

The
Chronicles
of Darien





INTRODUCTION

You're holding The Chronicles of Darien. Inside, you'll find a description of the dramatic and often tragic events that led to the present war.

There are many sides to every story; in this case, there are four — Aramon, Veruna, Zhon, and Taros. The history of Darien is followed by a presentation of the four points of view that correspond to the four sides involved in the war. Take the time to review the forces on each side. It's good to know what can and cannot hurt you.

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One: INSTALLING the GAME

SYSTEM REQUIREMENTS

Single Play

Processor 233 MHz, 64mb RAM, Microsoft or fully compatible mouse, 4x CD-ROM Windows 95 or 98, 100mb hard drive space, 100% Direct Sound Compatible Sound Card, VGA 16-bit color or better.

NOTE: It's good practice to have some free space on your hard drive at all times, preferably at least 10% of your hard drive capacity.

Multiplayer

Internet or LAN connection required. For Multiplayer games you may need more RAM and a faster machine than the minimum system listed above, as network games make high demands on your system.

STANDARD INSTALLATION

Installing Kingdoms

1. Close all running applications.
2. Place the Total Annihilation: Kingdoms CD in your CD-ROM drive.
3. Wait for the installation menu to appear. When it does, click the Install Game button, then follow the on-screen instructions.

NOTE: Make sure to check out the README file for the latest information about the game. You'll see its icon in the Kingdoms folder/shortcut menu.

Installation without AutoPlay

If you do not see the installation screen appear automatically after inserting CD into your CD-ROM drive, follow these steps:

1. Close all running applications.
2. After inserting the Total Annihilation: Kingdoms CD into your CD-ROM drive, double-click on the My Computer icon on your desktop.
3. Double-click on the CD-ROM icon.
4. Double-click on the SETUP.NOW icon. This launches the installation program.

Installing DirectX 6.1

Total Annihilation: Kingdoms has been designed to take advantage of Microsoft's DirectX 6.1 video and audio drivers. You need to install DirectX 6.1 for optimum game performance.

To install DirectX 6.1 and/or to check whether you have DirectX 6.1 already on your system, click on the Install DirectX button in the installation menu. The DirectX 6.1 installation program will check your system for earlier DirectX versions and report what it finds.

If no DirectX components are found, the installation program will automatically install DirectX 6 on your system.

If earlier versions of DirectX are found, you'll see them listed with the version numbers. Click on the Re-install DirectX button to update your DirectX drivers to version 6.

** If you have already installed DirectX 6.1 or better onto your system, you do not need to perform this process.*

NOTE: Almost all video and sound cards support DirectX. However older video or sound cards may not be compatible. Contact your video/audio card manufacturer to obtain updated drivers compatible with DirectX.

DirectX Troubleshooting

If you run into any video/audio problems after the installation of DirectX 6.1, but earlier versions of DirectX are installed and working fine, you may restore your original DirectX drivers by following these steps:

1. Click Start, Settings, Add/Remove Programs.
2. You'll see a list of programs that are present on your system, including DirectX.
3. Click on the DirectX entry, and then on the Add/Remove Button in the lower right-hand corner. You'll see a list of DirectX components on your system.
4. Click on the Restore Drivers button. This will restore your previous DirectX drivers.

The game might not work in Direct 3 D with some video cards. You can either play in software mode (Quality is nearly the same than in D3D) or download the D3D patch to the following URL:

<http://www.sold-out.co.uk/soldout/support>

We recommend to the Savage 4 and Savage 4 pro user to use the software mode.

Uninstalling Total Annihilation: Kingdoms

To remove Total Annihilation: Kingdoms from your system, use the Uninstall program included with the game. You'll see the Uninstall icon below the game icon in the Windows shortcut menu. Do not uninstall the game simply by dragging the Total Annihilation: Kingdoms folder to the Recycling Bin. This will leave some of the game's components installed on your system.

Improving Game Performance

Large numbers of units and structures can considerably slow down the game. You can try to improve performance with some of the following commonsense adjustments to your system or by adjusting the game options.

Adjusting Your System

You can improve game performance by adjusting the following system settings:

1. Close all other applications.
2. Check your system for programs running in the background (for example, virus-detection programs). These can not only slow the game down, but also result in lockups.
3. Run Scandisk and Disk Defragmenter (provided within Windows 95 and 98).
4. Check the startup menu for applications loading automatically whenever you boot up your system, and disable them.
5. Buy more RAM or a faster computer.

Adjusting Game Options

You can improve game performance by adjusting the following options:

1. Turning off or reducing unit sounds and chat through the Sound and Interface buttons in the Game Options Screen.
2. Turning off shading, anti-aliasing, and shadows through the Visuals button in the Game Options screen. This will result in less impressive graphics, but faster game play.
3. Slowing down the game speed with the slider available through the Interface button in the Game Options screen.
4. Make sure the Resolution slider is set to 640x480 in the Visual settings of Game Options. Higher resolutions require considerably more system resources.

In addition, in Single-Player Skirmish or Multiplayer games, you can improve game performance with the following options:

1. Reduce the number of computer opponents.
2. Select a smaller map.
3. Restrict the number of units that can be built (Multiplayer only).

INSTALLATION TROUBLESHOOTER

The Game Doesn't Install

Check whether you have enough space on your hard drive and whether the CD-ROM drive is working properly.

Game Won't Run

Check whether you have any free space left on your hard drive and whether the CD-ROM drive is working properly. Check for programs running in the background. Ensure you have Direct 6.1 or better installed. Try a complete restart. If the game still does not work, contact our Technical Support Department (contact info on page 76).





Two: The CHRONICLES of DARIEN

MANY THOUSANDS OF YEARS AGO, THE WORLD OF DARIEN WAS UNITED INTO ONE: THE KINGDOM OF KANDRA.

THE ANCIENT KINGDOM OF KANDRA

The Kandrans were a race as old as Darien itself, and their strict but benevolent rule stretched to the most faraway corner of their dominion. This rule was exceptional in one respect — it was not upheld by a vast bureaucracy, an omnipresent spy network or garrisons of soldiers in every little town and village. The Kingdom of Kandra drew its power from the Kandrans' mastery of Mana, the currency of magic.

THE MAGICAL POWERS OF THE KANDRANS

The Kandrans were masters of magic — even an average Kandran was capable of such simple, useful feats as turning water into beer or dissolving an ugly body wart. It is believed that the Five Wizards of Kandra held enough power to destroy the entire universe. At least part of this power was believed to come from a secret artifact known as the Heart of Thesh. It was rumored that the Heart of Thesh gave its possessor the ability to summon a devastating force, a force

against which there was no defense.

Fortunately, the Five Wizards of Kandra were as wise as they were powerful. While they instantly knew of any transgression of their code — called the Laws of Life — and doled out appropriate punishments, the Wizards never abused their position. They knew that any bending of the natural rules inherent in the manipulation of Mana would have disastrous consequences. And so, any personal joy derived from their immense powers was tempered by the weight of equally immense responsibilities.

Kandran Wizards practiced their magical arts at special, sacred sites that enhanced the power of the magic. These sites, marked by a circle of standing stones, probably contained extraordinary concentrations of Mana. It is an established fact that these sites retain special magical properties even today. When Mana was used on a truly massive scale, a rare mineral would sometimes result. This was known as mogrite — a substance that gives

mere humans immense magical powers, as well as immortality.

THE FIVE LEGACIES

The Kandrans were quick to recognize the value of mogrite. All of the five mogrite stones ever found were incorporated into items known thereafter as the Five Legacies: a pendant, a bracelet, a scepter, a ring, and — a throne.

Four of the Legacies symbolized the four elements — Earth, Water, Wind and Fire — while the fifth stood for the amalgamation of the four elements into one entity: the world. Thus, the pendant containing the mogrite stone known as the Stone of Darien symbolized Earth, and the bracelet with the stone known as the Soul of Kandra symbolized Wind. The scepter topped with the stone known as Angvir's Flame symbolized Fire, while the ring with the small but incredibly pure Macha's Tear symbolized Water.

The biggest mogrite jewel, symbolizing the world as a

whole, was known as Modron's Eye. It was mounted on the top of the Throne of Ludd, an imposing throne sculpted from blackstone, a Darien rock as hard as steel.

The Five Legacies were put in the custody of the Five Wizards of Kandra. Each Wizard was responsible for a particular Legacy for a single year. At the end of every year, the Wizards exchanged the Legacies among themselves. This was meant to underline the fact that the Wizards were not owners, but merely custodians, of the Five Legacies.

THE DECLINE OF KANDRAN CIVILIZATION

The Kandrans thought that putting the mogrite Legacies under the Wizards' care would ensure continued peace and security. Alas, they were wrong.

As time went on, the Wizards realized that possessing a mogrite stone meant much more than greatly increased magical powers. Mogrite also gave its possessor such benefits as immunity to sickness, almost instant healing of

wounds and injuries and incredible longevity. It also turned out that the mogrite stones incorporated into the Five Legacies were of unequal power. Modron's Eye stood out, in particular, for it gave its owner — or custodian — practical immortality. The uniting principle behind the Five Wizards was their equality as regards one another. Now, the custodian of the throne with Modron's Eye was more fortunate than the others.

What's more, the Wizards' new, long lifespan wasn't that pleasing to all the Kandrans. The resentment arose very slowly; the Kandrans were a people who enjoyed long lives in general — the average Kandran could hope to live well in excess of a hundred years. But after two generations of Kandrans had gone by, and the same set of Wizards continued to govern the kingdom, eyebrows were being raised and questions asked.

They were asked most loudly by the five acolytes chosen to succeed the reigning Wizards. It took thirty-six years to

train a talented Kandran for the Wizards' post; the training was very strict, conducted in conditions similar to solitary confinement. One set of acolytes had already died without ever putting their hard-gained knowledge into practice. And so, the candidates-in-waiting whispered and grumbled, sometimes publicly, which was a scandal without precedent in Kandran history.

THE FALL OF KANDRA

In happier times, the Five Wizards would have instantly been aware of the discontent. They would have righted the wrongs, punished the wrongdoers — if any — and things would have returned to normal. But the Wizards were increasingly involved in a power struggle. By that time, they all had their favorite Legacies, and of course the most coveted prize of all was the throne with Modron's Eye.

The final calamity struck without warning. There are no records, no evidence of what exactly led to the catastrophic

collapse of the Kingdom of Kandra. Was it a Wizard making a vicious bid for ultimate power? Was it a bitter acolyte, a frustrated Wizard-in-waiting, putting his hard-gained knowledge to devious ends?

No one will ever know.

THE DAY OF THE GREAT CALAMITY

What we do know is that exactly 427 years — to the day — after the Wizards took custody of the Legacies, Darien was struck by the ultimate disaster. All natural laws suddenly ceased to work. Farm animals swelled and burst as their bodily fluids instantly transformed to gas. People died horrible deaths, bones snapping as their bodies twisted into impossible shapes, eyes popping clear of their contorted faces as their heads swelled and cracked open like overripe grapefruits. In the Kandran capital, the enormous belusa trees lining all the main streets shriveled and split lengthwise, spilling smoking sap. Seas and lakes hissed

and steamed, rivers became rocky canyons, and mountains roared and crumbled into stony plains. Finally, the land itself groaned horribly, and a devastating earthquake swept Darien far and wide.

It was all over in a couple of heartbeats. A terrible silence fell over the tortured land of Darien, and then a bloody rain came down and fell for three nights and days.

THE HEALING OF DARIEN

Incredibly, handfuls of life survived — among them, a few dazed witnesses of the cataclysm that had just passed. They did not know why they had been spared and didn't dare to speculate. For immediately following the catastrophe, Darien was blessed by a period of incredibly clement weather that lasted the better part of a century. New water springs burst open across the land, deserts slowly filled with seas of swaying grass and birds began to twitter yet again, perched on the branches of young saplings.

It was as if Nature had decided to nurse the world back to health; slowly, the scattered survivors of the disaster grew into clans and tribes. But however far away and out of touch they were, all those freshly born pockets of civilized life shared one belief, one attitude: an absolute abhorrence of the magical arts. Merely speaking about the existence of the Kandran plaything that had laid low the land meant severe punishment.

The enormous store of magical knowledge accumulated by the Kandrans was lost. And as hamlets grew into villages, and villages into towns, there developed a new faith: a belief in the essential rightness of things as they were. If something was a certain way, that was the way it was meant to be.

THE NEW DARIEN

The healing of Darien took thousands of years. The newly emerged tribes had adopted a new calendar, starting with

the day of the Great Calamity as Day One. And so we know today that agriculture became possible again in Darien towards the close of the First Millennium; that the Second Millennium ushered in the appearance of numerous new species of flora and fauna; and that by the end of the Third Millennium, most of Darien's scars had overgrown with lush fields and forests. By the middle of the Fourth Millennium, nearly all of the tribes inhabiting Darien had reestablished contact with one another. This spurred progress, and many areas of knowledge grew by leaps and bounds, not least because finally the various surviving crumbs of Kandran knowledge became available to all.

However, one area of Kandran knowledge was left untouched. Of course it had to be the most important matter of them all: Kandran magic. To the creators of Darien's new civilization, magic was a Pandora's box of misfortune that would devour anyone who dared open it.

By that time, laws prohibiting magic-related activities

weren't necessary. To most of Darien's new people, admitting so much as an interest in the magical arts was the social equivalent of confessing to a fancy for gruesome murder. This was how things were.

Until Garacaius.

THE BABY IN THE WOODS

It was a special day — the last day of the Fourth Millennium. Pesco the fisherman was busy poling his boat along the thickly wooded shore. It wasn't easy — a mist had settled on the water, and Pesco had to watch out for floating, dead wood, a task made even more difficult by the occasional screen of reeds. He was in a great hurry though, because the evening was to be full of festivities to mark the coming of the New Millennium, and this hurry was his undoing. The flat-bottomed boat suddenly reared up like a startled horse as it struck a half-submerged trunk, and Pesco got very wet.

The water wasn't deep. Pesco stood submerged to his waist, spitting out curses and wringing out his cap. When it was dry enough to put back on his bald head, he did so, and took stock of the situation. It quickly dawned on him that all the fish he'd caught earlier were enjoying newfound freedom — he'd humanely but unwisely left them alive. He was about to start cursing again when he heard the baby cry. He listened, staring wide-eyed into the mist; the cry came again.

He waded through the water, then hesitated, standing knee-deep before a twisted tree bending from the shore; he had never seen a tree like that before. The third cry came. Pesco was suddenly seized with a grim foreboding of something about to happen. Dark-eyed with fright, he didn't even notice the drops of water that ran out from under his cap and down his face. The clammy air was still. Then Pesco's arm shot out as if of its own accord and grabbed an overhanging branch. Moments later, he was treading

carefully through the moss and tangled grass — he was barefoot, and the ground was covered with sharp, dry twigs.

He found the baby almost right away — he practically stepped on it after he pushed past through a pair of prickly bushes. The baby lay on a patch of open ground, naked as nature had made it, with nothing but a tiny leather pouch tied by thongs to the baby's foot.

