THE DEVELOPMENT
OF

Crusader Kings® III

Contents

Introduction

Hello everyone!

I don't know how to actually start here. Let's begin first with my thanks I want to give to the Paradox Interactive team working tirelessly on not only the game itself but the Dev Diaries too. Writing and structuring them certainly takes a lot of time.

It's also only through these Dev Diaries, that I am able to do things like this. First one was for Imperator: Rome and the second one now for Crusader Kings 3.

I started with these 'collections/PDFs' last year, before Imperator: Rome released. I noticed that a lot of people didn't know how all the mechanics work and that some wanted a manual for the game which they can just read. And since there were weekly Dev Diaries I saw it as an opportunity to gather them all, put them together, make a PDF out of it and let everyone download and read them.

That way they'll have all the Dev Diaries neatly in one place, a bit customized so it feels like a "book/manual" It's structured and they can view them offline without having to open a browser.

How long did it take you?

About 10-12 hours but over the course of a month – created the file on the 10th of August and finished it on the 25th of August, more or less – with brakes and less focused days. Also, the difference to last year is that I'm currently working, so I had to split up my work to 2-3 hours every evening and weekend. That's also why it actually took me longer since I'm tired most of the time after work – well, who isn't?

What did you actually do?

- *I created the cover with all the pre-existing art Paradox already provided*
  I found the sword somewhere online though
- *Page Background with wax seal – the background is actually from a CK2 Event, I just made it bigger and edited it a bit in photoshop to give it a more "paper" feel/texture and added the wax seal with the CK3 Logo to it*
- *The layout of the PDF itself and customizing the text etc.*

I edited all the Dev Diaries - But only the beginning parts where they'd greet you etc. I did that so the whole thing feels more like a books or documentary style thing that constantly continues in chapters rather than Dev Diaries that are weeks apart. In the same manner as the Manual for Imperator: Rome I also added the Author of every Dev Diary to the left side of the beginning of a new chapter, so you'll know instantly who wrote it.

Will you update this?

Sadly, I won't. I wouldn't even be able to if I wanted - with work currently etc.
Maybe, if I find some time in the future and they release some new Dev Diaries, I might sit down and add them too. But I can't promise anything. Also, this should more act like a "small book" where you can follow the development of Crusader Kings 3 in the order of the Dev Diaries before the Release of CK3.

Why did you do it?

It's fun. It's interesting and it keeps me busy – rather than lying around and watching something or doing nothing I have something to work on. And I like to give something back the community.

Why did you name it "The development of…" and not Manual like the last one?
I thought the new title is more fitting since all the Dev Diaries are like a little journey on how the development of CK3 progressed etc. and how more and more of the game got created.
Obviously, it is not like a real documentary piece.
Thinking about it now I could've also named it "The Dev Diary of Crusader Kings 3" or something like that. But better not think about things I could've done differently after I already completed them, right?

So, I think with that this'll be it. I really hope you'll it. :)

Thank you

The Vision

Doomdark
Design Director
Super Moderator
1 Badges

Greetings friends!

It is my pleasure to finally be able to talk about what I have been working on ever since Stellaris came out (and before) – Crusader Kings III, of course! CK3 draws on the wisdom gained over CK2's seven long years of expansions and patches – all the things we simply could not do in that game – and represents the natural evolution of Crusader Kings. Yes, CK3 is an evolution, not a revolution; it is better across the board and does not alter the core CK experience. That said, we did not carry over everything from every expansion and update to CK2. Rather than trying to do full justice to the less appreciated systems, we decided to go deep rather than wide.

The main design goals with Crusader Kings III were:

Character Focus: Crusader Kings is clearly and unequivocally about individual characters, unlike our other games. This makes CK most suited for memorable emergent stories, and we wanted to bring characters into all important gameplay mechanics (where possible.)

Player Freedom and Progression: We want to cater to all player fantasies we can reasonably accommodate, allowing players to shape their ruler, heirs, dynasty and even religion to their liking – though there should of course be appropriate challenges to overcome.

Player Stories: All events and scripted content should feel relevant, impactful and immersive in relation to the underlying simulation. That way, players will perceive and remember stories – their own stories, not the developers' stories.

Approachability: Crusader Kings III should be user friendly without compromising its general level of complexity and historical flavor. It is nice if it is easier to get into, but more than that, it should be clear what everything in the game is, what you might want to be doing, and how to go about it.

Now, you might say: "Cool, but I took the time to master CK2, bought all the expansions, and now it provides me an enormous breadth of options. Why should I buy CK3?"

