- Actions that the population disapprove of.
- Being under siege
- Poor weather

There are also some things which will make the Rebellion level fall.

- The presence of a high ranking leader
- The presence of an Infirmary or healers or units that can enhance the standard of living.
- Plenty of food
- Actions that benefit the wellbeing of the people
- Good weather

The Rebellion level is important at the monthly adjustment, and has an effect on

production. It is very important to keep this level as low as possible. Royal Proclamations are a very good tool for this.

11. POTENTIALS

Each location has Potentials for Local resources such as Ore. This is the MOST that a location can produce on the monthly adjustment, assuming a zero Rebellion level, and all necessary units are in place.

i.e.. An Ore potential of 10 means that the most that can be produced in that location would be 10 Ore, regardless of how many mines were present. This is to reflect the natural resources available in that area. The only limit to craft production is how many workshops your economy can sustain.

12. MANPOWER

Although you might have a population level, not everyone in the village can work. For this reason, there is a manpower pool. This represents the able bodied men (and Women) who are available to work in the facilities of a location.

In small villages, the proportion of able bodied is high, but as the village grows, this proportion falls to a lower level, reflecting the arrival of families and the growing infrastructure.

Each level of manpower is allocated to a production facility. If there is not enough manpower, some facilities will not function. Priority of manpower is given to provisions, so hunting lodges always get their allocation of manpower before others.

13. COMBAT

When two forces meet, unless they are allied they will fight.

In Ancient empires combat is very bloody. Many units will be destroyed and one side will lose.

Unless there are fortifications the battle will be classed as an open field battle. With fortifications it will be a siege/assault. For this type of fighting you need special weapons, such as ladders or rams. Without Siege Weapons and a high morale level your troops will not be able to attack without catastrophic losses.

You may of course mix a Royal Proclamation with your combat orders.

A planning guide is provided called the combat sheet, which helps you to adhere to all the limits and answer all the questions that the GM might need to ask.

14. ALLIANCES

You are allowed 3 allies. These will appear on your print out.

Of course you are allowed to write to anyone and an informal alliance can be set up. Contact is via the GM. It takes one month notice to break an official alliance. You do not need to be allied to trade.

15. MESSAGES

Messages are sent through the GM. You are not allowed to send your address, phone number or email. This is to simulate the slow methods of communication of the period and maintains the character of the game environment. Given that this is the age of Social Media, imposing this is impossible. However in the spirit of the game I would ask you to adhere to this ruling.

16. PROVISIONS

The following units require 1 provision at the Monthly Adjustment:

All Infantry units. All local units. (Such as Chiefs, Machinates, Sheriffs) Adapted by the Ration Level. (see below)

If they are not fed, the Rebellion Level will rise alarmingly, and the morale of local army units may fall sharply. Please note that provisions are allocated before any food

production is carried out. This means that you will need sufficient stocks of provisions already in place at the end of the month.

Cavalry and more advanced units may require more food than other types of units.

17. RATION LEVELS

Each Location has a ration Level. This is set by you. The levels vary between Starvation and double rations.

It is better to put a village on half rations than fall short of full rations, as the penalty is bigger.

Villages with poor ration levels will become unhappy, and Rebellion will rise but better to get the ration level right and warn them of food shortages than a higher level and fail to reach the correct amount of food needed.

Villages with higher ration levels attract population and allow growth. You must judge the population against the food stocks and make decisions about provision allocation.

| Ration Levels | | | |
|---------------|-----------------------|--------------------|------------------|
| Ration Level | Modifier | Name | Chance of Growth |
| 1 | 0.25 Rations Per Unit | Starvation Rations | None |
| 2 | 0.5 Rations Per Unit | Half Rations | None |
| 3 | 1 Rations Per Unit | Full Rations | Small |
| 4 | 1.25 Rations Per Unit | Better Rations | Better |
| 5 | 1.5 Rations Per Unit | Good Rations | Better |
| 6 | 2 Rations Per Unit | Double Rations | Best |

18. FORTIFICATIONS

Fortifications represent defences at a village, such as ramparts and walls. Each fortification level is capable of defending 1 village level effectively.

Therefore a village level of 3 would need three fortifications to be fully defended.

Partial fortification will provide limited protection to the defenders in combat, but full fortification will make the attackers task much more difficult.

Attackers can besiege a village and wait for them to run out of provisions, or rebel. This is a costly and time consuming task that has its own problems.

19. ORDER OF PROCESSING

Ancient Empires is processed in the following order:

All Market Trading.

All movement.

All production.

All unit upgrades.

Any special actions outstanding from previous parts of the turn.

20. COMBAT BONUSES

As your army gets better and your dirty tricks department gets dirtier you will receive combat bonuses.

These are the level to which your forces have special abilities over and above normal. They range from Navigation to Siege and are very useful to have in a war or if anything happens to you by someone else attempting a dark Royal Proclamation against you.