Pesco's thick, scarred fingers untied the thongs with amazing deftness. He pulled the pouch open, peered inside and reacted as if he had just looked death in the face. He jerked his head back and flung the pouch into the forest as far as he could. Those pale, softly growing grains — they had to be something magical! The infant had a pouch of some unnatural substance attached to its foot!

Pesco's breath came in ragged gasps as he scrambled around, looking for a suitably large branch or rock. He found his weapon and stood over the baby, trying to summon the determination he needed.

The baby! He could see it was a little boy.

He already had nine children of his own. Even if he'd found this one untainted by evil...he just couldn't afford another mouth to feed. But he could find someone else to take care of it, couldn't he? But there wasn't any sense thinking about it. The pouch...

Pesco grasped his club firmly. He raised it and held it high for a moment.

But...the baby! The baby, the baby, the baby!

With a shriek of dismay, Pesco threw the makeshift club after the pouch, hearing it crash and tear through the shrubbery. He cursed as he picked the baby up, cursed as he carried it back to the boat, and cursed most of the long way home.

Pesco had always cursed a lot, and that was why he fished alone.

THE HUMBLE FISHERMAN

It is recorded that on the fifth day of the sixth month of the sixteenth year in the Fifth Millennium, a youth named Garacaius passed the final examinations at the Ugarit Academy and left this famous school under a cloud.

Before graduation, each student was required to submit an essay on an extracurricular subject. The subject didn't really matter — what mattered was the student's ability to argue a point in a logical and convincing manner. Prize-winning essays included "The Joyful Fly: An Examination of the Relationship Between Selected Household Insects and Wildberry Jam," and the sensational "Stories My Mute Father Never Told Me: Adventures in Carpentry." Young Garacaius, however, had dared to write a treatise on...Mana, and the role of magic in the natural world!

To many, this confirmed Garacaius as a suspicious character. To start with, it was well known that he attended

the Academy through the help and protection of the Leimar clan, which practically ruled Ugarit. Yet he had repeatedly stated that he was not a member of the clan, most recently when tensions between the Leimar and the Balistan clans briefly flamed into armed hostilities. When asked about his birthplace, Garacaius claimed to come from a fishing village south of Ugarit. But a couple of students passing through that very village quickly found that none of its inhabitants had ever heard of Garacaius. In short, he was already somewhat suspect by the time he submitted his scandalous paper. All over Ugarit, doors leading to prospective employers firmly slammed shut.

Garacaius did not ask for anyone's help. He left Ugarit and made his way to the fishing village he thought he'd come from. His Leimar "relatives" had told him about the poor fisherman who couldn't afford the upkeep of a child. He found Pesco, by then bent with age, though still cursing as fluently as ever. To his chagrin, the old fisherman refused to

answer any questions about Garacaius' origins.

Garacaius had nowhere to go, so he stayed. He went out fishing with old Pesco — the first person ever to do that — and the old man was quietly grateful for a companion who did not object to his rude manner and helped with tasks he found increasingly difficult. What was more, before long the young man showed a flash of talent that amazed the fisherman.

THE BOAT THAT CHANGED DARIEN

The boat Pesco used had a flat bottom, like all Darien craft. Its shallow draft meant it could easily skim the waters on calm days and penetrate any encountered river with ease. However, the slightest storm could be extremely dangerous.

After a lot of nagging, Pesco agreed to help Garacaius build a new boat with a revolutionary design featuring a deeper draft. Almost half of the hull was to be underwater! Pesco argued a boat like that would be difficult to steer, slow

to gather speed and slow to stop, and that the submerged hull would never be watertight. But his arguments were in vain — Garacaius was as stubborn as a mule, and in the end the old man gave up.

By the beginning of the next fishing season, the boat was ready. To everyone's amazement, it was almost as easy to maneuver as the traditional flat-bottomed craft. What's more, its superior stability allowed the use of a sail in relatively strong wind. Before long, Garacaius and Pesco were making long voyages to hitherto inaccessible fishing grounds.

It was during one of these longer trips that Pesco finally told Garacaius how he had found him, as a baby abandoned in the forest. It isn't clear whether he mentioned the magical pouch. What is known is that Pesco and Garacaius began returning from their trips with immense hauls; in one voyage, they would net more fish than all the remaining fishermen in the village.

For the first time in his long, hard life, Pesco had enough money to spend every weekend in the village inn, drinking as if there were no tomorrow and pinching any shapely female bottom within reach. One weekend, staggering back home after a night of libations, poor old Pesco fell into a roadside ditch half full of water from a recent rain. Mean tongues said he was asleep before he hit the water.

But there were also whispers that Pesco said Garacaius had used unnatural talents to secure a rich catch on every fishing trip, and that there was an ugly argument, a fight. The fact is, Pesco the old fisherman was dead drunk, and drowned in ankle-deep water. Suddenly, Garacaius found himself resented. Pesco's family held him partly responsible, although just a month earlier they couldn't praise him enough for his role in turning around Pesco's fishing fortunes.

A week after Pesco's death, Garacaius loaded his few belongings onto his boat and sailed west out of the village

harbor and into the open sea. The fishermen mending nets at the end of the pier glanced up from their work from time to time and looked at the solitary sail. It grew progressively smaller, lingered as a white spot on a sea lit golden by the setting sun, then disappeared.

THE GOOD FORTUNE OF THE MERCHANTS OF IRGIRON

Irgiron, an island located right in the center of Darien, had always been an important trading center. At the dawn of the Fifth Millennium, Irgiron was home to a dozen trading houses that kept a firm grip on most of Darien's intercontinental trade.

The merchants of Irgiron weren't as well off as they could have been, because the flat-bottomed trading vessels in use at that time were notoriously unseaworthy. As a result, the merchants lost as many goods to the sea as they managed to trade. Therefore, the appearance of a young man

who claimed to have invented a truly seaworthy boat excited a lot of interest.

Within a short time, Garacaius had all the support he needed to begin building an ocean-going ship. He retained the oarsmen — Darien craft were traditionally powered by seamen's arms rather than wind — but added a large square sail. As he explained to the merchants, the stability provided by the ship's deep draft allowed the use of a sail in almost any weather. Furthermore, the deep hull offered the possibility of large cargo holds — Garacaius claimed his vessel would be able to carry as much merchandise as half a dozen of the traditional craft, and carry it in safety.

He was right. Within a few years, Irgiron's population doubled. New manufacturers popped up almost weekly, and the Irgiron merchants grew fat and happy.

THE RISE OF GARACAIUS

As for Garacaius, he had established trading posts of his

own in all the principal ports of Darien and became one of its richest citizens. He established his center of operations in Estoril, Irgiron's largest town. He built a magnificent house for himself, containing what was said to be the biggest library in Darien.

But Garacaius did not seem to enjoy the fruits of his efforts — more and more he left business affairs in the hands of trusted associates and disappeared for months on private expeditions. He explored all of Darien's seas and was rumored to have set foot on some of the unexplored, strange lands beyond Darien. He made long voyages inland — on one of those, he reached the lost city of Waleph; its inhabitants had been cut off from the rest of Darien for five thousand years.

THE STRANGE VOYAGES OF GARACAIUS

The men who accompanied Garacaius on these voyages were very close-mouthed. On occasion, especially when they had

just returned from another journey and the relief had loosened their tongues, they described many extraordinary things.

They spoke of ghost cities, and stone houses along paved avenues populated by no one but birds and wild animals. They described strange creatures, some half animal and half human, and others that clung to life although their eyes had rotted out of their sockets and most of their flesh had decayed and fallen away. The men spoke also of strange places — circles of immense stone slabs where the very ground glowed with a soft, moist light.

But the very next day, when asked to explain or to elaborate, the men that had sailed with Garacaius would shake their aching heads and mutter denials. However, one thing they were all happy to say, whenever asked, was that Garacaius was an exceptional man and that they trusted him with their bodies and their souls. This strange mention of the spiritual sent shivers down the backs of most

inquirers, and discouraged further questions.

The longest of Garacaius' expeditions, which took him to the heart of Zhon, lasted nearly two years. When he returned, his retinue was increased by a new companion: a beautiful woman, as dark-haired and dark-complexioned as Garacaius was fair. Normally this would have excited much comment, and Lasha, the dark-haired beauty, would have been the object of many inquisitive stares. But times had changed during Garacaius' latest absence. Things weren't normal. The whole of Darien had been swept by the flame of war.

THE GREAT CIVIL WAR OF DARIEN

It all started in the land of Taros, the land Garacaius had left so many years earlier to seek his fortunes at sea. The clans of Leimar and Balistan had one of their periodical skirmishes, only this time the House of Ontinor felt obliged to put in its two coppers' worth. The Ontinor was linked to the House of

Aidenfel in the land of Aramon, and in the scuffle Aramon's House of Buriash took the opportunity to seize some disputed land. And so it went.

Within the year, every single clan and noble house of Darien was engaged in hostilities of some sort against one or more enemies. The web of communication Garacaius had woven with his ships spread the disease of war to every shore.

Garacaius tried to remain uninvolved, but it was hardly possible. Within a month of his return, his trading post on the island of Caora was raided by sea brigands, and the islanders were put to the sword. Garacaius led a small army of volunteers out to punish them, and before he knew it he was involved in half a dozen squabbles with various armed factions.

The Great Civil War of Darien lasted eight years. For the first five, it wasn't so much a full-fledged war as a series of ongoing skirmishes — short intervals of peace were

interrupted by bloody flare-ups that lost their fire after a couple of furious battles.

THE BIRTH OF VERUNA

However, by the fifth year of the war, things changed. The numerous independent factions, most of them grouped around the noble houses, clans and tribes of Darien, finally merged into four distinct sides. Three of these contestants wanted to pursue the conflict to its bitter end. The fourth — a federation of island city-states sought immediate peace and the settling of differences through negotiation. This pacifistic attitude was not surprising, for the island cities were constantly fighting hostile forces, having found themselves caught in the middle of the global battlefield.

It was no surprise that the city representatives elected Garacaius the leader of the island federation. After all, the islands had been his base of operations for many years, and he was widely respected. What was significant was that the

federation adopted the name of Veruna, an ancient Kandran word signifying deep regard for the truth.

THE TRIUMPHS OF GARACAIUS

It soon became apparent that the Kandran link went beyond the name. Veruna's forces, led by Garacaius, repulsed all attackers with astonishing ease. In the sixth year of the war, one of the noble houses of Aramon, the Dernhest, suddenly declared itself an ally of Veruna, and by the end of the year the entire continent of Veruna was in Garacaius' hands. In the seventh year of the war, Garacaius took the southern land of Zhon. But there were also growing rumors that the leader of the forces of Truth had used magic to subdue his opponents.

In the eighth year of the war, Garacaius invaded Taros. His army came ashore not a mile from the fishing village that had been his home. But the village was lifeless — its inhabitants had fled, expecting to be massacred. That

evening, the great leader was thoughtful and sad as he stood at the edge of his army's camp, watching the sun set over the lifeless houses.

THE REAPPEARANCE OF MAGIC

It was an appropriate portent for what was to follow. The Tarosian campaign turned out to be the most savage of the entire war. The noble houses of Taros ceased all infighting and presented a united front to the invading army. Hopelessly outnumbered, the Taros nobles turned in desperation to that old, secret weapon of the Kandrans: magic.

Taros had always had an unfair share of Darien's magic potential. There is a theory that attributes this to the active volcanoes in the Kaf range, which forms the continent's rocky spine. The cells of the Judicial Palace in Elam had always contained at least one unfortunate soul put away for showing an unhealthy interest in the magical arts. Now, with the armies of Garacaius quickly advancing inland,

these wretched aspiring magicians were hurriedly pulled out of the dungeons and ordered to save the forces of Taros from a certain defeat. As luck would have it, with their very first effort, the newly appointed Wizards managed to blind a cavalry detachment scouting the approach route to Taros' capital, Elam.

Historians agree that Garacaius was beside himself with fury upon hearing the news. He immediately ordered a forced march on Elam, and demanded an instant, unconditional surrender from the city's defenders. When it was apparent that a surrender was not coming, Garacaius retreated to his tent and emerged wearing a ring no one had seen before. Stepping out in front of the line of his troops, he raised his arms and cried out words in a strange language, then quickly knelt down and bowed his head. To a man, his entire army, fifty thousand strong, did the same.

Witnesses said a strange, dark mist then descended on Elam, silencing the jeers and insults of the soldiers lining the

fortified walls. A long and terrifying silence fell, and at long last the mist began to dissolve. A moment later, Garacaius rose from his knees and led his army into a deserted city. The entire population had vanished into thin air; it was a very quiet occupying army that marched in. Each throat was gripped by realization that Garacaius was a Mage, a Mage whose powers equaled those of the infamous Wizards of Kandra.

THE NEW MAGE EMPEROR OF DARIEN

After this final victory, there was no question as to who should rule the newly united world of Darien. There was only one possible candidate: Garacaius.

He moved swiftly, establishing the new Darien capital in the city that had been his home for some time: Estoril, on the island of Irgiron. He was probably at least partly motivated by sentiment for Irgiron, for that was where he had made his fortune. More coldheartedly, the central location of the

island conferred various strategic advantages. Garacaius' already magnificent house was rebuilt and expanded into a true palace.

On the day he assumed power, Garacaius made a famous speech to the Darien nobles assembled in the new parliament. He revealed that he had been actively pursuing magical knowledge for many years, and that in the course of his expeditions he had recovered all Five Legacies, the heirloom of the Kandrans. In a famous speech known later as the Oath to Darien, Garacaius swore never to abuse the magical knowledge he had acquired, and to use it only in the direst necessity and in accordance with the wishes of his people. Moreover, Garacaius swore never to use magic for personal advantage, no matter the circumstances.

THE REIGN OF GARACAIUS

In the years that followed, Garacaius kept his oath. His new empire suffered many growing pains. Civil war flared

occasionally, as participants of the Great Civil War settled scores now long overdue. Never, not in a single instance, did Garacaius reach for the awesome weapon at his disposal. All conflicts ran their course, all disputes were settled by very earthly means. There were even those who grumbled that a timely spell was preferable to having one's insides pierced by cold steel.

The first years of the rule of Garacaius were also marked by a personal note. The First Mage Emperor (a title he was said to detest, but which had been conferred upon him by a fearful, but grateful populace) became officially betrothed to the dark-haired Lasha, whom he had met on his last expedition in the land of Zhon. Four children resulted from this union, and their appearance was held to be a miracle of harmony. There were two boys and two girls, and one of each was fair; the others, dark.

By the time his children were of age, Garacaius had quelled all remaining unrest; Darien was in a state of total

peace. He began devoting more and more time to his children, and it seemed to suit him. Garacaius had always been a somewhat restless man, with a face that reflected the tensions running through his soul. Now he appeared relaxed, at ease...almost happy.

THE TRAGIC DEATH OF EMPRESS LASHA

Tragedy struck as it always does: out of the blue. One day, Garacaius took his family sailing in the first boat he had ever built, the vessel that revolutionized ship design in Darien. It seemed safe enough; he didn't intend to venture beyond the Estoril harbor. The weather seemed perfect — sunny and windless. But at sea, weather can change in the blink of an eye, and, after all, Estoril and the island of Irgiron lay in the middle of a vast ocean.