That is a fair question! As I mentioned earlier, we decided not to carry over all features from CK2, so if you play CK2 primarily for, say, the nomads or the merchant republics (the only faction types that were playable in CK2 but not in CK3), you might be disappointed. There are likely other features and content that will be missed by some players, but, in return, we believe that everyone will find the core gameplay far more fun and rewarding! To be clear, CK3 is a vastly bigger game than CK2 was on release.
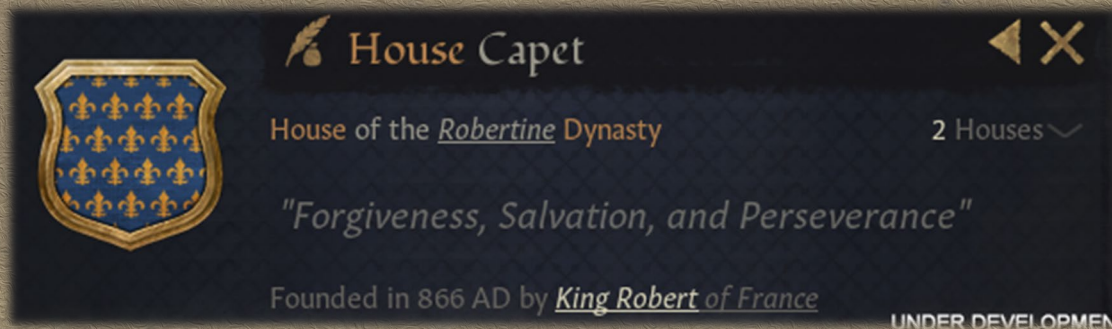
Dev Diary 01: Dynasties & Houses

Dynasties

Dynasties are immaterial yet fundamentally important things that make Crusader Kings what it is - your line must follow an unbroken line of members from your Dynasty; if your Dynasty ends, so does your game.

Now, the representation of Dynasties in CK2 was limited. A character belonged to a Dynasty, and that was that - you got a minor opinion boost with characters that were of the same one, and nothing more. In CK3, we really want to emphasize the power that Dynasties held, and their impact on the medieval world! We want you as the player to feel a bond with your Dynasty, and care for it. To achieve this, we have done a multitude of things!
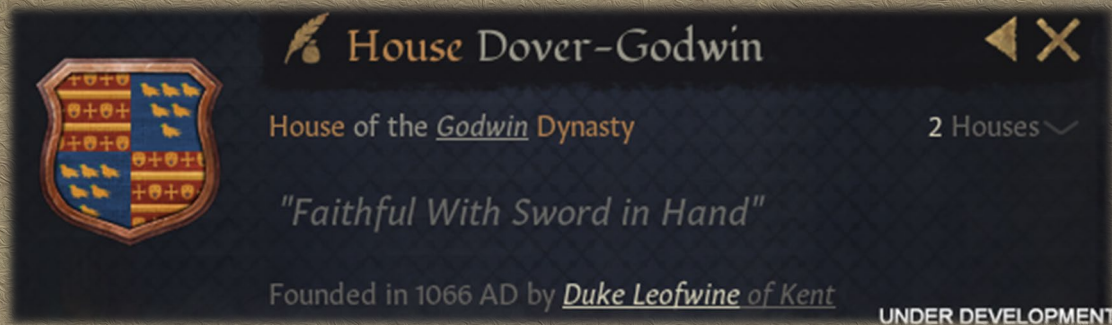
House Capet

House of the _Robertine_ Dynasty   2 Houses

"Forgiveness, Salvation, and Perseverance"

Founded in 866 AD by _King Robert_ _of France_

UNDER DEVELOPMENT

Firstly, something that we know will especially please CK2 players, we have redefined what a Dynasty actually is - not a monolithic entity, but a collection of Houses. No longer will Dynasties have just one name, one Coat of Arms, and one identity - instead several Houses (aka Cadet Branches!) will be collected under the umbrella that is the Dynasty, working together (theoretically...) towards bringing renown upon the Dynasty!

What is a House?

Each Dynasty will have a Founding House (usually of the same name as the Dynasty), which is the first House of that Dynasty. As the game progresses, ruling Dynasty members that are distant by blood to the current House Head (more on this below) may choose to create a Cadet Branch - effectively creating a new House under the Dynasty. Creating a Cadet Branch makes the character creating it House Head (with the most powerful House Head becoming Dynast), and by extension free from the direct influence of their old House Head.

Making your own Cadet Branch requires quite a bit of prestige, that you do not stand to inherit your House Head's titles, and that all of your Dynastic ancestors are dead (your father can't be alive, for example). Cadet Branches/Houses come with a lot of flavor: their own names, Coat of Arms and Mottos, usually inspired by the location in which they are founded, and the founding character. For example, if a ruler of the Jimena Dynasty would create a Cadet Branch in southern France, they might be called the Toulouse-Jimenas, and so on.

House Dover-Godwin

House of the _Godwin_ Dynasty   2 Houses

"Faithful With Sword in Hand"

Founded in 1066 AD by _Duke Leofwine_ _of Kent_

UNDER DEVELOPMENT

What is a House Head or a Dynast?

Within a House there is always a leader, a House Head, that wields power over the rest of the members. A House Head has the power to legitimize bastards, call House members to war, and demand that they adhere to their Faith (refusal to convert will result in them creating a new Cadet Branch). The House Head also has inherent leverage on all House members born after they were made head, by virtue of getting a Hook on them (more on Hooks in another DD). They also gain passive prestige based upon the number of members in their House. House leadership follows the succession of the House Head, so that if you're the leader of your House you will most likely keep that title on succession.

