

MANUAL

# CRUSADER KINGS<sup>®</sup> II

## THE OLD GODS



# INTRODUCTION

## WELCOME TO THE OLD GODS!

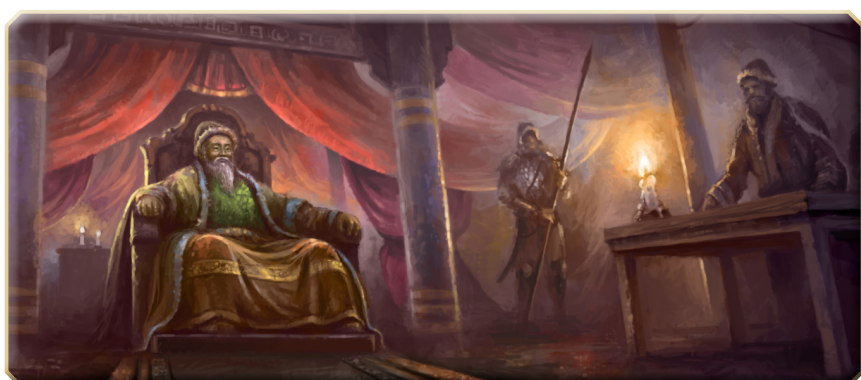
**PLAYING AS A PAGAN** in 'The Old Gods' is quite different from playing as a Christian or Muslim ruler. This document will explain the fundamentals of pagan gameplay, which is useful to know even for Crusader Kings II veterans. You can also access this information as a tutorial inside the game.

Conquest is much easier for pagan rulers - you can subjugate all other pagans and conquer neighbouring counties at will. The seafaring Norse have the added option of taking any coastal county, and can declare 'Prepared Invasions' in which restless bands of adventurers may join the ranks in hopes of plunder and glory. Take care, however, for keeping your realm together is far more difficult for Pagans - vassals are more likely to join independence factions, and can win such wars easier. Pagans vassals are also more sceptical of new rulers, which can cause problems until you prove yourself worthy. Pagan realms are prone to grow quickly and then break apart as generations pass.

Pagans are not as centralized as Christian and Muslim rulers and are therefore limited to low Crown Authority and the Gavelkind succession law. However, a powerful and pious Pagan ruler who controls enough Holy Sites can Reform their religion so that it is better able to compete with the monotheistic faiths. The reformer creates or becomes the new religious head of the reformed religion, and all faithful rulers gain the ability to wage Holy Wars. The restrictions on Crown Authority and Succession Laws are lifted and it becomes easier to manage large realms - independence factions will be less potent and vassals will be more accepting of the new ruler on succession.

As a Pagan male, you are able to take up to 3 Concubines in addition to your wife. However, these women will not add to your stats or provide alliances. You can gain Concubines through diplomacy or by simply taking any imprisoned woman as your Concubine.

The Christians and Muslims are a constant threat to Pagans - they are more stable and can wage Holy Wars on you. However, all Pagans except the Tengri have a great defensive advantage: non-pagans take significant attrition damage in pagan lands. Alas, this effect does not last forever though - if the Pagan religion is reformed or if the attacker has a high enough technological level, the advantage is lost.





# THE PAGAN FAITHS



**THE PAGAN RELIGIONS** can be roughly sorted into two groups: Offensive (Tengri, Norse) and Defensive (Suomenusko, West African, Romuva, Slavic).

## Tengri



Tengrism is the religion of the steppe peoples of Eurasia, especially Turkish and Mongol nomads. The chief god is Tengri, the creator god who rules the skies. Shamanism and animism also feature prominently in the religion.

## Norse



Norse heathenry is the last surviving branch of the ancient Germanic belief system. A pantheon of gods under the wise warrior god Odin rules all the branches of the worldtree, Yggdrasil. The other two main gods are Thor, friend to mankind, and Frey, god of fertility.

## Suomenusko



Finnic paganism is diverse, varying a lot between tribes and regions. It is shamanistic and animist, revering a multitude of gods, including Ukko/Perkele, Kuu and, in the east, Mastor-Ava, goddess of the Earth.

## West African



West African religion is a blanket term for the diverse pagan beliefs of the tribes of Sub-Saharan West Africa. Ancestor worship, animism and totemistic shamanism dominate, but there also various pantheons of gods.

## Romuva



Baltic paganism is polytheistic, with a pantheon of gods led by Dievs, god of the sky. Other main gods include Perkunas, god of thunder and lightning, very similar to the Germanic god Thor and the Slavic Perun. Other important deities include Saule, goddess of the sun and fertility, Daugava and Meness.

## Slavic



Slavic heathenry is polytheistic, the chief god being Perun, god of thunder and lightning, quite similar to the Germanic god Thor. Other important deities include Veles, god of the underworld, Svarog, Jarilo and Svantevit. In addition, many tribes revere local gods.

## Aztec (Sunset Invasion)



The Aztec religion features a creation myth centered on sacrifice - even gods were sacrificed to keep the sun moving. This is reflected in the many festivals and rituals of the religion, which feature human sacrifice on a massive scale. The chief gods are Huitzilopochtli, god of war and human sacrifice, Tlaloc, god of thunder and rain, Xiuhtecuhtli, god of fire, Xipe Totec, 'our Lord the Flayed One' and Quetzalcoatl, god of wisdom.