The squall hit the harbor like a striking snake. One moment, the water was as placid as a pond. The next, foam-flecked waves reared up as savage blasts of wind whipped

and slashed at the sea. The children panicked, and the boat capsized. Garacaius was an excellent swimmer and managed to save the four children, but his beloved wife, Lasha, drowned.

The squall passed as swiftly as it came, but things had changed forever. Garacaius could have saved everyone by using magic. Possibly he wanted to, but hesitated to break his solemn promise. By the time he made up his mind, it was much too late.

That morning, as the family clambered onto the boat, Garacaius was a man in the prime of life — and thanks to the Legacies in his possession, he could look forward to many years of perfect health. That evening, Garacaius was a crushed old man. And in the days that followed, he sank deeper and deeper into grief, tortured by his conscience.

THE WEAKENING OF THE MAGE EMPEROR

Time passed, but did not heal the wound. The Great Mage

Emperor seemed to lose all interest in the well-being of his empire. Trouble followed trouble — across Darien, old wounds were reopened and new ones were made. Garacaius acted ignorant; he dismissed agitated couriers with a weary wave of hand and returned to his private hell.

Eventually a deputation from all of Darien's tribes and noble houses assembled in Estoril. After a day of debate, the gathered nobles decided to present Garacaius with a demand: Rule, or step down in favor of one of your children. In this way, the nobles hoped to avoid the possibility of infuriating Garacaius — one does not pick a fight with a mighty Wizard. And if Garacaius' successor would turn out to be wise, all the better. If stupid, he or she could be manipulated.

Garacaius instead chose a compromise. He did not resign, but he put practical control of Darien into the hands of his children. To each, he gave part of the empire that he thought most appropriate. To his daughters, he gave what

best agreed with their temperaments; to his sons, what best fit their abilities. As he made the appointments, Garacaius also gave each child one of the Five Legacies. Possessing them would ensure that the new rulers would command more power than any scheming nobleman could ever hope to achieve.

THE FOUR CORONATIONS

His first-born son, Elsin, called Elsin the Fair, was renowned for his open and just nature. Practical, down to earth and honorable, Elsin was nevertheless somewhat less than brilliant — his desire for justice outweighed all other considerations. The one area where he shone was the science of engineering, with its straightforward, unbendable laws and rules.

Elsin received dominion over the land of Aramon, perhaps the finest of them all. Aramon was the most developed of Darien's continents, and Elsin quickly

proceeded to develop it even more, founding new cities, building roads and bridges, and establishing the famous Aramon Academy of Engineering and Design in the newly built provincial capital, Kaluen. To cement his grip on power, Elsin received the Legacy with the mogrite Stone of Darien mounted into a pendant.

Garacaius' second-eldest child was a daughter named Thirsha. Strikingly similar to her black-haired mother, Thirsha loved the land of her mother's birth, the land of Zhon. She was happiest when hunting deep in the bowels of an untamed forest, and spent whole weeks out in the country with just a single groom for company.

Thirsha received dominion over her beloved Zhon, the wildest and least explored of Darien's continents. With it, she received the bracelet containing the stone known as the Soul of Kandra. It was particularly appropriate, for the forests of Zhon contained many mysterious ruins dating from before the Great Cataclysm. As with Elsin and Aramon, sending

Thirsha to Zhon was an inspired choice. Before long, the stubborn, half-wild tribes of the continent were firmly under her control, and the tribesmen reverently referred to her as the Huntress.

Garacaius' younger son and third-born child, Lokken, had shown great promise. But after Lasha's death, much of his early brilliance seemed to be replaced with many undesirable traits. Garacaius dearly loved the dark-headed Lokken, perhaps even more so than Elsin, and he believed a hungry mind, when not fed properly, turns to feed on itself. So he decided to give Lokken plenty to think about.

Lokken received dominion over Taros. This ancient continent, some of whose tribes proudly claimed to predate the Kandrans, was almost constantly troubled by disturbances of one sort or another. The four noble houses of Taros all harbored grievances against one another, and much of the land lay wasted by years of fighting. Together with Taros, Lokken received the scepter with the stone called Angvir's

Flame. Once again, it seemed to be a wise appointment — within a year, Lokken had quelled all unrest with a brilliant mix of diplomacy, brutality and magic.

Garacaius' daughter Kirennia was his youngest child, and the one that most resembled her father. The resemblance included a love of the sea that survived her mother's drowning. As soon as she was old enough, Kirennia left Estoril for long trips onboard trading ships visiting the farthest corners of Darien. Her co-sailors quickly dubbed her the Sea Mage, for Kirennia had an uncanny knack for anticipating changes of weather and piloting a ship safely through the thickest fog.

Kirennia received the dominion of Veruna and the ring with the mogrite stone known as Macha's Tear. Among her first decrees were the abolition of all internal taxes and the doubling of wages paid to experienced seamen. The inhabitants of the islands that formed the federation of Veruna had a ruler who instinctively knew what her people did best;

within a short time, Veruna came to command a virtual monopoly on sea trade.

Garacaius remained to oversee the first years of his children's rule. He was a forlorn figure in the Estoril palace, a sad old man seated on the fifth Legacy, the blackstone Throne of Ludd. Although the mogrite Eye of Modron topping the throne assured health and vitality, each new day aged Garacaius by a week. He seldom spoke, and most of those who tried to talk to him received no more than a sad stare in answer.

THE END OF AN ERA

Ten years passed. All of Estoril prepared to celebrate the tenth anniversary of the Four Coronations. Among the scheduled attractions were a sea parade featuring the finest ships from Veruna's fleet; the inauguration of the Darien Exhibition, featuring awe-inspiring machines and other examples of fine engineering from Aramon; and the opening

of a gallery called The Wonders of Zhon, exhibiting unique handicrafts and works of art from that exotic land. After night had fallen, the assembled public was to be treated to a performance of the Fire Eaters of Taros, a group of artists skilled in manipulating fire in all its shapes and forms.

The day of the great celebration began with a rosy dawn. The white stone floors of the Estoril palace seemed to be lit pastel peach and orange as Gudnor, personal groom to Garacaius for the last forty years, walked from chamber to chamber in search of his master. He was determined to restore at least some dignity to the man he had loved and served twoscore years, for on this day Garacaius would have to make several public appearances.

It seemed Garacaius had not slept in his bed, and now, as Gudnor approached the Throne Room, his brow was furrowed with concern. It would be unfortunate if his master had chosen to spend yet another night alone on the throne, staring at the night's shadows with unseeing eyes. Such

night-long vigils left him looking even more frail and finished. Gudnor's hand tightened on the box of pomade given to him by Kireнна, and he entered the Thone Room.

A moment later, his agonized cry shattered the morning peace.

For Garacaius was not in the Throne Room. The Throne of Ludd was empty. And where the stone known as Modron's Eye had been, a cavity yawned mockingly.



The Four Realms

IT HAS BEEN 1527 YEARS SINCE GARACAIUS DISAPPEARED.
HIS CHILDREN, ALL OF THEM GRANTED IMMORTALITY BY THE LEGACIES IN
THEIR POSSESSION, CONTINUE TO RULE THEIR RESPECTIVE DOMAINS.

However, all this is about to change.

For the last couple of centuries, the differences between the four monarchs have become more and more pronounced. The emergence of four different “state” religions is another sign that the former unity of Darien has been shattered beyond repair. Previously, all Darien worshipped the same gods. Now, most citizens of Aramon wear rings bearing the silver Hand of Anu, Lord of Light, while the people of Taros worship a terrible dark deity called Belial. All religious inhabitants of Zhon worship Tammuz, the Goddess of the Hunt, and

the patron saint of Veruna is Lihr, a mighty sea god.

All four kingdoms have previously fought one another, but now a great divide is opening between West and East.

Ever since Garacaius disappeared, the kingdoms of Aramon and Veruna have been loyal to Garacaius’ great oath renouncing the use of magic in any but the most extreme circumstances. They have concentrated on building their power through economical means — where Aramon excels in industry and internal development, Veruna is a trade powerhouse. Both Elsin, ruler of Aramon, and Kirennia,

the Sea Mage of Veruna, insist that their father's law be obeyed — or else.

In the East, Taros is in open rebellion against the constraints imposed by the long-absent Garacaius. Lokken initiated his reign by using magic to subdue and terrorize the rebellious noble houses of Taros. Emboldened by his success, he has been practicing magic with growing intensity, going so far as to reshape the land to his pleasing. This has resulted in unexpected consequences. The Kandran Laws of Life stated he who manipulates Mana is like a swimmer borne along by a swift, powerful current. While one may use it to one's advantage, trying to control or alter its course leads to tragedy. Lokken insists everything is going according to plan, but that's not how it looks.

South of Taros, deep within the woods of Zhon, Thirsha the Huntress is also a regular practitioner of magic. Proudly independent, the Huntress has responded to the demands of Elsin and Kireнна with haughty scorn. She will not be told by

anyone when it is appropriate for her to practice magic, and she supports Lokken in his right to do whatever he pleases in his domain.

The preceding centuries have already seen several bloody conflicts between the sibling Monarchs. Aramon has fought Veruna over the barren land of Kuvera in the northwest, and over several islands in the Sea of Mannan. The pirates of Zhon prey on Verunan ships and slaughter their crews. Zhon tribes repeatedly raid the rich coast of Aramon, whose Monarch retaliates by launching punitive expeditions deep into Zhon territory. A seemingly implacable hatred exists between Taros and Aramon, who have fought several full-scale wars on ideological grounds.

Each side has many valid grievances against the others, and tempers have reached a boiling point. The Four Monarchs are assembling armies and readying for imminent war.

ARAMON

You stand on the steps of your palace in Kaluen, the city you designed and helped build with your own hands. You reach out and touch one of the two columns flanking the entrance. You remember the stonemason showing you how to hold the chisel, how to strip the stone away in thin, even flakes.

You always believed in leading by example. All of Darien knows that Elsin is a king whose deeds follow his words. It wasn't so in the beginning. Do you remember the day you started building your city, Kaluen? It had been a long march to the building site, and you led the column of workers on foot, sharing their hardship. Yet on the first night after your arrival, when you walked among the tents and listened to the voices coming from inside, you heard scorn, not praise. What fool would walk when he could ride? Why would anyone build a new city for a capital?

That first morning you saw three men struggling with a small boulder. You pushed them aside, lifted the pick you

held in your hand and with one mighty blow split the stone in two. Then you picked up both halves in turn and threw them onto a waiting cart. You didn't say anything, merely throwing the three workmen a look of quiet contempt. That evening, whispers of the feat of strength replaced the grumbling from the tents. It had been a lucky blow that had split the stone, in more ways than one.

It took many years of hard work, but you have succeeded. All of Aramon came to enjoy prosperity. Kaluen has become one of the most admired cities in Darien. No army can be considered equal to Aramon's steel-clad warriors, and even the unruly noble houses of Aramon have finally accepted you as their unquestioned ruler.

But now, things have changed. Your brother Lokken, as always, disobeyed the rules laid down by your father. He has been using magic with wild abandon and terrifying results. You've heard he's raising an army of undead to invade Aramon.

Lokken and the army of Taros aren't the only threat. Your sister Thirsha, the ruler of the wild continent of Zhon, has grown increasingly hostile in the preceding years. She has hidden herself in the mysterious city of Ulasem, deep within Zhon's wilderness; all contact has been lost. It seems you'll have to fight Zhon as well as Taros. Fortunately, Kirenna and the mighty navy of Veruna are likely to be on your side.

Victory in the approaching war won't be easy. The eastern coast of Aramon is horribly exposed — both Zhon and Taros lie just across the water. And there's always the possibility of treachery. It took a long time to reconcile the noble houses of Aramon to the fact that they all must bow to Elsin, the Mage King. The House of Buriash was especially bitter — its lords had ruled Aramon in the past.

Take the time to review your forces. You need to know them well, if you want to win against the Tarosian undead and the wild beasts of Zhon.

THE ARMED FORCES OF ARAMON

Aramon's strengths are readily apparent: the Mage King Elsin commands infantry and cavalry that are unmatched in the world of Darien. Aramon's fighters are unmatched with the sword and battle axe. Elsin's armies can also boast of heavy artillery and strong defensive structures, making Elsin's land might the most potent in the world. A conspicuously less formidable aspect of Elsin's armed forces are the magicians. Save for holy men — the Acolytes of Anu, who specialize in the healing arts — Elsin avails himself of very little magic, holding, more so than his siblings, to his father's precepts. His long-standing relationship with his sister Kirenna, the Sea Mage of Veruna, has brought with it sound precepts in ship building, making for a respectable Aramon navy.

EL SIN OF ARAMON (THE MAGE KING)

The Mage King Elsin is the benevolent monarch of Aramon. Elsin wields a mighty mogrite long sword — which he uses to direct immense magical energy. He possesses a Legacy that gives him regenerative powers. Elsin is the founder of Aramon — he can build Tier 1 structures. His spells are Lightning, Meteor and Earthen Wave.

Tier 1



WALL *Built by: Elsin and Mage Builder*

Most often used for protecting vulnerable sides of Aramon encampments, Walls are made tough — stone construction with a spiked barbed top. While good at keeping infantry and cavalry at a distance, Walls

can be fired over by catapult weapons and crossed by flying units.



GATE *Built by: Mage Builder*

A necessity when building Walls, a Gate allows access into and out of defended positions.



LODESTONE *Built by: Every Builder*

Lodestone is a dark luminous material available to all Aramon's Builders. It allows for the extraction and purification of Mana. Lodestones are vital for the raising of armies.

Like any structure, it can be destroyed by the wily to impoverish their enemies.



WATCH TOWER *Built by: Elsin and Mage Builder*

Watch Towers are a first line of defense for Aramon's armies in the early stages of the war. Manned by capable archers, they can keep small armies at bay and are quite capable in support of defensive garrisons.



BARRACKS *Built by: Elsin and Mage Builder*

Training of Elsin's Tier 1 army units takes place within the Barracks. The highest standards of medieval warfare are taught here to future Swordsmen, Horsemen, SpyHawk, Catapults, Mage Builders and Archers.



SWORDSMAN *Built by: Barracks*

The Swordsman is the valiant mainstay of Elsin's ground forces. Well trained, the Swordsman is the strongest of the Tier 1 hand-to-hand combatants in the game. His expertise, however, comes at the cost of longer training, and as a result, more resources are used in the process.



HORSEMAN *Built by: Barracks*

The Horseman rides a mighty horse and carries a sinister flail. His glistening iron armor sets him far apart from his weaker counterpart, the Tarosian Black Knight. The Horseman is a good quick-strike unit but has no long-range weapons.



ARCHER *Built by: Barracks*

The Archer is the only Tier 1 soldier at Elsin's disposal that sports a ranged weapon. Very skilled with their bows, Archers are lethal both as destroyers and defenders.



CATAPULT *Built by: Barracks*

Classically designed, these sturdy rolling platforms hurl large rocks for distance over small obstructions. A Catapult can do much damage, but cannot take much punishment itself, making it most effective behind your other units.