The Dynast, on the other hand, wields significantly more power than a House Head - with their power encompassing the members of all Houses of the entire Dynasty! The Dynast is always the most powerful House Head of a Dynasty, with leadership being updated on the death of the old Dynast. In addition to everything the House Head can do, the Dynast can also Disinherit/Restore Inheritance, Denounce/Forgive members of the Dynasty (which affects opinion in a major way), personally Claim titles held by Dynasty members, and make Dynasty members end wars they have against each other. All of these powers work against every member of the Dynasty, not just the House they are a part of. The Dynast also gains prestige for every living member of the Dynasty. Being the Dynast is very powerful indeed, but you have to carefully weigh the powers against other benefits, as they cost Renown.

What is Renown?

Renown is a resource accumulated by a Dynasty and is used for several things. Firstly, all renown earned by a Dynasty counts towards its Level of Splendor. The Level of Splendor is the outward perception of the Dynasty, how well it is perceived in the eyes of the world, and affects the prestige you get on birth, the prestige when marrying into it, and the maximum long reign opinion you can get. Having a high level also makes it much easier to arrange marriages, especially with Dynasties below your level. Regardless of if Renown is spent or not, the Level of Splendor will not decrease. The higher your Dynasty's Level of Splendor, the more impressive its Coat of Arms frame will look. Peasant Dynasties will start at a negative Splendor level, which means that you will actually lose prestige for marrying them.

Renown itself is a spendable currency, representing the clout your Dynasty holds over itself. Its use is twofold; firstly, it can be used for the most powerful Dynast interactions (getting claims, disinheriting, etc.) and secondly for unlocking Dynasty Legacies (more on this below).

The way you get Renown encourages you to mimic a 'playstyle' that was common in reality, but that was not very practical in CK2 - spreading your Dynasty far and wide! You will gain renown for every ruler of your Dynasty that is not a subject under another member of your Dynasty. This is based on tier, which means that a King will give more Renown than a Duke, and so on. Marrying in such a way that your Dynasty ends up on the throne of a foreign realm is therefore useful for other reasons than to just murder them until you inherit their lands. Having your Dynasty spread out will give you more Renown, and thus a more powerful Dynasty overall. For example, if you are playing as the King of England you will NOT gain renown from your landed vassal brother, but you WILL gain renown from your Dynastic cousin ruling a Duchy in the Holy Roman Empire. You will also gain renown from marrying away your dynasty to be spouses of powerful rulers, symbolizing your newfound influence in their realms. This gives you a reason to carefully plan the marriages of your kinsmen, even if you are not in need of an alliance!

What are Dynasty Legacies?

We all know that the playing field in Crusader Kings is a very volatile one, you might be Emperor of the World as one character, while being reduced to Count of Norfolk as the next. Dynasty Legacies offer some permanence in this otherwise very wild world, in the form of modifiers and unlocks that affect every member of your Dynasty. Essentially, by using Renown you get to shape what your Dynasty is known for. There is a myriad of Legacies to choose from, all divided into tracks with an appropriately thematic name, such as 'Kin', 'Guile' or 'Blood'. These aim to represent notions the world had (or has) about certain dynasties, i.e., that the Seljuks are warriors, the Abbasids lawmakers, the Habsburgs diplomats (and, ahem, prone to marrying their own kin), etc. Each Legacy track contains five unlocks, each costing a progressively higher amount of Renown to unlock.

In this Dev Diary we will go into details on one of these tracks, "Blood" (which also happens to be my favorite). This track is designed for those of you who enjoy breeding traits into your family line, with the first few unlocks all focusing on increasing the chance of inheritance, emergence, and reinforcement of genetic traits (more on genetic traits in another DD). The last few unlocks will reduce the chance of negative traits appearing (essentially allowing for more.. 'risky' marriages), give you the chance to choose a genetic trait to be more common among your kin (i.e. beautiful, intelligent and strong... but also giant or dwarf. No matter how much I pleaded with art I couldn't get a 'Habsburg chin' trait, though!), and finally rounding off with an increase to your Dynasty members Life Expectancy (which increases both their average age, and average fertility - this even means that women of your dynasty remain able to bear children for longer!).

Legacies take a long time to unlock, and you will have to work hard toward unlocking even one full track - though their power more than makes up for the wait. Legacies are chosen and unlocked by the Dynast, so make sure that you are in control of your Dynasty.

Dev Diary 02: The Medieval Map

Ambitions

Let us start with our ambitions. CK2 had several parts of the map that was outdated, and to be frank, a bit underdeveloped. When we started to update the map for CK3, we knew that we wanted to take a pass at everything, do additional research, and update the different areas accordingly. This goes for the entire De Jure title hierarchy, so there are several new kingdoms and duchies present. In terms of scope, the map will roughly match that of CK2. I know I will disappoint those of you hoping for China, but, sadly, it will not be on the map. We will however, have a few new additions: the entirety of Tibet will be present, unlike CK2 where the most eastern parts were excluded, and sub-Saharan Africa is also extended, where we've gone all the way to the Nigerian coast.