# THE OFFENSIVE PAGANS

**A**LL OFFENSIVE PAGANS lose Prestige when they have not been at war for some time, but they also never have a shortage of CBs to use on all those around them. Alternatively, they can go looting!

To loot, select an army and click on the 'Toggle Looter' button. Move the army to the lands of someone not of your religion to have them start looting. This will make you hostile toward the owner of the county and all his lieges, so beware of their troops. If you are looting a county neighbouring your own lands, the loot will go straight into your coffers. Otherwise, you need a fleet in an adjacent sea zone. The loot will be loaded onto the ships, and will then need to be transported back to the homeland, so plan accordingly. This means that only coastal counties and those next to your land can be looted. If you are Norse however, you have another option - your ships can navigate the major rivers of Europe, opening up more areas for raiding.

The Norse also have the ability to do Prepared Invasions. After declaring their intention to invade an enemy, landless adventurers may flock to their banners. These extra troops will allow smaller Norse realms to take on larger enemies, making them even more dangerous to the Christian and Muslim world. However, both attacker and defender need to be of reasonable size and a ruler can only attempt one prepared invasion in his lifetime.





# THE DEFENSIVE PAGANS

**T**HESE PAGANS ARE not quite as aggressive as the Norse and the Tengri, instead they focus on the defense of their homelands. The troops of the defensive pagans are more powerful than those of other religions, especially in counties of their own religion. Defensive pagans also have larger garrisons in their homelands.



# THE ZOROASTRIANS

**R**ULERS WHO FOLLOW the ancient Zoroastrian faith have also been made playable in The Old Gods, although the religion is not technically a part of the pagan religious group.

Zoroastrians worship Ahura Mazda, the uncreated God, as proclaimed by the ancient Iranian prophet Zoroaster. It was the official religion of all Persian empires (except the Hellenic Seleucid Empire) until the Muslim conquest of the Sassanid Empire in 651. The ancient form of the religion involved great sacred hill top fires, the exposure of dead bodies to scavenger birds for cleansing, and religious close-kin marriages in imitation of Ahura Mazda and Zoroaster.

By 867, the common folk in several parts of Persia still cling to Zoroastrianism but they are the subjects of Muslim rulers and their conversion to the Mohammedan faith is only a matter of time. Just north of these domains, along the eastern shores of the Caspian Sea, Satrap Vandad of the Karen dynasty rules the last independent Zoroastrian realm on the map. This is a challenging starting position and reclaiming Persia and its holy sites for the Zoroastrian faith will not be easy, but it can be done.

The Zoroastrian Church starts the game in 867 without a High Priest, but if you hold the Persian Empire there is a decision to restore the position of the Moabadan-Moabad (the Priest of Priests). Much like the Pope, this priest can grant divorces and sanction invasions against other Zoroastrian realms if they exist.

Finally, Zoroastrian rulers can enter holy marriages with close relatives of the opposite gender. Such sacred unions increase their standing among vassals, but producing a healthy heir can become problematic and you may need to fall back on your concubines for that.





# PLAYING AS A NON-PAGAN IN OLD GODS

**E**VEN THOUGH YOU are not playing as a Pagan you will find that they are bound to influence your game in many ways. Here we will explain how their unique gameplay affects you, which can be useful even if you are a Crusader Kings II veteran.

The first thing to be aware of when dealing with Pagans is that they are much more aggressive than other, more 'civilized' religions. They can conquer or subjugate each other at will and are always a threat to their neighbours due to their looting and their powerful troops. A wise leader will know when to strike at them however, for their realms are far less stable than ours, especially in the early years of a new chieftain.

Any county that borders a Pagan realm or that the Vikings can access via sea or river is at risk of their raids. Vikings will come in their ships, and steppe nomads on horses from the vast Tartar wastes. As they siege our counties, they loot and pillage the countryside, which will temporarily lower the tax income, so it is important to raise an army and chase them out. If they manage to actually occupy holdings, they can pillage these even further, burning down buildings, or even entire holdings. We can prevent this mainly by building forts - the fort level prevents looting, and heavily fortified counties can even block the Vikings' ability to sail down rivers.

The Pagan realms themselves are not the only threat - Vikings can declare their intention to invade a civilized country. Heathen adventurers from far and wide may then travel to join their ranks, boosting a normally harmless realm into a serious threat for even the mightiest of civilized rulers.

You can, of course, attempt to civilize these barbarians by sending our religious councillor to convert their rulers. If all else fails, you can also dominate them with Holy Wars, but you should be aware of how powerful the Pagan armies can be, especially when entrenched in their homelands, where their holdings will be hard to besiege and their troops will be much tougher to beat on the battlefield. Worst of all, it is far harder for us to forage in the hostile forests and marshes of the heathen homelands. Luckily, this harsh penalty can be overcome - either if the Pagans reform their religion and society to a point where we could almost consider them civilized, or if our technology reaches a high enough level.



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**FORZA DJURGÅR'N!**

=^.^=

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The development studio is currently working on Europa Universalis IV, the next instalment in their empire building series and East vs. West: A Hearts of Iron Game.

Continuing to re-invent and advance each of these, as well as create all-new titles, is just one way the studio keeps it's 500,000+ member community coming back for more. Just as important is the studio's passion for rich strategy, shared by their fans, and their legacy of providing games so deep and challenging that each offers hundreds of hours of gameplay.

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