SPYHAWK *Built by: Barracks*

These highly trained, silent messengers have but one mission: reconnaissance. They fly high and fast, often even able to evade tracking arrows. They do not engage enemy units and won't last long if cornered.



MAGE BUILDER *Built by: Barracks*

The Mage Builder, an architect Mage among his warrior brethren, is recruited in the Bastion. This mage is necessary for the building of Aramon's Tier 2, and some Tier 1, buildings. If attacked, the Mage Builder can respond with a magic throwing hammer.

Tier 2



STRONGHOLD *Built by: Mage Builder*

This tower-like fortification is manned by a lone Cannoneer who sees far and wide from his high perch. It is a structure vital for the defense and safety of other unarmed buildings. Well armored, Strongholds are a valuable defense for army encampments.



KEEP *Built by: Mage Builder*

Much more impressive than a humble Barracks, the Keep is the source of the Elsin's strongest, most durable units.



WAR GALLEY *Built by: Mage Builder*

The War Galley is a versatile and well-armed naval vessel. It can transport other units and take part in offensives with its array of cannon. It is the entire Aramon fleet.



TREBUCHET *Built by: Mage Builder*

This huge device is the ultimate in medieval artillery. Bigger and more powerful than a Catapult, the Trebuchet lob explosive projectiles capable of leveling enemy fortifications from behind your front lines. Its drawbacks are a low rate of fire and frailty in close combat, so defend it well.

Tier 3



BARBARIAN *Built by: Keep*

The skilled and powerful Barbarian broadswordsmen hail from the highlands near Ullin's Fingers. Taller and stronger than the average soldier, these muscled warriors are bred for war. Their endurance and initiative is unsurpassed, and these lumbering soldiers are always up to engaging the enemy with their massive two-handed broadswords.



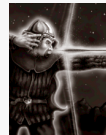
CANNONEER *Built by: Keep*

The medium-sized, medium-strength mobile cannon manned by the Cannoneer is an improvement over the Catapult; the damage it deals is much graver. It is however slightly slower and, like the Catapult, isn't designed for close combat. The Cannoneer can hurl explosive cannonballs over defending walls, unless stationed very close to walls or its target.



TITAN *Built by: Keep*

Wielding massive sledges, Titans are a clan of smiths loyal to the Elsin. They're big, they're brutish and their hammers pack a heavy wallop. Titans fill out Elsin's heavy infantry ranks. Their smithing background gives units in their immediate vicinity a bonus armor adjustment.



MAGE ARCHER *Built by: Keep*

Mage Archers are the elite Archers in Elsin's armies. Firing slightly farther than standard-trained Archers, their arrows also inflict more damage. In addition, Mage Archers can fire three different types of arrows: Fire, Tracking and Paralyzing arrows, depending upon their target's weak spots and the archer's personal Mana supply.



ASSASSIN *Built by: Keep*

The Assassin is a covert operative that is quick and lethal for enemy units. Armed only with his throwing daggers, an Assassin can cloak himself to move about undetected behind enemy lines, until his personal Mana supply runs dry.



ACOLYTE OF ANU *Built by: Keep*

These units are grand masters of Earth spells. They have three spells at their disposal: Earthquake, Meteor and Flesh Turned Stone. They also have the added ability to resurrect most units from the dead and heal the injured.

Tier 4



DIVINE LODESTONE *Built by: Acolyte*

Divine Lodestones are endowed by their builders with a stronger purification potential, allowing them to absorb Mana quicker than standard Lodestones. They require much more time and Mana to be built.



GOLD DRAGON *Built by: Acolyte*

This enormous dragon is Aramon's most powerful unit; only one of which can exist at one time however. With three levels of fire attacks, great range and hit points by the cartload, Gold Dragons are magnificent killers.



ANU: DEITY OF ARAMON

(Appears randomly, but only when an Acolyte of Anu is present.)

The deity Anu is the defending patron of Aramon. When summoned, the Avatar of Anu will defend the children of Aramon and end victorious against any odds. Anu can also attack Aramon's enemies and cause great ruin to opposition encampments.

The Noble Houses of Aramon

The four Noble Houses of Aramon generally maintain good relations with each other; armed conflict is the exception rather than the rule. All four Houses had, at one time or another, control over all of Aramon. Thus they regard each other as equals and were initially resentful at having Elsin's rule imposed upon them.

THE HOUSE OF BURIASH

The House of Buriash is probably the most powerful of the four Noble Houses of Aramon. Its lands occupy most of northwestern Aramon, and its nobles ruled Aramon immediately prior to the coronation of Elsin as Aramon's Mage King. The present Lord Buriash is rumored to retain grievances about the way his family was removed from power.

The Lords of Buriash have always been warriors by nature, and peasants inhabiting their lands don't have an easy life.

THE HOUSE OF DERNHEST

This House is said to have come into existence as a result of a union between Verunan sailors and the fair maidens that northeastern Aramon is famous for. Traditionally, the Lords of Dernhest have acquired wealth through commerce rather than warfare, so there may be truth in this. However, the present Lord Dernhest is determined to make his mark as a military leader and certainly has the talent to become one. His one weakness is an inordinate fondness of good food and drink.

The Dernhest House is probably the most loyal to Elsin; its lords seem to have little political ambition.

THE HOUSE OF HELDAIN

The lands of the House of Heldain lie deep in the interior of Aramon. Its nobles traditionally aspire to become chivalrous knights. The morality of the Heldain lords may be questionable on occasion, but there is no doubt that this noble house produces the finest cavalrymen in Aramon. All men of the Heldain House seem to have an instinctive understanding of their beasts, the rider and the horse acting as one in combat.

The House of Heldain has been somewhat divided in its attitude to Elsin. Interestingly, the Heldain noble most famous for his independence, courage and intelligence. Joreth, has always been a staunch supporter of Elsin.

THE HOUSE OF AIDENFEL

The House of Aidenfel, whose lands lie in eastern Aramon, claims to be the most ancient of the four Noble Houses. It has produced a large share of Aramon's artists, men of learning and inventors. There is a rumor that the House of Aidenfel is directly descended from the Kandrans, and certainly this is the Noble House with most links across Darien; its men and women often take spouses from overseas.

The most recent of these intercontinental marriages, that of the current Lord Aidenfel to a beautiful Taros aristocrat, has added to tension between Taros and Aramon. It's said every Tarosian noble dreamed of possessing this particular beauty, and there have been drunken boasts of taking her back by force.

VERUNA

Viewed from the window of your palace, the Lendran harbor is a forest of masts. Each day, several dozen ships come in or leave on voyages to distant shores. You are the true inheritor of your father's maritime talents, for no other nation in Darien can match Veruna's fleet.

From your earliest years, you've loved the sea. As a child, you'd spend hours staring at the blue-green water swell up and crash down on the sandy beach just a short walk away from the palace at Estoril. You would stand in the wet sand at the ocean's edge, feeling your feet sink a little deeper every time the water kissed your ankles, leaving little rings of foam. You refused to bathe after returning to the palace; you enjoyed the sticky skin, the salty taste you felt when you licked your forearm in secret. Your room faced the shore. You fell asleep and awoke with the sound of the sea in your ears.

Then came the sea voyages as you grew older. At first, the sailors laughed, but within a couple of years, you could

navigate by the stars like a veteran captain. You knew the sea's mood; you could sense a storm approaching even when there wasn't a cloud in the sky. It was as if the sea was you and you were the sea. You knew where to find schools of fish and where rocks lurked, even if you had never been to that particular spot before.

Recently, things have become strange. At times, looking to the horizon from the hilltop palace above Lendra, you feel a mixture of dread and apprehension. There are strange monsters stirring somewhere in the waters. There is danger headed your way. You know this, for the sea speaks to those who listen.

There has always been animosity between you and Thirsha — she never wanted to share in any of your pleasures, preferring instead to wander the forests of Irgiron. After she had taken the crown of Zhon, she banned your traders from that continent and actively encouraged Zhon pirates to attack your ships. Then Lokken turned hostile. It

started with his raising customs duties, impounding goods and charging progressively higher anchorage fees. And the captains who have recently visited Taros speak of terrible things — empty ports, abandoned towns and corpses risen from the grave and wandering among pools of hissing lava. Several ships that had sailed for Taros have disappeared entirely. It's fortunate that the skirmishes you've had with Elsin haven't destroyed your friendship, for you can feel war coming, lurking just beyond the haze.

You turn away from the window; there is much to be done. Your dominion is a collection of islands populated by seafarers, not soldiers. It's essential that no enemy army ever gain a firm foothold on Veruna's shores. You must control the seas, and it's time to review the tools that will let you achieve this goal.

THE ARMED FORCES OF VERUNA

Kireнна's peacetime interests in cartography and shipbuilding have made her island nation the most dominant sea power in Darien. Veruna boasts many more ships than any of her siblings' navies, all of them seaworthy war machines. Veruna is also the only kingdom able to build water-borne defensive structures, protecting her coasts from seabound hostiles. However, Kireнна's land forces are not to be underestimated. They are among the most diverse and technically advanced in Darien.

THE SEA MAGE (KIRENNA)

Kireнна, master and monarch of the Verunan isles can build all Tier 1 structures available in Veruna. She is a fearsome and spirited warrior as well, wielding a powerful trident and able to hit enemies with a variety of magical spells: Water Ball, Water Burst and Water Blast.

Tier 1



WALL *Built by: Kireнна or Priestess*

Most often used for protecting the vulnerable sides of encampments, Verunan Walls are well-made constructions topped by a spiked barbican. Walls can keep infantry and cavalry at a distance, but offer little protection from catapults and winged enemies.



GATE *Built by: Kireнна*

Gates are important fixtures in long stretches of Walls. The thick wooden doors allow access for traders and an exit point for an encampment's defenders.



LODESTONE *Built by: Kireнна, Priestess and Flagship* Lodestone is a shimmering material available to all the monarchs. It allows for the gathering and purification of Mana. Lodestones are vital for the raising of armies, but like any structure they can be

destroyed in order to impoverish foes.



GUARD TOWER *Built by: Kireнна or Priestess*

Manned by fearless Archers, the sturdy wooden Guard Tower, on its own, is a good defense against small raiding parties. Guard Towers are built tall to give the Archers inside a wide and unobstructed view of the terrain before them.



ENCLAVE *Built by: Kireнна, Flagship or Priestess*

The Enclave is very similar to the Mage King Elsin's Barracks. Inside, Verunan foot soldiers are trained. This Tier 1 structure is not fortified and therefore defenseless against enemy attack.



PARROT *Built by: The Enclave*

Discovered on a Verunan island northwest of Zhon, these highly intelligent tropical birds have been bred for speed and their ability to relay valuable information back to their masters. Because of their size, these birds do not

engage the enemy.



WARRIOR *Built by: The Enclave*

This basic foot soldier carries a long sword. Warriors aren't as well armored as Aramon Swordsmen. Still, Verunan Warriors are quite capable of taking the fight into the enemy's kitchen.



CROSSBOWMAN *Built by: The Enclave*

These long-range fighters are well-trained experts at their profession. Success in medieval warfare depends heavily on these chaps being uninterrupted in their work, as they don't fare well when enemy soldiers and monsters get too close. As with any arrow, their bolts are less effective against undead creatures than living targets.



CATAPULT *Built by: The Enclave*

The Catapult, a sturdy artillery piece atop a large wooden platform, is a staple in any good army. Although slow-moving, the Catapult hurls man-sized boulders onto the heads of its targets. Catapults are also able to strike structures and units behind Walls and Gates.



PRIESTESS *Built by: The Enclave*

The Priestess is responsible for much of the construction of both Tier 1 and 2 structures. Although very talented in conjuring and summoning, she has no weapon with which to defend herself from enemy offensive units. She is also a skilled healer and can be of great assistance to units behind the lines.

Tier 2



SEA FORT *Built by: Kirenna or Priestess*

The Sea Fort is a collection of docks and buildings with an open slip allowing the production of Verunan ships. While sturdily built, the Sea Fort has no defenses and so relies on other units for protection.



SKIFF *Built by: Sea Fort*

In peacetime, the Scout Ship serves as a fast transport for naval officers, and when the seas churn with violence, reconnaissance is the assigned task of this fast sailing vessel. Billowing sails power the ship, a pair of Archers defend it. While not heavily armed, this ship can see far over the waves and is fast enough to escape a fight.



HARPOON SHIP *Built by: Sea Fort*

By any standard, the Harpoon Ship is a formidable battle ship — very few of its unlucky targets survive more than a few salvos from the powerful weapon on deck.



FLAGSHIP *Built by: Sea Fort*

The Flagship is a multi-purpose vessel — while its lone Archer can do some amount of damage to wooden hulls, its more important task is construction. The Flagship can build Tier 1 and 2 structures.



MARINE TRANSPORT *Built by: Sea Fort*
During an alliance with Aramon, Veruna's fleet was augmented by the massive Marine Transport. With its flat-bottomed hull, the Marine Transport has no problems with shallow water.



MAN OF WAR *Built by: Sea Fort*
The Man of War is a large, multi-decked warship that literally bristles with cannon. A sturdy war ship, the Man of War can also transport friendly units.



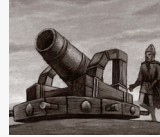
TREBUCHET SHIP *Built by: Sea Fort*
This massive wooden vessel carries a large, incredibly powerful Trebuchet on deck that packs a great punch. The weak point of this fearsome craft is its slow speed and weak armor, a result of the heavy Trebuchet. The Trebuchet has good range but takes a while to reload.



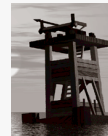
CITADEL *Built by: Priestess*
The large, fortified Citadel is a beautiful spectacle with a very serious purpose: units that are trained within its massive walls are the most powerful of Veruna's land forces. It has no defenses of its own, requiring the help of its students for protection.



BASTION *Built by Priestess*
This tower-like fortification is manned by a lone hardy soul who can see far and wide from his position and holds the reins of a powerful cannon. The Bastion is a structure vital for the defense and safety of encampments and unarmed buildings.



MORTAR *Built by: Priestess*
Mortars are large rotating platforms that lob cannonballs into the enemy's ranks. The projectiles travel a high, parabolic path that can clear the highest of defensive structures. However, the Mortar is vulnerable because of its stationary nature and slow reload time.



FLOATING TOWER *Built by: Flagship*
Floating Towers are a necessary defensive fortification for the Sea Forts of Veruna. These wooden towers have a ballista atop their superstructure that can track and attack targets in a 360-degree arc.

Tier 3



MUSKETEER *Built by: The Citadel*
Musketeers have very good range. These units need spotters to hit targets at their maximum range. They almost never miss, are well clad in armor and can do heavy damage when lined up against enemy attackers.



BERSERKER *Built by: The Citadel*
These wild, kilted warriors are absolute maniacs, well equipped for the lunacy of war. With either a pair of axes or swords, these muscular bruisers can hack their way through almost any opposition. A spare short sword is saved strictly for desperate situations.



AMAZON KNIGHT *Built by: The Citadel*

The Amazon Knight is Veruna's version of fast cavalry, able to hurl her spear with lethal accuracy. Endowed with a heroic sense of valor, these fighters can help to win most battles with the strength of their endurance.