When setting the map visuals, province layout, rivers, and more, the focus has always been on clarity. The map should be easy to read and get information from. For example, you should be able to read most of the terrain simply by looking at the map, without the need to click on the province, or tooltip it, in order to find that out, while rivers should be easy to see and let you know if you will cross one when moving armies around.

We represent the map on three different zoom levels. When zoomed far out, the map will turn into an actual paper map, allowing for an easy overview and stylish screenshots. Zoom in a bit and you will have the 3D map, with the typical political overlay, great for interacting with your vassals and other realms. Zoom in even further and you will see the names of all the counties along with the terrain, as we strip away the realm colors. Perfect for moving armies around and knowing where to pick your battles, without the need to switch around to different map modes (but do not worry, we still have several map modes for easily accessing different information).

Baronies

One of the most notable changes is how we handle Baronies. In CK2, Counties were the smallest entity we had on the map, a province if you will, with several Baronies represented through the interface of the County view. In CK3, we took the next logical step and made Baronies into their own provinces. We have been able to create a map with much more granularity and better accuracy. Most Counties will normally consist of two to five Baronies, with some exceptions. The number of provinces will be noticeable when waging war, as it offers a larger degree of movement for you armies (more on that in the future).

To give you a good idea of the increased province density, here is a comparison of the British Islands in CK2 and CK3, being on the left and right side, respectively:
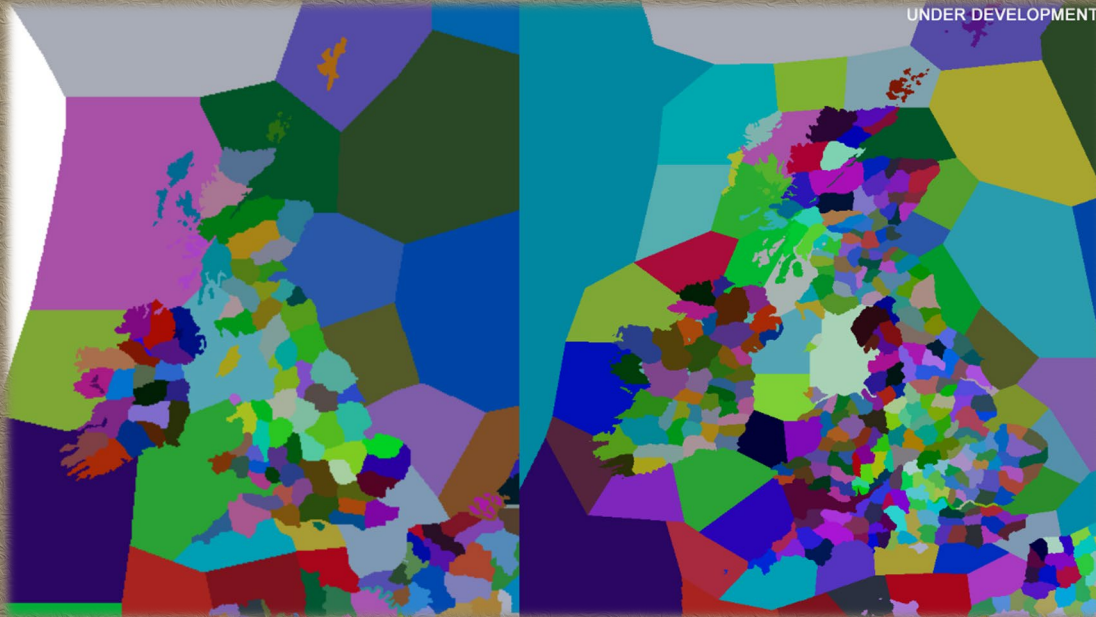
Before you all go nuts about playable baronies: No. You cannot play as a Baron. The lowest playable rank will still be that of a Count. The emphasis will therefore be on the Counties rather than the individual Baronies. As such, Baronies exist with a few things in mind. For example, they can never leave a county. This means Counties stay the same over time, avoiding weird splits where a single barony goes independent or to another realm (reducing that hideous border-gore ever-so-slightly). The number of Baronies within a County is one factor that represents its wealth and how "good" it is. Another important factor is the terrain. A County with a lot of Desert will not be as beneficial as one with a lot of Farmlands for example.

Speaking of terrain, we have several different terrain types spread out across the map. Instead of having a single terrain spread out across large areas of the map, we differentiate between similar terrain types by separating them, such as Forest and Taiga, or Plains and Drylands. Not only does it make the map look and feel distinct in different parts of the world, they also have a different impact on gameplay.