21. EFFECTS OF WEATHER

The weather in Ancient Empires varies from month to month. On good weather months, extra production is available, but as weather gets worse, the amount of production falls.

On good weather adjustment turns ALL production will be raised by 20%

On poor weather adjustment turns, ALL production will be reduced by 25%

On BAD weather adjustment turns, all units effected by weather will only produce 20% of their normal output. (Taking Rebellion into account).

It would be wise to plan for at least a few months of the year when food production will be less than expected due to weather conditions.

22. CAPTURED LOCATIONS

If a location is captured, and it has no potentials, then it is an un-surveyed location. To find out the potentials of the village, you will have to carry out a survey. A survey costs 30 Knowledge, which will reveal the potential production levels of Natural resources and food production. This is done on the "Potential Survey" Part of the turnsheet. This only needs to be done once per village that has zero potentials.

Usually if you capture a village in battle, the Rebellion level will be very high after the battle due to the village being ripped from control and your will being imposed on them. High Rebellion can be lowered but it will need your attention.

23. SHIPS

Ships are built at a boat yard. Boat Yards require manpower from the manpower pool to operate.

Boats & Ships move 600 miles per turn.

All ships and boats come with crew, and a cargo capacity that may be used for combat units or supplies.

Only Light Naval Units may use rivers. Ships cannot be upgraded. Each ship consumes Provisions for the crew.

Fishing Boats are able to fish the seas, and provide valuable extra food to your population. Fishing has a potential, usually much lower in coastal and river locations, so getting onto the high seas may well give you a good catch. Weather effects fishing. Good weather brings good fishing, but poor weather restricts the activity of your fishing fleet.

A Cargo Galley can carry 4000 cargo points. (Cargo Point values are in the Unit descriptions book).

24. TECHNOLOGY ADVANCEMENT LEVELS

As the game progresses you will see that more units become available to you as you get higher Technology Advance Levels (TAL).

To achieve these you must buy technology with Knowledge points and then buy into the next level.

You already have TAL 1 Unit technology. TAL 2 can be reached by spending Knowledge to reach that level. (See table 2 Below)

Each of the TAL 2 units technology has to be purchased using Knowledge points before that unit can be produced.

This is a one time payment per unit type and will appear in the "Current Technology" Section of the printout. All TAL 1 units are available at the start of the game.

25. TRADE

Market Trades are sent on the Monthly Adjustment. You can buy and sell goods to

generate income.

You do not need to provide transport goods, as this is assumed to be carried by trade caravans, and cannot be intercepted in transit.

26. UNIT ORGANISATION

In the Ancient world Armies were organised into larger units than the 100 man units you will be equipped with. They each had a name. Table 1 outlines those formations used in the game. Of course these are ideals and reality will rarely allow you to field a mathematically correct formation.

| Name | Men | Fighting Units | Leaders Needed | Machinates | Healers |
|--------------|----------|----------------|----------------|------------|---------|
| Century | 100 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Alae | 500 | 5 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| Numeri | 200-3000 | 2-30 | ? | ? | ? |
| Cohort | 1000 | 10 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| Comitatus | 1500 | 15 | 2 | 2 | 2 |
| Guard | 2000 | 20 | 3 | 3 | 3 |
| Band | 3000 | 30 | 5 | 4 | 4 |
| Legion | 5000 | 50 | 9 | 6 | 6 |
| Wing | 10000 | 100 | 22 | 14 | 14 |
| Horde | 3100+ | 31+ | ? | ? | ? |
| Grand Legion | 10100+ | 101+ | 44+ | 20+ | 20+ |

27. GAME CHARGES

START UP Free

TURN CHARGE £3.50

MONTHLY ADJUSTMENT FEE £3.00

THERE ARE NO HIDDEN CHARGES

28. LOAD POINTS

Each commodity has a load point weight, to be used to calculate the amount to be transported and the capacity needed. (See Table 2)

| Cargo | Capacity Per Point |
|------------|---------------------|
| Provisions | 10 load points each |
| Knowledge | 0 load points each |
| Craft | 20 load points each |
| Metal | 40 load points each |

| Unit | Knowledge Cost |
|-------------------------|----------------|
| TAL 1 to TAL 2 | 50 |
| Military Units | |
| Light infantry | 20 |
| Light Missile | 30 |
| Light Cavalry | 50 |
| Light Marines | 25 |
| Replacements | 2 |
| Support Units | |
| Healer | 50 |
| Sheriff | 20 |
| Naval Units | |
| Merchant Boat | 50 |
| Fishing Boat | 20 |
| Siege Weapons | |
| Small Siege Ram | 15 |
| Small Siege Shield | 15 |
| Production Units | |
| Foundry | 75 |
| Boat Yard | 30 |
| Defences | |
| Rampart & Ditch | 20 |
| Wooden Gate | 10 |
| Facilities | |
| Well | 30 |
| TAL 2 to TAL 3 | 1500 |