DIRIGIBLE *Built by: Citadel*

The Dirigible's main use is as a reconnaissance platform. They are very, very slow, but from the great height at which they float, they enjoy a very long line of sight. The gondola riders can drop explosives onto ground targets or fire arrows at other flying units.



CRUSADER *Built by: Citadel*

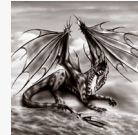
A result of a Verunan alliance with Aramon, this religiously motivated adventurer is armed with a gleaming broadsword and serves as a powerful addition to Veruna's infantry. This heavy infantryman is a Tier 3 unit — much stronger and more durable than a Warrior.



PRIEST OF LIHR *Built by: Citadel*

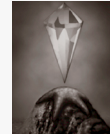
Only the most devout magicians are deemed worthy of the title of Priest of Lihr. Years of study and worship to Lihr add up to a wide range of powers. Most notably, these holy men can traverse water on foot. The Priest is able to build structures and defend himself with a Water Ball spell.

Tier 4



DRAGON OF LIHR *Built by: Priest of Lihr*

This massive green dragon is Lihr's personal pet and only one may be commissioned at a time. Three attacks, Fire Breath, Water Ball and Tsunami, and more hit points than any other Verunan units make the Dragon the most potent weapon at Kirenn's disposal.



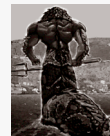
DIVINE LODESTONE *Built by: Priest of Lihr*

The Divine Lodestones built by the Priests of Lihr allow faster collection of Mana, but like their smaller cousins, are still vulnerable to attack. They require much more time and energy to be built.



PILLAR OF LIGHT *Built by: Priest of Lihr*

This magical obelisk is neither an offensive nor defensive tool. Instead, it radiates energy that heals the wounded within a fixed circle. The magical energy works only on Verunan units. Left unguarded by Warriors or Crossbowmen, this structure is vulnerable to attack.



LIHR: DIETY OF VERUNA

(Appears randomly, but only when Priest of Lihr is present)

The Water deity Lihr defends the faithful Verunans and will fight in their stead on occasion. In times of apparent defeat and during glorious victories, the Angel of Lihr will alternately protect his children and destroy the remnants of their enemies' armies and fleets.

The Noble Houses of Veruna

The four Noble Houses of Veruna have almost always coexisted amicably, the one exception being a short war fought between the House of Aenir and the House of Iuli, brought about by a territorial dispute. Otherwise, the most warlike measures the Houses ever take against one another are temporary commercial boycotts.

Veruna had been the adopted home of Garacaius; in contrast to other dominions, the houses accepted its Mage Queen with enthusiasm.

THE HOUSE OF AENIR

Aenir is one of the two Houses that share lands on Veruna's biggest island, Vidara. Originally a clan of hunters, the House of Aenir entered the commercial scene later than its rivals. Its relatively weak commercial presence is compensated by the fact that the House has produced the majority of Veruna's fighting men —most of the archers on board Veruna's fighting ships come from the lands of the House of Aenir.

The House of Aenir has been an especially loyal supporter of Kirennia, hoping to score points over its closest competitor — the House of Iuli. It has also been recently successful in having an old territorial quarrel resolved mostly in its favor.

THE HOUSE OF YDDYN

The House of Yddyn originated as a clan on the island of Athri, on Veruna's eastern flank. Gradually, it moved on to colonize the neighboring islands of Caora and Gudrun. In later years, its ill-timed attempt to establish outposts in the barren land of Kuvera led to a sharp, short war between Veruna and Aramon.

The House of Yddyn is said to produce Veruna's finest navigators, endowed with an almost supernatural sense of direction. However, this is not really surprising once one learns that Veruna's easternmost islands are covered by mists much of the time.

THE HOUSE OF JATHA

Most of Veruna's thinkers and government officials come from the House of Jatha. Its lands occupying just a few small islands on Veruna's southern fringe, the House of Jatha had always sought to spread its influence through wise diplomacy rather than commercial or military power. However, the members of this illustrious House are no meek pacifists. Present command of Veruna's war fleet lies in the hands of Lord Il-Jatha.

The House of Jatha has close ties with Aramon. After the Great Civil War, many Jathans settled around the city of M'Hari on Aramon's northeastern shore. The close relations between this noble house and Aramon's House of Dernhest have greatly contributed to the creation of an alliance between Aramon and Veruna.

THE HOUSE OF IULI

The moment Garacaius "rehabilitated" the Kandrans, confessing that he had been a student of their sciences, at least one noble house on every continent began to claim blood links with the mysterious, ancient race. In Veruna, it was the House of Iuli.

There is some evidence to support the claim that the House of Iuli was Veruna's first merchant house, dating back long before the islands were united as one nation. The House of Yddyn might have produced the finest seamen Veruna ever had, but it was the House of Iuli that made all those voyages profitable.

Originating on the island of Vidara, the House of Iuli led the colonization of the island of Irgiron, establishing Darien's then-premier city, Estoril. Several centuries later, when Garacaius arrived on the island, it was none other than the First Lord of Iuli that gave the future ruler of Darien help and support he needed.

In recent years, the power of the House of Iuli has waned. Its reluctance to pay the taxes needed to maintain Veruna's war fleet has earned the house Kirennia's disfavour. As a result, a disputed village passed into the hands of the House of Aenir, and the house also lost control of the Office of Customs and Commercial Taxes.

ZHON

This was once the heart of the Kandran empire. Now, monkeys screech where priests have prayed and tangled vines cover crumbling altars. You stand on the crumbling steps of an ancient temple and smile at the scorpion that scampers by your foot. For no wild, living thing will ever harm Thirsha the Huntress, the Mage Queen of Zhon. They are all your friends.

It has always been so, from the first time your shaky legs carried you out of the Estoril palace. You can still see the lemon tree in the corner of the courtyard and remember the scent on your fingertips after you'd rubbed the leaves. It was like a woman's perfume, yet infinitely more alluring and elegant. Suddenly, you felt love for that tree, pure, true love, and felt loved in return. The others — Elsin, Kireнна, even Lokken — laughed when you told them. So you never told them anything again, not even after you'd made friends with the wolves inhabiting the Irgiron forests.

Once they ceased being frightened, they behaved like big puppies...

Arriving in Zhon was like a dream come true. You disliked busy Estoril, its streets packed with people and vehicles. Was it your sensitive sense of smell, with all those body odors forcing their way into your nostrils, that made you feel slightly nauseous? Was it your keen eyesight that made you see what was in those faces — because there were many faces, faces everywhere you looked, talking too loudly, smiling falsely, grimacing. A thousand misused masks. You thought, when a wolf wants to bite, it bares its teeth. And so do people, in a smile.

The burghers of Estoril called the inhabitants of Zhon savages. You found those savages the best company you've ever had — human enough to share complex thoughts, animal enough to remain pure and simple. And sensible enough to understand that magic is part of Nature, just like the morning dew. Elsin and Kireнна, with their fixation on

material things, could never comprehend that or resist meddling in other people's business.

Expeditions from Aramon have repeatedly forced their way into Zhon, ostensibly to look for ancient artifacts. Veruna's traders are constantly trying to convert your people into slaves of the material world. It's time to put an end to that.

The forests of Zhon are your fortified walls, its craggy mountains, castles. Your forces aren't armed with swords and guns, but with natural powers and brute strength. And now that you have forged an understanding with the beasts of the sea, you have a force that's as effective in the water as it is on land.

With Lokken planning to invade Aramon, you'll probably have to take on Veruna. If victory is to be yours, it has to be achieved quickly — Veruna and allied Aramon command vast resources.

THE ARMED FORCES OF ZHON

To an outsider, the armed forces of the Huntress Thirsha appear the softest military power in the world. Thirsha's enemies soon discover how misleading this impression can be, for Zhon's forces are commanded by powerful Beast Trainers and Beast Lords, as mobile as the monsters they summon. Guerrilla warfare is Thirsha's strength. The Trainers and Shaman bend magic to turn their charges — normal animals of all sorts — into loyal war machines, all of whom are mobile and quick to regenerate, for Thirsha's armies grow even as they move.

THE HUNTRESS (THIRSHA)

Thirsha, the Huntress, rules over the harsh and challenging lands of Zhon. She, like her sibling monarchs, wears a Legacy that gives her supernatural regenerative and destructive powers. She wields a magical spear and can take wing to attack enemies with blasts of lightning, ball lightning and a massive Wind Wave.

Tier 1

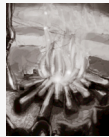


by enemies.

LODESTONE *Conjured by: Every Builder*
Zhon Lodestones are dark, glistening objects that allow the extraction and purification of Mana. Lodestones are vital for the summoning of Zhon's armies, but like any structure, if left undefended, can be easily destroyed



BEAST HANDLER *Summoned by: Huntress and Beast Tamer* The Beast Handler is a unit that through the use of magic transforms Mana into bloodthirsty warriors. If needed, he can turn his training whip on enemy units, but summoning is most decidedly his forte; the Beast Handler is better used for creating creatures to kill for him.



SACRED FIRE *Conjured by: Huntress and Beast Handler* This Sacred Fire is a great equalizer in Thirsha's war against the stronger armies of her siblings. This structure rapidly heals any nearby Zhon units. During guerrilla campaigns, Sacred Fires in strategic locations are a key advantage.



HUNTER *Summoned by: Beast Handler* The Hunter is a bear-like, swarthy highlander skilled in the accurate throwing of a spear. Fast and lightly armored, the Hunter is ready to aim its spear at enemies on land and in the air.



BAT *Summoned by: Beast Handler* The Beast Handler magically alters small flocks of bats whose eyes and ears then become Thirsha's. Fast-flying and providing a good line of sight, they are primarily scouting units that have no offensive abilities. Bats are very fast and can escape some attackers.



TROLL *Summoned by: Beast Tamer* This Tier 1 infantryman is a stout compliment to the Goblin. Armed with a double bladed battle-axe and clad in thick, durable armor, the Troll is a valued addition to the battlefield.



GOBLIN *Summoned by: Beast Handler* Goblin warriors are the basic Tier 1 humanoid infantryman in the Zhon army. For lack of a handy weapon, Goblins improvise, using human femur bones as clubs. Goblins are not very durable warriors, but are cheap to recruit and always willing to fight.



BEAST TAMER *Summoned by: Beast Handler and Beast Lord* The Beast Tamer is a more skilled Beast Handler. He has no weapons, wears little armor and his only responsibility is the construction of Tier 2 structures and the training of very powerful Tier 2 creatures, which happily put his training to "good" use.

Tier 2



GRYPHON *Summoned by: Huntress* The Gryphon is a mighty lion with powerful dragon's wings. In battle, this huge beast's rider wields a throwing spear, which it hurls from the skies. Not the strongest of units, the Gryphon depends on speed and agility — a typical guerrilla warrior.



DEATH TOTEM *Conjured by: Beast Tamer* One of the dubious fruits of a long-ago alliance with Taros is the Death Totem. This tall, foreboding statue fires a massive lightning bolt that does a great deal of damage to enemies.

**HARPIES** *Summoned by: Beast Tamer*

The terrifying Harpies: hellish birds with women's heads and bodies attached to giant vulture wings. Their burst of mind-altering energy can charm enemy units, making them turn on their own kind and fight for Zhon.

**BASILISK** *Summoned by: Beast Tamer*

The Basilisk is a large crawling reptilian with ominously glowing eyes of fire. Its weapon is its stare, with which it can turn enemies to stone, rendering them helpless against the onslaught of other Zhon creatures.

**KRAKEN** *Summoned by: Beast Tamer*

The mysterious Kraken remains submerged at all times. The enormous long tentacles churn up a vortex of water that is hurled at enemy ships.

**BEAST LORD** *Summoned by: Beast Tamer*

Beast Lords are the master trainers of Zhon. Their extensive knowledge of magic manipulation allows them to train the highest tier of Zhon beasts. The Beast Lord is well armed, wielding a bolo that he hurls with great accuracy. Beast Lords are invaluable, making them a primary target for Thirsha's enemies.

Tier 3

**DRAKE** *Summoned by: Beast Lord*

This small, dragon-like beast spews fire from its maw and is itself immune to fire. An effective offensive creature, it can fly into and out of battle in a blink. It is, like most of the Zhon minions, very quick and agile.

**SHAMAN** *Summoned by: Thirsha, Beast Lord*

The Shaman is a Zhon craftsman. Skilled in the summoning of the Sacred Dragon and the potent Divine Lodestone, his tasks are very different from those of the Beast Handlers. The Shaman has a medium-powered

lightning attack at his disposal and enough hit points to escape a modest scuffle with his life.

**STONE GIANT** *Summoned by: Beast Lord*

This huge, living catapult of a creature lumbers from grove to grove and throws boulders at passing enemies. Fittingly, these Giants are strongly armored and resistant to projectile attacks.

**ROC** *Summoned by: Beast Lord*

The Beast Lord creates and trains Rocs, the mythical avian monstrosity. Rocs aren't combat units — they have no weapons. Their main task in the Zhon air fleet is transporting land-bound units over obstacles. The

Roc has the unique ability to carry many units at once through the air.



JUNGLE ORC *Summoned by: Beast Lord*
Jungle Orcs are the Beast Lord's apelike creations, capable of laying waste to enemies with their massive paws. They have no special immunities but benefit from Herculean stamina and the complete lack of pain nerves.



WISP *Summoned by: Beast Lord*
This mysterious flying creature fires lightning bolts at its enemies. A powerful addition to Thirsha's air forces, the Wisp is a tough and speedy fighter, with a good line of sight.

Tier 4



ANCIENT DRAGON *Summoned by: Shaman*
These impressive, ochre-hued dragons have existed for eons in the world of Darien. The Beast Lord's magic is only used to tame these ferocious predators and to give them the ability to spawn on command. Flying on its huge webbed wings, it rains down hellfire on its victims from its nostrils. It can also dish out Ball Lightning and an impressive Shock Ring.



DIVINE LODESTONE *Conjured by: Shaman*
Zhon's Divine Lodestones require more time and Mana to be built, but reward the effort with the ability to absorb Mana much faster than standard Lodestones. But unless guarded, they are easy prey for the enemy.



TAMMUZ: DIETY OF ZHON
(Appears randomly, but only when Shaman is present) When the Wrath of Tammuz appears on the battlefield, she can guard the creatures of Zhon with unmatched ferocity. In an offensive capacity, Tammuz can be persuaded to rain death upon a visibly stronger enemy army. Tammuz is a powerful deity, able to move to attack anything, anywhere.

The Known Tribes of Zhon

There is much uncertainty surrounding the exact number of tribes inhabiting Zhon, as most of them have the nasty habit of killing all visitors. However, thanks to lucky explorers who managed to observe and escape, four tribes have been positively identified. Their shared feature is hostility towards any outsiders that dare set foot on Zhon.

Zhon's cities aren't agglomerations of living people. Rather, they're ruins dating back to the time of the ancient Kandrans. Because of that, Zhon is rumored to be the hiding place of many ancient artifacts, including the mysterious Heart of Thesh.