UNDER DEVELOPMENT

Impassable Terrain

UNDER DEVELOPMENT

Then we have Impassable Terrain. These are far more frequent, and in many cases much larger, than you will be used to from CK2. We have essentially used these for any area that we consider uninhabited enough to warrant it not being part of an existing County. Some areas have plenty of smaller impassable provinces, such as the mountains surrounding Bohemia, while others have fewer and far larger pieces of inhospitable land, such as the deserts of Arabia and Syria. Impassable Terrain cannot be traversed by armies, often creating bottlenecks that you will have to pass through or perhaps even choose to go around, should it be heavily fortified.

Dev Diary 03: War

War. What is it good for?

You may ask. A whole lot I would say. You can use it to press that juicy Claim you have been holding on to for a while, or perhaps you would rather use it to put the unbelievers to the sword. Whichever strikes your fancy. The topic of the day is war, and more specifically, how we go about waging war.

I aim to give you an overview of how wars will be fought. I will not go into details about CBs or anything like that this time. Bear in mind that the game is still very much in development and everything talked about here is subject to change.

Let us start by taking a look at what an army is made up of. Just like in Crusader Kings 2, the bulk of your armies consists of Levies. Levies in Crusader Kings 3 are made up of their own unit type, simply called Levy. These are essentially conscripted peasants forced to do your bidding and are not very impressive on their own. In great numbers, however, they are an efficient meat shield meant to complement the troops of your armies that have a far higher impact: Men-at-Arms.

Total Soldiers: 7509/7509
- *Heavy Infantry*: 400
- *Archers*: 200
- *Heavy Cavalry*: 100
- 🛡 Knights: 8
- Levies: 6801

UNDER DEVELOPMENT

Men At Arms

Men-at-Arms are the equivalent to the Retinues of CK2. They are trained troops that come in several different unit types which excel in their given role. There are base variations available for everyone to recruit, such as Light Cavalry and Heavy Infantry, but the really interesting ones are usually unique to certain cultures or specific regions of the map, though all have their own stats and uses. Speaking of stats, there are four different values present on a Men-at-Arms regiment that you need to keep track off:

Damage — This is obviously the amount of damage a single soldier of this type is able to inflict on the opponent

⚔ 20

Toughness — This is how much damage a soldier can take

🛡 24

Pursuit — In the aftermath of a battle (more on this below), Pursuit increases the amount of damage you can inflict upon a routing enemy

≫ 0

Screen — The opposite of Pursuit, Screen allows you to protect fleeing soldiers from being killed

🏹 0

Pikemen

Type: Pikemen

⚔ 20   🛡 24   ≫ 0   🏹 0

Counters these Types: Light Cavalry, Heavy Cavalry

Terrain Effects:

Long pikes allow these regiments to form walls of spikes that can stop a Cavalry charge dead.

Reinforcement: 💰 9/month
Maintenance: 💰 1/month

UNDER DEVELOPMENT

Not all Men-at-Arms are equal. You will have access to a few immediately from the start and unlock access to additional regiment types as you progress throughout the game. Some will be similar to each other but may be tailored towards a certain terrain type. Others may just be a straight upgrade but will in those cases be much more expensive than their weaker counterpart.

Men-at-Arms allow you to customize your army for any given situation. If you know where or who you will fight, certain Men-at-Arms will be far superior. Is there a lot of hilly terrain in your region? Then Archers are the way to go. Are you facing a lot of cavalry? Bring Pikemen! A smaller army will stand a much higher chance of winning if you bring a Men-at-Arm type that counters those of the enemy. When a regiment is countered, it is efficiency in battle will be lowered, with its Damage output significantly reduced. If the countered regiment is greatly outnumbered by the countering type, efficiency will reduce even further. There is a limit to how much a Men-at-Arm's Damage can be reduced though, as to not make your expensive troops completely useless.

Siege Weapons

Next we have a special kind of Men-at-Arms: Siege Weapons. Medieval warfare was all about sieges. Castles and sieges are very iconic for the time frame, so we felt that it was necessary to have that properly represented. You will start off with access to a rather weak catapult, but it will still allow you to besiege holdings faster than without one. Later on, you will unlock improved siege weapons, such as trebuchets, that are able to speed up sieges significantly.

UNDER DEVELOPMENT

You can only own a certain number of Men-at-Arms regiments at any given time, so choose carefully which troops you decide to recruit!

Knights

Levies and Men-at-Arms are not the only soldiers available to you. As a ruler, you have a number of Knights at your disposal. These are the vassals and courtiers of your realm with a high Prowess, which is the equivalent to Combat Rating in CK2, and represents how good a character is at fighting and is used when they participate in battles. You can normally only have a few dedicated Knights,
but there are various ways to increase the number of Knights, as well as their effectiveness.

Finally, we have the Commander. An army can only have a single Commander, who uses his Martial skill to improve the troops under his command. There are plenty of different commander traits available, which either have a direct effect on battles, such as terrain bonuses, or give the Commander bonuses outside of battles. One such example is the ability to have supply last longer (more on this below).