THE URU

The Uru is a tribe of hunters of exceptional ability. They inhabit forests along Zhon's western coast, and some centuries past were eager to trade animal skins in exchange for tools and weapons. Since then, the Uru have become increasingly hostile and xenophobic.

The hunting skill of the Uru tribe makes the tribal members natural warriors; they make particularly dangerous foes when fighting in their thick home forests. The Uru were responsible for initiating the cult of Thirsha, worshipping Zhon's Mage Queen as a Goddess in her own right.

THE IHOM

The Ihom tribe inhabits the northern part of Zhon. These fierce warriors spend their time attacking ships passing through the narrow straits between Zhon and Taros, or alternately fighting a fellow Zhon tribe, the Kinik. The conflict with the Kiniks is so old, it has passed into tribal tradition. To achieve manhood, an Ihom boy needs to bring a Kinik head. Since the Kiniks have a similar custom, it is only the extraordinary fertility enjoyed by the women of the two tribes that prevents Zhon from becoming seriously depopulated.

THE KINIK

The Kinik are the traditional adversaries of the Ihom. They occupy most of eastern Zhon, with the heart of their territory lying behind natural barriers even other tribes find difficult to traverse. From behind this semi-impenetrable barrier, Kiniks launch raids on Ihom territory. With an uncanny sense of timing, they often take place right after the Ihom are heavy with loot from successful pirate attacks. It is thusly suspected that Kiniks have magical, supersensual abilities.

The few successful attempts to trade with the Kinik revealed that this tribe has a rich source of precious gems and metals. However, the last nonviolent contact with the tribe took place centuries ago, and little is known about its present wealth.

THE SEIRN

The Seirn are the senior race of Zhon. Although savage by average Darien standards, the Seirn appears to be the most advanced of Zhon's four major tribes. Unfortunately, the Seirn is also the most secretive, and reports of the tribe's advanced knowledge of magic cannot be verified.

It's known that Thirsha's closest advisors come from the Seirn, and that they are respected by other Zhon tribes, for even the battle-mad Kinik give the Seirn a wide berth. The Seirn is also the guardian of the lost city of Ulasem, reportedly Thirsha's residence and Zhon's de facto capital.

TAROS

You didn't intend things to turn out this way. But they did, and there is only one possible explanation. Someone else has been casting spells against you. Not quite powerful enough to damage a potent Mage King, but enough to twist your magic around. And who could it be? Once again, only one possibility: Elsin. That sanctimonious liar.

It's hard to believe you could have made mistakes all by yourself. You've always been the most adept magician among the four royal children. You remember the day your father took you to the site of an ancient battle. There were the remains of a skeleton under a thorn bush. You looked into the dark eyeholes of the grinning skull and suddenly saw beyond, into the world of spirits. Since then, this other world has been as much of a home as the one you were born to, the world of living flesh.

It became your goal to throw open the doors between the two worlds. It was obvious that magic was the only key, no

matter what laws said. For no laws would be needed once the spiritual and the material joined into one.

At first, everything went so well. As punishment for your willfulness, you received the inhospitable land of Taros as your dominion. But within a few years, things had completely turned around. The bloodthirsty clans of Taros put away their weapons, and thanks to your knowledge and use of magic, grassy meadows and sparkling streams appeared where before there had only been rocks and dry canyons. Only the ultimate spell, the one to unite the two worlds, remained.

However, all the positive transformations on Taros had been watched with jealous eyes. Yes, your dear brother and sister weren't happy with your success. Accusations were followed by threats, as if anyone could dictate terms to an independent Mage King! And then, when threats didn't work, sabotage. Filthy, insidious sabotage. Land transformations ceased to work, and a terrible plague swept the

land. Only one option remained: to return the dead to life, and make sure no one stands in the way again.

It may seem Aramon is the most powerful dominion in Darien, but are material forces a match for legions of undead aided by magic? However, you cannot underestimate the secret reserves Elsin is sure to have. Veruna will probably be busy battling Zhon — it's entirely up to you to defeat Aramon. You must strike first and make it instantly clear to the other side who is doing the losing in this particular fight. One factor in your favor: the noble houses of Aramon aren't entirely supportive of their Mage King.

Before you strike, prepare yourself by reviewing your forces.

THE ARMED FORCES OF TAROS

Lokken, more than any of his older Monarch siblings, uses magic to its full military potential. Magicians and clerics are the cold heart and odious soul of Lokken's forces. Lokken's Wizards manipulate weather, raise the dead and create abominable bloodthirsty monsters to fight in their stead. Lokken's weakness, however, is his navy — his disinterest in peacetime trade has left him with no real ships of value.

NECROMANCER (LOKKEN)

The fearsome Necromancer rules Taros with hardened steel and ill enchantment. Lokken's biggest advantage over the other monarchs is his ability to build all Tarosian structures himself, regardless of tier. Inspired by his interest in the black arts, his creations rely heavily on magic and are often immune to spells themselves. Lokken himself can cloak, and in battle is a cruel opponent, smiting his enemies with a Fireball, Tracking Fireball or the all-consuming power of his Fire Wave. Lokken can also torch foes with a powerful volcanic blast.

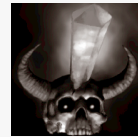
Tier 1



WALL *Built by: Necromancer and Dark Mason.* Like the other kingdoms, Tarosian Walls are a passive form of defense. They can be created to surround other vulnerable structures, keeping the enemy's fire and arrows at a distance. Walls are built high and but are not very effective at withstanding prolonged catapult attacks.



GATE *Built by: Necromancer*
Tarosian Gates are a necessity when building Walls, allowing your armies access into and out of defended encampments. They make for an intimidating threshold — all blackened wood and carved rock, would-be opponents face a grim sight when approaching. Sturdier than Walls, Gates can take a good pounding.



LODESTONE *Built by: Necromancer and Dark Mason.* Lodestone is a shimmering, crystalline material available to all the Monarchs. It allows for the extraction and purification of Mana, and is therefore vital for the raising of armies. Like any structure, it can be destroyed, thereby impoverishing an enemy.



MAGE TOWER *Built by: Dark Mason*
Atop each Mage Tower sits a sharp-eyed magician who keeps a lookout over the frontiers. When approached by enemy armies, he throws powerful lightning bolts their way.



CAGED DEMON *Built by: Necromancer and Dark Mason* Placed around encampments, the Caged Demon is a frightful and dangerous obstacle to enemy armies. Furious at being caged, they spit fireballs at enemy units. They have much stamina and can take a lot of punishment before they fall.



CABAL *Built by: Necromancer and Dark Mason*
Within the shadows of the Cabal, the spawning of the Necromancer's legions goes on. Using Mana, Cabals churn out ghoulish undead infantry. The training is quick and efficient, rapidly producing large amounts of fairly competent units.



ZOMBIE *Built by: Cabal*

It is not known exactly where Lokken unearths these recruits, but the blackened, undead Zombies are disturbingly human in semblance. While very obedient and completely fearless, Zombies are slow and cannot match higher Tier opponents.



GARGOYLE *Summoned by: Cabal*

Although fearsome-looking, these leather-winged beasts are not armed. They do have keen eyesight and are an efficient means of gathering information about enemy movements and fortifications.



EXECUTIONER *Built by: Cabal*

Executioners greatly improve the Tarosian ground forces. As its name implies, the Executioner never has any moral issues to contend with, rushing at his enemies with his glaive, a long, sharp blade mounted on a short pole. Skilled, well-trained professionals, they fight most zealously at the Necromancer's bidding.



BLACK KNIGHT *Built by: Cabal*

Clad in black armor, the Black Knight can accurately rain arrows upon enemies from atop a sturdy yak-like steed.



GHOST SHIP *Built by: Temple*

Although part of the Tarosian navy, the Ghost Ship isn't strictly a sea-going vessel — rather, it hovers magically and can traverse land and sea with equal ease. It is armed to the teeth with rapid-firing magical cannon, and the exploding energy it lobs is most effective against other ships and slow-moving infantry.



DARK MASON *Built by: Cabal, Abyss and Temple*

Dark Masons are unique in that they specialize in spells for the construction of fortifications, defensive structures and some summoning buildings. Dark Masons carry no weapons with which to defend themselves.

Tier 2



ABYSS *Built by: Necromancer and Dark Mason*

The Abyss is an "officer school" of sorts for the Necromancer's army. Units emerge from the Abyss after considerably more time than from the Cabal, but they are more powerful fighters.



WEATHER WITCH *Built by: Abyss*

Weather spells are this enchantress's domain. She can loose Tornado, Thunderbolt and bruising Ice Storm spells upon her foes.



FIRE DEMON *Built by: Abyss*

The Fire Demon is a classic small saurian creature from a dark nether plane. They are fairly nimble and sure-footed and a great addition to an attack force.

The fireballs it shoots are guided, and their relatively long range makes them most effective against naval and human targets.

**IRON BEAK** *Built by: Abyss*

This terrifying Stymphalion-like bird swoops down and wreaks havoc among the enemy. It can fire exploding eggs at its enemies and quickly retreat to a safe distance from would-be attackers. Its explosive eggs are most effective against buildings, slow-moving units and defensive structures.

**SKELETON ARCHERS** *Built by: Abyss*

These ungodly soldiers fire enchanted flaming arrows with deadly accuracy. Able to fire at long range, Skeleton Archers can strike at an enemy before it can come too close. Lacking tendons and other connective tissue, these units are too brittle to withstand close combat.

Tier 3

**TEMPLE** *Built by: Necromancer and Dark Mason*

The units that emerge from the advanced Tier Temple take longer to summon, but they are the Necromancer's elite warriors. The Necromancer builds this defenseless structure, but he builds it to withstand even very heavy assaults.

**BLADE DEMON** *Built by: Temple*

Blade Demons spawned in a Temple are quick, agile warriors. Their intimidating, red, bat-like arms do as much damage to the minds of their enemies as their long swords do to their bodies. Fighting more vigorously than Zombies, Blade Demons inflict much damage upon their enemies.

**FIRE SPOUTS** *Built by: Temple*

These tarantula-like monsters do exactly what their name suggests: they cover enemies in a blanket of fire. This terrifying creature's greatest advantage is its ability to cloak itself and lay ambush to its prey.

**SKY KNIGHT** *Built by: Temple*

Atop the back of a winged, fire-spewing abomination, the Sky Knight is a fearsome — and usually final — sight for any enemy that dare oppose him in combat. The fast, saurian creature that is his mount breathes terrible fire at its rider's command, and can swoop away very quickly when the odds rise too high.

**FIRE MAGE** *Built by: Temple*

The Fire Mage is a versatile Wizard with a selection of three fire-based spells: the short-ranged spell Death Breath; the potent Fire Swirl, which is effective at long range; and Fire Storm, which is this mage's most powerful spell. Each spell is more powerful than the last, but also more costly. The Fire Mage's talent also affords him some protection from fire.

**MIND MAGE** *Built by: Abyss*

The Mind Mage is a fearsome sorcerer who preys upon his enemies' biggest weakness: their minds. He makes his enemies believe that his own brothers in arms are his enemies, causing much havoc amid their ranks. This spell works against individual units and, for a larger sacrifice of Mana, against large groups of units.



LICH *Built by: Temple*

The sinister Lich is literally quite a drain on its enemies — it approaches enemy soldiers and radiates a powerful life-stealing energy. It is especially useful against non-magic-using enemy soldiers. The Lich's tough skin can take much pounding.



DARK PRIEST *Built by: Temple*

The flying Dark Priest is a master of magical destruction. He presents a regal image as he gracefully flies over land and sea on his flying carpet. His first two spells, Lightning and Ball Lightning are both quick and effective against fast-moving units. The third spell, Fire Bomb, uses more Mana than the first two but is a more potent spell. Trained for war, the Dark Priest is a fearsome combat unit. He can also summon the Black Dragon and conjure Divine Lodestones.

Tier 4



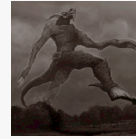
BLACK DRAGON *Built by: Dark Priest*

The fearsome Black Dragon is among the strongest pillars of the Necromancer's military strength. They are so feared, even among Tarosians, that only one is ever allowed to exist at one time. Three powerful fire attacks make this creature invaluable to any military campaign.



DIVINE LODESTONE *Built by: Dark Priest*

The Tarosian Divine Lodestones are the backbone of the Necromancer's magical abilities. Each provides more Mana than lower-level Lodestones and requires much more time and Mana to be built.



BELIAL – THE DEITY OF TAROS

(Appears randomly, but only when Dark Priest is present)

The patron deity of Taros, Belial, appears randomly, depending on his capricious will. Once the Spawn of Belial is present on the battlefield, he can greatly aid the defense of Tarosian followers or revenge them against their enemies. Belial can travel anywhere on the map and can choose between a devastating claw attack or a radiating firestorm.

The Noble Houses of Taros

The Noble Houses of Taros are a very bloodthirsty lot, outdoing even the Kinik of Zhon on several counts. For many centuries, Taros had been a continent where treachery and murder were commonplace. Things improved, briefly, after Lokken was appointed its Mage King.

The last century has seen a series of catastrophic events overtake this unhappy land. While a full-scale civil war hasn't erupted yet, the only way Lokken can prevent the Noble Houses from running amok is by directing them at a common enemy.

THE HOUSE OF ONTINOR

Ontinor is the least violent of the Noble Houses of Taros. Most of Ontinor lands lie on a large, semi-isolated peninsula on the western shore. This piece of geographical good fortune has meant that Ontinor has escaped involvement in most of the bloody quarrels that have turned Taros into a constant battlefield.

The lands of Ontinor lie right across the water from Veruna, so its not surprising that this Noble House is the principal importer and exporter of Taros. In addition to supplying other Tarosian Houses with imported goods and weapons, Ontinor maintains relations with most of the Noble Houses in Veruna and Aramon — or at least it did until recently.

THE HOUSE OF VENTAR

The House of Ventar is engaged in almost perpetual conflict with the House of Balistan. Originally, the issue was control of the commercial rights in the Taros capital, Elam. Since then, individual vendettas that have accumulated on both sides are enough to keep a war aflame forever. The current uneasy peace between the two Houses is the result of Lokken's brutal intervention.

Occupying isolated and barren territory in the northern part of Taros, the House of Ventar has never mustered enough power to become prominent in Tarosian affairs. Instead, it tends to ally with whoever happens to be at odds with Balistan. So far, this policy has brought little reward.

THE HOUSE OF LEIMAR

Leimar lays claim as the oldest and most aristocratic of the Noble Houses of Taros. As usually happens with such ambitions, the House of Leimar is said to be descended from a family of Kandran aristocrats that miraculously survived the Great Catastrophe. All members of the House of Leimar have some knowledge of magic, and are proud of the fact that it was the Leimars who supported Garacaius until he reached adulthood so many centuries earlier.

The principal noble of the House is Baron Leimar, a man of outstanding cruelty and deviousness. Recent reports indicate he commanded the Tarosian forces that pacified the island of Zakum, which dared to declare itself autonomous in the face of the wave of horrors sweeping Taros.

THE HOUSE OF BALISTAN

The House of Balistan is famous for the bloodlust of its sons. Legend has it that many centuries earlier, the founder of the House of Balistan had a vision in which he saw Paradise. The contrast with his own living surroundings inspired such hate that he turned into a homicidal maniac and subsequently passed the appropriate genes to his sons.

There is a saying that the sons of Balistan will arise from their graves if there is more blood to be shed. Incredibly, most of Taros believes it's true.

Three: STARTING A NEW GAME

Video Option

Before you start up Total Annihilation: Kingdoms, you should run choose renderer, and select what video mode in which to play the game. If you have hardware acceleration, you can select Glide, Direct3D or software. If you do not have a video hardware accelerator card, you will only have the software option available.

Quick Play

To dive right in and start playing:

- Select Play Computer Opponent.
- Select a Map.
- Select a Side.
- Select OK.

GAME OVERVIEW

Total Annihilation:Kingdoms is a real-time strategy game. The object of the game is to defeat your opponent by carefully managing your units, structures and resources in real time — you won't stop to take turns while your opponent manages his armies! You'll win if you make the

right strategic choices, but you must also move quickly — a weak move made promptly is often better than a brilliant one made too late.

If you are new to real-time strategy games, make sure you're familiar with the structures and units at your disposal, their place on the various unit hierarchies, and understand their strengths and weaknesses. It's also a good idea to have some knowledge of the units and structures at your enemy's command, too. Section II of this manual provides descriptions of the four different Monarch's structures and units.

Total Annihilation: Kingdoms features 3D terrain. Treat it as you do terrain in the real world, because that's how it affects your units. Terrain will affect what your units can see and what they can't. If a unit is standing on a hill, it will see farther than units at the base of this hill. And units with distance weapons will shoot farther, too.

Finally, Total Annihilation: Kingdoms is a game in which winning and losing are both fun. Don't worry about winning too much when you're fresh to the game. Just play, and have fun!

HOW TO PLAY TOTAL ANNIHILATION: KINGDOMS

Total Annihilation: Kingdoms is a real-time strategy game (RTS) in which players take the role of one of four immortal monarchs of the magical land of Darien. You'll have to use every ounce of cunning, strategy and skill at your command to gather precious resources, build an army from the ground up, and lead your forces into battle!

This section will provide an introduction to the game for novice players. This is just an example of how to play the game, not a treatise on RTS gameplay. It is by no means the only way to play the game, because as you advance in skill and experience, you will invent your own strategies, discover new uses for familiar or unfamiliar units or even download completely new units and maps from the Cavedog Entertainment Web site.

At its most basic level, playing Total Annihilation: Kingdoms means balancing time and resources while efficiently constructing an army of valiant swordsmen or crazed zombies. Each unit comes with a price in resources, and each unit requires a pre-set amount of time to build. Balancing these costs are units that deepen your pool of resources, and others that speed up your efforts.

Let's talk about the opening moves of two basic strategies for beginning players, the Quick Rush and the Sustained Attack, and then describe something in between in greater

detail. There are of course many other strategies, but these two make for good examples. As you play, you'll develop your own strategy.

In the Quick Rush, a player will forgo defenses and large-scale resource-gathering in favor of constructing a large number of fast, inexpensive units. This way, the player hopes to quickly get the drop on his/her opponent, while they are at their weakest.

The player using a Sustained Attack concentrates on building a well-fortified base, gathering resources and attacking with a large, well-supported army. Both of these strategies work well, especially in the hands of a master. Both can be defended against...also in the hands of a master.

Our in-between example is for the House of Aramon. Let's start on a basic land map against one opponent. Each player starts off with one unit, the Monarch, which will appear in the center of the main screen at the start of the game.

Around your Monarch, you'll see a radius of bright, visible terrain surrounded by inky blackness representing unexplored territory. As you move around, more terrain will come into your Monarch's line of sight. As you move some more, previously visible terrain will fade into gray as it moves out of view. This gray "fog of war" will show terrain you've visited, but not enemy units or changes that have occurred since your Monarch moved out of sight.

Your objective is to eliminate your opponent, and the

clock is running. You should use your Monarch to create a Barracks. Select him by left-clicking directly over the unit, or dragging a square around him. The Monarch's build menu will appear on the bottom of the screen, showing you all of the units the Monarch is capable of constructing.

Select the Barracks in the lower right. Your cursor in the main screen will show a "ghost image" of the Barracks — left-click to place the Barracks in the location of your choice. If you are unable to build a Barracks in a particular location (likely because of rough terrain, surface features or water), the ghost image will show an "X." Sometimes placing a unit can be a bit tricky, but keep looking around and you'll find a spot. Once you choose the location of the Barracks, the Monarch will move there and begin construction.

After the Barracks are completed, select it with a left-click. The Barracks' build menu will appear on the bottom. Left-click twice on the Mage Builder; you are issuing orders for the Barracks to train two of these units, one after the other. Numbers will appear on the buttons to show you the number of "queued" units the Barracks has in its build list.

While this process is started, take your Monarch and start searching for a Mana site, which appear as small circular objects with glowing stars with some stone structures around it. There should be one nearby. If you don't see it, search a larger area — it's around there somewhere. Once you've found one, select the Lodestone from the build menu

and build it directly on top of the Mana site. Once completed, the magical powers of the Lodestone will increase your pool of resources, which you will need to build bigger and more powerful units. In the lower right-hand corner of your screen you will see a crystal ball that will tell you your Mana status. The numbers to the left and right of the crystal ball show the amount of incoming (left) and outgoing (right) Mana.

By this time, the Barracks will have turned out the first Mage Builder. Select and order him to start building a Garrison. Once the Mage Builder starts this task, select your Monarch (once he's done building the Lodestone) and move the cursor over the sparkling image of the under-construction Garrison. You'll see an animated hammer. Left-click, and your Monarch will move to the Garrison and begin to assist the Mage Builder in construction. With the Monarch's considerable power added to the Mage Builder's, this will speed up the construction process. Any unit capable of constructing or summoning can be ordered to assist fellow units in this fashion, and the intelligent use of this feature separates the good players from the bad!

Select the Mage Builder while he is still constructing. From his build menu, hold down the Shift key and select a Stronghold. Keeping the Shift key down, place some protective Strongholds around your new base. The ghost images will now appear everywhere you click. By holding the Shift

key down, you can queue up multiple construction orders — once the Garrison is completed, the Mage Builder will automatically begin constructing Strongholds, one after the other.

About this time, the second Mage Builder should be ready for action — select and order him to guard your first Mage Builder via the orders menu. With the guard order, a unit will automatically assist with units they themselves can build. With one or more helping out, you can speed up any construction process. The extra speed comes at an extra price in resources. Like everything else, balance is key!

Now, select your Barracks and start building other units — Archers, Swordsmen, Horseman or Catapults. The order in which you select units determines the order in which they're built. A left-click on the build button increases the build number by one, while a right-click decreases the number by one. If you hold down the Shift key and left-click, the queue number will increase by five; hit Shift and right-click to decrease the number by five. To order a structure to produce only one type of unit for an indefinite period, hold down the CTRL key and select the unit. The structure will now continue to produce that one type of unit, one after the other, until you order it to do otherwise.

Not only can you order a structure to build a whole slew of units, you can issue orders to those units before they even

arrive on the field of battle. Your forces can “hit the ground running,” and save precious time. To do this, select the Barracks, click the Move button, and click somewhere on the map you've already explored. Now, if you hold down the Shift key with the Barracks selected, you'll see a ghost image showing the path and end point. Any unit leaving the Barracks will automatically move to that spot. This command works for Move and Patrol. To issue more commands to your units, simply hold down the Shift key — the next order will be added to the list of commands.

Let's go back to your first Mage Builder, the one ordered to build the Garrison. Select and order him to build a Wall. Hold down the Shift key (to queue up build orders), then click and drag to order a section of walls to be built. You'll see walls being placed wherever you move the cursor (don't move your cursor too fast or else gaps can appear in your fortifications). This click-and-drag feature is particularly handy when building walls or queuing up forces when you are playing Zhon.

Now, select the completed Garrison. You'll notice all the possible order commands for the Barracks can also be found in the Garrison's command menu, but a whole new set of more powerful units can now be built.

All Total Annihilation: Kingdoms units and structures have a place on an overall build hierarchy — the more powerful the unit, the higher it is on the hierarchy. While all

four sides have distinctly different units and hierarchies, they all have one thing in common: the more powerful the unit, the higher it is on the hierarchy, and the more time and resources it takes to build.

Aramon has four levels in its hierarchy. The Barracks is at level one, the Garrison at level two. In the Garrison, you can build an Acolyte, a construction-capable unit more powerful than the Mage Builder. The Acolyte of Anu can summon level four units and structures, such as the Dragon of Anu or a Divine Lodestone. Of course, the cost of all of these units increases as you move up the hierarchy.

Let's select your offensive units (e.g. Swordsmen, Horsemen and Archers) and go looking for a fight. Select them, either by clicking and dragging a square around them or by selecting one after the other by holding down the Shift key and left-clicking each one. Order them to move into the unexplored sections of the map in search of the enemy.

Once you've located enemy units, move the cursor over the units you would like to attack. The cursor will change to an animated attack cursor. If it doesn't, this means your units cannot attack — some units and structures can be attacked only by certain types of units. You'll need larger projectile units, such as the Catapult, to attack structure and fortifications.

WORKING WITH RESOURCES

The resource in Total Annihilation: Kingdoms to manage is Mana. This resource is shown in the lower-right corner. All units cost a set amount to create, but the resources can be modified in a number of ways:

- Building a Lodestone on a Mana site will increase your supply, based on the type of Mana site and Lodestone.
- For single-player missions, the starting Mana has been set to a predetermined level.

Every unit requires a certain amount of Mana to produce. As that unit is produced, that Mana is used from your supply. If the amount of Mana you are using exceeds the amount you are bringing in and your stores are depleted, your production will be greatly slowed. Needless to say, it is a good idea to keep your amount of Mana well above zero.

Main Title Options

The Main Menu screen presents you with five options.

- **PLAY THE ADVENTURE** starts a new single-player story/mission game.
- **PLAY AN OPPONENT** starts a new multiplayer game.
- **PLAY THE MACHINE** starts a new single-player skirmish with computer opponent(s).
- **OPTIONS** allows you to adjust settings for sound,

graphics and screen resolution.

- **EXIT** closes the program and takes you back to the desktop.

Playing the Adventure

In the Adventure, you'll eventually play the role of all four Monarchs as each battles the forces of its immortal siblings. You'll use your units progressively, playing along in the riveting story that spans the world of Darien. The more you play, the more units are introduced and the more the story unfolds. There are also special, unique units that you will have to guide, keep alive and perform special tasks.

Choosing Play Adventure from the Main Menu gives you a new set of options. Select New if you have not started a new game before.

- **PREVIOUS** takes you back to the previous menu.
- **START** starts the story from the selected chapter.
- **CHANGE NAME** selects a different game name.
- **NEXT CHAPTER** selects the next chapter, if unlocked.
- **PREVIOUS CHAPTER** selects the previous chapter.
- **LOAD GAME** loads a saved game.

LOAD GAME SCREEN

After you click 'OK' in the Battle Room, Skirmish Setup or Story Journal, this screen tracks the process of loading the game. The master progress bar on the bottom gives an overall percentage on the lower right and the progress of specific elements on the lower left. In Multiplayer games the slots in the upper left contain the names of the players and shows you their individual progress. The name of the map being loaded is always displayed in the upper right.

Play The Machine

We suggest playing the computer after you have played enough of the story to feel comfortable with the game. Selecting PLAY THE MACHINE will launch a game in which you play against up to seven computer opponents. Traditionally, this is good training ground for later multiplayer games, but you'll probably fight a better Campaign game, too. The Skirmish mode gives you instant access to the game's most sophisticated units, whereas the Campaign is arranged in a progressive learning curve.

The PLAY THE MACHINE screen also gives you an opportunity to customize your game. The panel on the right lets you set starting conditions for yourself and the computer opponents.

- **Player Name/AI Opponent** lists the name and number of AI Opponents.
- **Side** states the side of Player and AI.
- **Color** color of side.
- **Team** allows team assignments.
- **Fog Of War** turns on/off the fog of war.
- **Random Start Locations** randomly select start locations.
- **Cheat Codes** useable or not.
- **Monarch Expendable** on/off of death of monarch ends game.
- **Map Revealed** on shows all of the map at all times.
- **Units** allows the player to set the number of units allowed in the game.
- **Map** allows you to select a map to play on.
- **Map Information Window** lists information about the selected map.
- **Options** takes you to the options screen (see options).
- **Previous** takes the player back to the previous menu.
- **Play** begins the battle.

Game Options

The Game Options screen accessed through the OPTIONS button presents a wide variety of choices. Many of these options affect game performance.

The Game Options screen can also be accessed during the game with the F2 key.

- **INTERFACE** leads to a menu with Interface Options. Overall game speed, scroll speed, text on/off, number and delay of text displayed on your screen. The Interface button within the Interface Options menu lets you choose between a left- and right-click mouse interface. This choice is discussed in Section IV — please see Table of Contents.
- **MUSIC** opens a menu with Music Options. Music volume and on/off.
- **SOUND** opens a menu with Sound Options. Sound (on or off), Unit sounds (on or off) and general effects sound volume. Turning Unit Sounds off or down can improve game performance.
- **VISUALS** opens a menu with Graphic Options. Screen size can be adjusted from here, depending on your computer's video card. The blood and damage bars can also be set on or off from here.

STARTING A NEW OPPONENT GAME

To play Total Annihilation: Kingdoms against human and AI opponents, click on the Opponent Game button on the Main Menu screen.

The Select Connection screen will appear, giving you the following connection options.

- **Boneyards** play on Cavedog's free online matchmaking service.
- **Update** updates currently listed and accessible games.
- **IP Search** allows the entering of a game's IP address.
- **Host a Game** starts a new game with you as the host.
- **Join a Game** takes you into the selected game.
- **Select** accepts the current highlighted option.
- **Previous** takes the player back to the previous menu (Main Menu).

To obtain your computer's address number, establish a connection to the Internet. Next, run a program called **winipcfg.exe**, which is located in your Windows directory. A typical address consists of four groups of three digits each, separated by periods (for example, 255.255.255.255).

Creating a New Multiplayer Game

If you select Host A Game, a menu appears requesting a player name, game name and a password. There must be a user and game name listed for a game to start. A password is optional. Once you have input a user and game name and click start, you will find yourself in the main Battle Room, allowing the game host and players to choose from a number of options, such as selecting which side to play, player color and team/ally. Other game information can be changed only by the game creator.

Customizing Multiplayer Games

Selecting a Map:

This option allows the game initiator to pick the map on which that the battle will be fought. Once in this menu screen, you will see a small picture of the map, a brief description (size in screens and number of players it supports), a scroll window and Cancel/OK buttons. To view a map, click on the map name in the scroll window, bringing its picture into the map view window. To select a map, click on it and select OK or double click on the map. Players can view the selected map by selecting the Select Map option from the multiplayer battle menu.