Battle

With armies out of the way, let us have a look at battles! At the very start of any battle, a combat width is set that decides how many troops are able to fight each other at the same time. The width is set to the relative size of the defender, depending on the terrain type you are fighting in, being larger in flat and open terrain, and smaller in rough terrain and mountains. I would generally advise against attacking larger armies in plains for example...

The single most important part of a battle is Advantage, which is essentially a modifier that increases the damage of all troops on either side. When a battle starts, all sources of Advantage is taken into consideration. It can come from traits, terrain, buildings, etc. but most importantly, the Martial skill of your Commander. All of these are added together for both sides of the battle. The difference is then added as the Advantage bonus for the side with the higher Advantage.

Example: Your army has a total Advantage of 40 and attacks an enemy army that has a lousy total of 10. This means that you will have an Advantage bonus of 30 during the battle, which then translates into a rather significant damage bonus for your troops.

In addition to the starting Advantage, each Commander also makes a roll every few days in an attempt to increase their Advantage or even it out. This tug of war can be further expanded by various modifiers and traits. For example, the trait 'Cautious Leader' will decrease your potential max roll, but also increase your lowest possible roll, trading a high potential for a higher average. These exist to make even battles a tad bit unpredictable but will rarely be the deciding factor.

Soldiers on the combat line damage the enemy on every tick. When a soldier "dies", he will be considered to be either a Casualty, or to be Routed. Casualties, you guessed it, are considered dead and will have to be replenished over time. Routed soldiers, on the other hand, are troops that are injured or fled the battle and are added back to the army once the battle is resolved. Battles are resolved once either side runs out of fighting troops.

Once the battle is won, it enters the Aftermath phase which lasts for a few days. This is when the victor has the opportunity to chase down and kill any survivors (the Routed troops). As mentioned earlier, this is the time for certain Men-at-Arms to shine. With a high Pursuit you can kill a larger amount of the enemy to really capitalize on your victory. Alternatively, you can have a high amount of Screen to make losing battles less penalizing. Keep in mind that battles will grant you a fairly limited amount of War Score. Which brings us to sieges!

Besieging and occupying enemy holdings is the main way of gaining War Score and winning wars. As mentioned in lats week's map dev diary, Baronies are their own provinces. You will not have to siege all of them in order to occupy a full county or seize your War Goal, only fortified holdings have to be besieged. Castles and County Capitals are all fortified by default, with how difficult it is to besiege these holdings being decided by their Fort Level. Fort Level can be increased by certain buildings and modifiers.

Each Fort level increases the amount of Siege Progress you need to get before it gets occupied. You gain a base amount of Siege Progress every tick, which can be increased further by heavily outnumbering the garrison or having Siege Weapons. This constant progress will not change over the course of a siege. It allows you to know what the maximum duration of the siege will be, and you can take that into account as you plan your next move. Sieges also have what we call 'siege events', which occur with a fixed interval, and can make the siege progress faster by giving you a onetime Siege Progress bonus or increase your base Siege Progress. Siege Weapons are required to get the 'breached walls' event, which in turn allow you to directly assault the holding. This is a risky maneuver since it will cost you troops, at the benefit of vastly increasing your daily Siege Progress.

Being attacked while besieging a holding will make you the attacker of the battle, making you lose out on any usual defender bonuses you would get from the terrain. Sieges are therefore slightly riskier and assaulting the holding to gain control of it before the enemy attacks might well be worth the cost.

A few final words on moving armies around. As I mentioned briefly in last week's DD thread, major rivers have designated fords for crossing. You can no longer cross them freely as in CK2 and will often have to move your army to find a good place to cross. Beware though, crossing a major river will make you lose Advantage should you engage an enemy in battle on the other side, making river crossings for perfect places to catch your opponent. Along with the increased amount of Impassable Terrain, there are plenty of bottlenecks that you can use to your advantage (pun intended).

Have you ever been annoyed by walking into a province just for a short while in CK2, only to go above the Supply Limit and lose a bunch of troops? Fear not. Armies now carry an amount of Supply with them. Supply is drained whenever armies are in Baronies with a lower Supply Limit than their size. You can therefore safely march through a few Baronies with a low Supply Limit without troops dying. If you army runs out of Supply however, it will start to take attrition and lose troops over time. Supply is increased as long as you are below the Supply Limit in territory you control. Beware though, your army might not take attrition on low Supply, but it will suffer an Advantage Penalty in battles!

Chasing armies deep into enemy land is certainly not recommended. Marching into a County controlled by the enemy, that does not border anything you control and is not on the coast, will make your army take a single and quite significant attrition hit. If you have a huge number of troops to spare though, then perhaps you do not need to worry about it.

rageair
Design
43 Badges

Earldom of Thomond

De Jure Hierarchy

County Holder:
you

Control: 100
Development: 2
Popular Opinion: 0
Culture: Irish
Faith: ✝ Catholicism

Limerick 👑
Your Castle Holding

Tax: 0.44
Loot: 9
Levies: 308

Supply Limit: 12710

250   2
Castle   I

UNDER DEVELOPMENT

While certain things are still on a per-Barony level, such as buildings, two of the most important values you have to deal with are on a per-County basis - Development and Control!