Selecting MultiPlayer Game Options:

- **USE MAP SCRIPT:** Enables the map scripting for multi-player maps.
- **WATCHING:** Allows non-participants in LAN games to watch the game.
- **RANDOM START LOCATIONS:** Selects random starting positions.
- **START LOCATIONS:** Starting positions can be Set, or Random.
- **MONARCH EXPENDABLE:** On/off of death of monarch ends game.
- **MAP REVEALED:** On shows all of the map at all times.
- **FOG OF WAR:** With this enabled you can only see non-player forces and Mana sites that are inside your units detection range.
- **UNITS:** Allows the player to set the number of units per player in the game.
- **SELECT MAP:** Takes you to a menu where you can preview and select the map on which you'll play.
- **OPTIONS:** Brings you to the Options menu.
- **PREVIOUS SCREEN:** Takes you back to the select multiplayer game screen.

- **START:** Starts the game only after all players have clicked their ready buttons.

Joining a Multiplayer Game

Select a Game and select Join at the Multiplayer Main Menu. Once in the Battle Room, a player can select his/her side, color and teams. All players must click the ready button to the left of their name before the game creator can start a game.

Four: PLAYING the GAME

This section discusses the game components — featured resources, structures, and units — and how to control them through the game’s interface.

GAME COMPONENTS

Total Annihilation: Kingdoms has two resources: Time and Mana. Both come into play when summoning objects or casting spells.

Time

Each unit or structure takes a certain amount of “conjure time” to bring into existence, but the amount of time can be modified in a number of different ways. Conjure units such as Monarchs and mobile conjurers can speed up the conjure time by assisting other units in the summoning process.

Mana

Building or summoning all units in the game requires an outpouring of Mana. Each player starts with a store of Mana determined by the settings of each particular battle. And like time, your amount of available Mana can be modified, in this case by the construction of Lodestones.

Lodestones built on a sacred site increases your supply of Mana. The exact amounts depends on the sacred site and the type of Lodestone.

Your amount of available Mana is shown by the crystal ball in the lower right-hand corner of the screen. When your cursor is over the battlefield, you’ll notice the Help Info in the lower right contains a number indicating the current amount. To the right and left of the crystal ball, you will be given your current use vs. current influx of Mana, numerically. “+” indicates how much Mana is flowing in per second. “+” indicates how much you are spending per second.

Personal Mana

Personal Mana represents each unit’s personal store of Mana used for casting spells or using magic. Any unit that casts spells will have a Mana bar located on the bottom information bar. A certain amount of Mana is required to cast each spell. Mana regenerates over time.

Structures

There are several types of structures in *Total Annihilation: Kingdoms*. Some produce units with which you

can attack your enemy, while others will defend your base, either by serving as a physical barrier or actively attacking enemy units with built-in weapons. Lodestones, another type of structure, increase your Mana production.

Section Five of this manual contains hierarchy charts for units and structures, as well as a short description of the structures found at the first three Tiers. As you progress, additional units and structures may become available...

Units

Total Annihilation: Kingdoms features a wide variety of fantasy units that fly, swim, walk and crawl. One of the unique features of *Total Annihilation: Kingdoms* is the ability to add new units into the game. New downloadable units will be accessible at www.cavedog.com.

The units in the game break down into three types: support, combat and conjuring units.

Conjuring units have several functions:

- Building new structures. Note that several construction units can work on a single structure at the same time. This significantly shortens construction time. To assign an additional construction unit to a project, order it to repair the building under construction.
- Building new units.

- Repairing structures and healing units.

Conjuring units vary as to what they can summon, depending on which side you are playing. The build hierarchies for each side are very different. The listing in the back of the book describes them in detail for you.

Combat units are just that: units that by some means cause damage to another unit. They can use ranged or melee weapons, and some use magic.

Support units are units that cannot conjure or damage other units. Walls, Transport Ships and Lodestones are prime examples of these types of units.

Ships in Total Annihilation: Kingdoms serve different purposes. Most are scout or combat vessels, but some are primarily meant for support roles. All ships can transport troops; each ship's capacity depends on its size. However, only specialized transport ships have the ability to stow and transport large assault units such as catapults and cannons.

Ships load and unload units via the respective buttons in the game interface. To load troops, click the Load button and either select the unit(s) individually or use the mouse to drag a box around an area of units. The units will then move toward the ship and be magically transported on board. To unload, simply click the Unload button and click on the stretch of shoreline where you would like to unload your units.

Some units in *Total Annihilation: Kingdoms* are unique — you are allowed to build a limited number of them, or perhaps only one. If you lose them in the course of a game, they cannot be replaced, so a wise player will protect these units and use them only at crucial moments that might turn the tide of battle, or perhaps the whole war.

The Game Interface

Total Annihilation: Kingdoms is played almost exclusively with the mouse. You can configure your mouse to use a left-click or right click interface, as you prefer.

In addition, you can also use the keyboard for certain handy functions. A full list of all keyboard shortcuts is provided in the keyboard shortcut section of this manual.

Choosing the Mouse Interface

Choose your favored mouse interface through the Options menu, which displays an Interface button.

- **The left-click mouse interface** uses the left mouse button for selecting units and giving them orders. The right mouse button is used to deselect units, and to find a location within the Mini-Map.
- **The right-click mouse interface** uses the left mouse button to select units, but the right mouse button to give

them orders. The left mouse button is also used to deselect units, and within the Mini-Map.

The Main Battle Screen

Once you have completed game setup and started a game of *Total Annihilation: Kingdoms*, you are taken to the Main Battle Screen. Most of it is taken up by the Battle Map, where the action takes place.

To the side of the Battle Map is a panel containing a Mini-Map of the battlefield and the Build/Orders menu. The bottom of the Main Battle Screen features status bars showing you different information depending on where your cursor is located or what unit/structure is currently selected.

The Battle Map

The Battle Map shows the battlefield from an overhead 3D perspective. New games typically start with an unexplored map; you have to explore it with your units to reveal the battlefield and find the enemy. You can only view what your units and structures can “see” at any given time. Unexplored areas are black. Areas that were explored by your units but are not currently under your observation will show as gray or fog-covered on the map.

Units selected on the Main Map can be given orders in the Battle Map or by using the Mini-Maps. For example, you can

click on a unit on the Main Map and move it to a new location by clicking where you want the unit to go on the Mini-Map.

The Mini-Maps

There are two different Mini-Maps in Total Annihilation: Kingdoms. One is the small window screen in the upper right-hand corner of the Main Battle Screen. The other is a full screen Mini-Map, available by hitting the TAB key.

The upper-right corner of the Battle Screen features a small map of the entire battlefield. This little map is useful for keeping track of the situation and for quickly jumping from one area to another. You can also move units and order them to fire on the Mini-Map, just like on the main Battle Map. To quickly jump to a location, click on it within the Mini-Map. You can also scroll within the Mini-Map by dragging the mouse and holding the appropriate mouse button. This depends on your choice of the mouse interface.

Units can be given orders within the Mini-Map, just like on the Battle Map. This is particularly convenient when moving a unit a long distance or conducting long-range bombardment.

The full-screen Mini-Map can be brought up by hitting the TAB key. This will hide the normal Battle Map and fill the window with the Mini-Map. On this map you will see all of

the explored terrain, your units and any enemy units that are visible to your units. You might be able to discern the general type of unit (e.g. structure, summoning structure, water units, flying units land units) but no specific details about the unit. From this view, you can do everything that you can on the smaller Mini-Map, but with greater precision.

Note that units or structures selected on the Battle Map can show their health bars. Health bars can be turned on and off with the “~” key. A green bar indicates good health; yellow, some damage; red, serious damage. The selection oval around a unit also reflects the health of the unit in the same way.

The Information Bar

At the bottom of the Main Battle Screen, you'll see a border with some different bars on it. These bars and pictures inform you about many things, depending on what the cursor is placed over or what unit is selected.

- **Health Bar** shows the health of the selected unit.
- **Personal Mana Bar** shows the personal Mana level of the selected unit, used for magic-related events.
- **Experience Shield** shows the experience and level of the selected unit.
- **Mana Ball** shows your Mana and productivity efficiency.

The Unit Status Bar

The Unit Status Bar appears at the bottom of the Main Battle Screen. To access it, select a unit and hold the mouse cursor over it. You will be told what type of unit it is, and how many enemy units it has killed. All units begin as a Novice with no levels, experience or kills. Units with five kills become Journeymen, which improves their combat capabilities. Another five kills result in a rank of Master and another improvement in the unit's battlefield performance.

Use your construction units to repair veteran units often. You can visually tell veteran units by the gold coloration on their uniforms. The more experienced the unit, the more gold you

will see (e.g. a Level 5 Archer has gold shoulders and arms, a Level 10 Archer has gold shoulders, arms and bow).

The top horizontal red bar in the left of the unit's health bar and the blue bar below it is the unit's personal Mana supply, used for spell casting. The two bars on the right show the health and personal Mana supply of an enemy unit if the cursor is held over it.

INTERFACE MENUS

The Orders Menu

This menu changes visually for each of the four races, but functionality remains the same. There are five standard buttons on this menu.

- **Move** tells the currently selected unit/s to move where you click.
- **Patrol** tells the currently selected unit/s to patrol from its current position to where you click.
- **Attack** tells the currently selected unit/s to attack the target clicked on.
- **Guard** tells the currently selected unit/s to guard object that is clicked on.
- **Stop** tells the currently selected unit/s to stop whatever it's doing.

Unit orders can be queued up by holding down the Shift key. For example, if you want a mobile summoning unit to move from point A to point B, build a Stronghold, heal unit X, move from B to C, then patrol between C, D, E, you'd do the following:

- Select the unit and hold down the Shift key.
- Click the Battle Map on point A and then point B. Select a Stronghold and select a location for the structure to be built. Then select Heal and click on unit X. After that, select Move, click on point C, then select Patrol and click on points D and E.

Because you've held down the Shift key while issuing all of these commands, the unit will perform each task in turn.

Beneath the Attack and Guard buttons, there can be Utility buttons. These will appear if the unit has some special functionality, such as the ability to Load and Unload troops for transport, clear obstacles or heal other units.

There are two sets of three buttons located lower on the menu. The lowest of the set of three are the order buttons, which control different functions depending on what type of unit is selected. They control the actions of the units when enemy units are within different ranges.

- **Offensive** units will aggressively pursue and engage enemy units.
- **Defensive** units will fire upon enemy units within their range but will not move from their current position.
- **Passive** units will sit and watch, no matter what is happening to them or going on around them.

The top set of three buttons controls magic and spell levels. Most spell casters have three different levels of spells. The lowest level (far left button) takes very little personal Mana, but does the least amount of damage of the units three spell types. The far right button is the most powerful spell the unit is capable of casting, which also uses up the most personal Mana. In between is a medium-level spell, doing a moderate amount of damage and using less Mana than the more powerful spell.

As you move your cursor over the button, a description of what the button does will appear at the bottom of the screen.

The Build Menu

The Build Menu will appear when you have a unit selected that can summon or build another unit, such as your Monarch or summoning units. This menu will be on the bottom of the screen and will show a list of units that can be produced.

Conjuring Structures

To conjure a structure, select the summoning unit and click on the appropriate icon in the Build Menu. When you move the mouse cursor over the Battle Map, you'll see an outline of the intended structure. A red "X" means you cannot build in the selected location. After you've chosen the building site, click to start the construction process.

To queue up construction orders, select the summoning unit, hold down the Shift key and select each unit you would like to build and its location. The summoning unit will build each in turn, moving from one task to another automatically. If you hold the Shift button down, you'll see ghost images of that summoning unit's queued tasks. With a Ctrl-click (clicking the mouse while holding the Ctrl key down), you can change the unit's orders without erasing the rest of the build queue.

Total Annihilation: Kingdoms also has a feature to help facilitate the construction of town walls.

- Select a unit that can build walls.
- Select a wall to be built and place it with a mouse click.
- Without releasing the mouse button, hold the Shift key down and drag where you want the walls to be placed.

- You will now see walls queued up in a line where you have drawn.

This process works with all structures and units.

Summoning Units

To summon a unit, click on the appropriate unit-producing structure, then left-click on the desired unit's icon in the structure's Build Menu. Multiple clicks will form a production queue. Note that you can queue up units of different types. You can also hold down the Shift key to queue up units in increments of five.

If you want to order the structure to only create one type of unit continually without interruption, hold down the Ctrl key and select the unit. You will see "+++" in the unit box, signifying that the structure will only churn out this type of unit until it is destroyed or told otherwise. To cancel this function, right-click on the unit icon in the structure's Build Menu.

Units can be built with "standing-orders," that is, they will come out of their unit-production structure and automatically move to perform a task. To do this, select the structure and click the Move icon. Units emerging from this structure will automatically rally to this point. The same process

works for all functions of this menu and the orders can even be staggered (e.g. move to point X, move to point Y, patrol between points A and B).

Other Orders, Commands, Fun Stuff

Area Attack and Load

You can instruct units to attack a group of enemy troops or structures. To do this:

- Select the attacking units, either by selecting them individually by holding down the Shift key, or by clicking and dragging a box around them.
- Select the A (for attack) key or click on the attack cursor and draw a box around the units that you want attacked.
- Your troops will now attack all enemy units contained within the box. You can hold the Shift key down to see a “to be attacked” cursor on the selected units.

A similar feature exists for loading troops onto ships. To do this:

- Select the ship to be used for transport.
- Click on the Load cursor and then click and drag a box around the troops to be loaded. The troops will then begin loading one at a time until either there are no more troops or the ship reaches its storage capacity.

- To unload, select Unload and click a desired location. The troops will unload and walk a short distance away from the unload point.

Veteran Status

Units in *Total Annihilation: Kingdoms* gain experience as they destroy enemy units. As a unit advances, they can change appearance and gain effectiveness. As a unit gains experience killing opposing units, golden colors will appear on the unit or structure. The more gold appears, the more experienced the unit is.



K e y b o a r d

UPPERCASE

A = Attack

C = Clear

D = Diplomacy menu

G = Guard

H = Heal

K = Cloak on/off

L = Load unit into transport

M = Move

N = Move to next unit off screen

O = Open/Close or Activate/Deactivate unit

P = Patrol

S = Stop

T = Track unit

U = Unload unit from transport

CTRL +

A = Select all units

B = Select all builder units

D = Dismiss selected units

E = Select melee units

F = Select factory units

L = Load saved game

M = Select and track monarch

N = Select naval units

R = Select all ballistic units

S = Save game

U = Select all units on screen

W = Select all units with weapons

Y = Select all units that fly

Z = Select all like units



S h o r t c u t s

1-9 = Select squad

CTRL 1-9 = Create squad

ALT 1-9 = Create formation

CTRL F5-F8 = Set bookmark location

F5-F8 = Return to bookmarked location

F1 = Game options

F2 = Briefing

F3 = Track last reporting unit

F4 = Leaderboard

F9 = Screen shot

F12 = Clear chat

TAB = Full screen radar

PAUSE = Toggle pause

CTRL+F1 = Select weapon 1

CTRL+F2 = Select weapon 2

CTRL+F3 = Select weapon 3

+ = Increase Game speed

- = Decrease Game speed

~ = Toggle damage bars

5. TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

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