Development

Development is the measurement of technological advancement and general infrastructure in a County. Development directly increases taxes and levies you get out of the holdings, and it also unlocks some other special options. Development increases very slowly across the duration of the game and radiates outwards from high-development Counties to those nearby. For example, Constantinople (aka the City of the World's Desire), starts with a very high Development level. This will slowly spread outwards, reaching the most remote areas much slower than their Greek heartland. Naturally, there are other ways to increase your development, such as through the Steward's 'Increase Development' task, although this is a fairly slow process, and usually only worth doing in certain Counties. Having terrain such as Farmland or Floodplains in your Counties make them ideal candidates for development, and when they have gotten some levels of development you can just sit back and enjoy, as it slowly spreads throughout the rest of your realm!

Control

Control, on the other hand, directly represents the power you have over the County. This naturally decreases during sieges and by forcefully seizing territory, taking the place of the 'new Administration' modifiers from CK2. If you do not pace yourself and use your Marshal to increase Control in newly conquered territories, you might find yourself with a slew of useless land. This also increases the importance of keeping peasant rabble and similar nuisances out of your lands…

Each County also has an opinion of their holder, referred to as the 'Popular Opinion'. This represents the sentiment of the local peasants, and tends to decrease if you're not of their culture or faith, promoting the use of 'local lords', vassals of the local culture/faith, to handle such territory for you - as converting it will take quite some time. Unhappy Counties tend to cause problems down the line… more on this in another DD.

Holdings

Now, on to the Holdings themselves! Each County will have a certain number of slots available for Baronies, with some being constructed at the start, and others not. The three core types of holdings remain unchanged - Castles, Cities and Temples make up the majority of holdings on the map, each with their own main purpose. Castles provide levies and fortifications, cities provide taxes with a secondary focus on Development, and temples provide an even mix of taxes and levies with a secondary focus on increasing Control. This means that if you want a County to develop really fast, building many Cities might be the thing for you. If you want a resilient domain perhaps you would prefer Castles, etc.

Based on the terrain of the province, each Holding has access to a number of buildings. Regular buildings primarily focus on increasing taxes and levies, with some secondary effects such as increasing fortifications or increasing supply. These are usually straight upgrades, and are long-term investments that you should always consider, much like in our other games.

Construct New Building ✕

Walls & Towers
Bastions & Curtain Walls

Garrison: +150

Holding:
Income: 💰 +0.25/month
Fort Level: +1

💰 250
⏳ 3 years

Construct

Show Details

Farms & Fields
Crop Fields

Holding:
Income: 💰 +0.50/month

💰 250
⏳ 3 years

Construct

Show Details

Pastoral Lands
Pastures

Levies: +50

Holding:
Income: 💰 +0.25/month

💰 250
⏳ 2 years

Construct

Show Details

Barracks
Wooden Barracks

Levies: +150

💰 250
⏳ 3 years

Construct

Show Details

UNDER DEVELOPMENT

Duchy Capital Buildings

To spice things up, we have also introduced the concept of Duchy Capital Buildings. These buildings can only be built in the capital Barony of any De Jure Duchy, limiting their availability across the map. To build them and have them be active, you need to hold their associated Duchy title personally - this way you can't simply hoard Counties in which you can build these special buildings, as just like in CK2 you will get severe penalties for holding too many Duchies personally. The buildings themselves are very expensive but come in many flavors - allowing you to tailor your experience. The Military Academies track of buildings increases the effectiveness of your Knights and allows you to have more of them, establishing marches will make the entire Duchy more defensible, the Siege Workshops will increase the effectiveness of your trebuchets, and so on!

Construct New Duchy Building ✕

Military Academies
Military Schools

Owner:
Army Maintenance: -2%
Number of 🛡 Knights: +2
Knight Effectiveness: +20%

💰 550 ⚠
⏳ 5 years
Construct
Show Details

Marches
Strategic Marches

Duchy:
Defender Advantage: +2
Supply Limit: +25%
Fort Level: +1
Garrison Size: +25%
Levy Reinforcement Rate: +25%

💰 550 ⚠
⏳ 5 years
Construct
Show Details

Siege Works
Siege Workshops

Owner:
Siege Weapon Effectiveness: +20%
Siege Weapon Toughness: +2

Duchy:
Fort Level: +1

💰 550 ⚠
⏳ 5 years
Construct
Show Details

Royal Armories   💰 550 ⚠

UNDER DEVELOPMENT

We also have the concepts of special buildings. These aim to represent historical buildings, both ancient and those built during the time period. Placed in predetermined baronies on the map, you have the usual suspects such as the Pyramids or Colosseum, along with more fringe or lesser-known constructions such as Offa's Dyke or the Buddhas of Bamiyan. Some of these will be possible to construct during the course of the game, such as the Tower of London or the Alhambra. All of these constructions provide unique and interesting bonuses, with some of them being represented with 3D models on the map.

Dev Diary 05: Schemes, Secrets and Hooks

Voffvoffhunden
Rouge Game Dev -
Former CK3 Content
Designer
54 Badges

We have all been there. A united Scandinavia is within your grasp, if only it had not been for your meddling siblings! In CK2, these kinds of problems were handled with the gentle application of the "Murder Plot", as it was popularly called. That system has been expanded and replaced with our brand new Scheme system!

For Crusader Kings 3, we wanted a system that was slightly easier to predict while keeping it unreliable in its outcome, so that murder remains an... option, rather than a safe bet. We also wanted to reduce the number of agents that you need, to make it more valuable to focus on a few candidates close to the victim, rather than having to send messengers with bags of gold to every single courtier and vassal in the land.

Scheme System

All this is achieved through our new Scheme system, where you can use target a character with a Scheme in accordance with your plans, recruit Agents, build up your Scheme Success Chance, and finally achieve your goal. I will try to illustrate how it all works by referring to that most iconic of all Schemes: Murder.

By now, the progress bar might have caught your eye. Each month, a Scheme has a chance of progressing one step, with the odds determined by the Owner's Scheme Power, and the Target's Scheme Resistance. These two values are based on the relevant Skill (Intrigue in the case of Murder) but are also affected by Spymasters (in the case of Intrigue-type schemes), various modifiers, and of course - the Owner's Agents. The closer a Murder Scheme's Agents are to the Target (and the better their Intrigue), the more Scheme Power they add.

Once the Scheme has progressed 10 steps, it tries to execute. The chance of a successful outcome is determined by the Scheme's Success Chance (which has a slightly different set of modifiers to Scheme Power), while its Secrecy is used to check whether you are discovered or not when you try to execute.

If you've gathered capable agents and you're lucky enough to not get caught, that inheritance will be as good as yours!

As the Scheme's Owner, you are protected from discovery until you actually attempt to execute your scheme. This protection does not extend to your agents, however! And being discovered as a participant in a murder plot is rarely good for one's reputation, or for one's habit of seeing sunlight every day.

It is worth noting that when the existence of a Scheme is discovered in this way, its chance of success drops significantly, as the appointed victim makes every preparation possible to foil your plans.

On the other hand, perhaps you're just not the murderous type? Thankfully, the Scheme system is so flexible that it can be used for all manner of long-term interactions. On the opposite end of the spectrum, Seduction makes a return as a Scheme. Seduce does not use Agents in the way Murder does, and it is not dangerous in the same way... unless your target happens to be married, that is. Achieving success - determined by things such as your skill at seduction, their sexual preference, and whether you get along whatsoever - can net you a new Lover.

I know where your minds are going at that thought, and yes - it's a great way of acquiring Agents for your Murder Scheme!

Sway is another returning favorite that's now a Scheme. Sway also does not use Agents but largely relies on your Diplomacy instead. It simply progresses towards its execution and then checks whether you successfully improve their opinion or not. Then it loops around and starts over, building up the target's opinion of you until you stop it -- or commit some horrible diplomatic faux pas...

To add to the convenience, all characters can run one Hostile Scheme (such as murder) and one Personal Scheme (such as Seduction or Sway) at the same time. Unfortunately, you can only target a given character with a single scheme at a time, so you will not be able to both murder and seduce the same person, just to see which one pays off sooner. You have to do one after the other.

Secrets

Now, as I indicated earlier, trying to murder someone is usually illegal. (Fun fact: according to Paradox's legal department this is also the case in real life.) However, if you are not discovered when you do it, you are off the hook, right? Not so! Let me introduce you to something that will change the way you nervously glance over your shoulder forever: Secrets!

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Characters can acquire Secrets when they do something that is frowned upon or outright illegal. You want to keep your own Secrets close to your chest, while it can be of great benefit to uncover the Secrets of others. By sending your Spymaster to… well, spy, it's possible to find out what is going on with your annoying vassals, your threatening neighbor, or even at your own court!

So what do you do when you discover a Secret? One possible course of action is to expose it for the world to see, of course! This will apply various effects depending on how serious the Secret is. Being the King's secret lover will cause a scandal, being a Secret Deviant will leave you with the Deviant trait, while being exposed as a secret murderer is exactly the excuse your Liege has been waiting for to throw you in the dungeon. Not to mention those horrible Kinslaying penalties ("Hey, they're my family, and I choose what to do with them, okay?").

Hooks

The other possible course of action ties into our new evolution of CK2's Favors. This is now a generalized system called "Hooks", which come in various flavors. Favors is one of these, while another might represent the loyalty that a House member owes to the House Head.

A Hook is used to force characters to do what you want them to, such as accepting marriage offers, changing your Feudal Contract, or forcing them to join your Scheme as an Agent…

There are Weak and Strong Hooks, where weak Hooks are used up once expended, while Strong Hooks only get a cooldown, ready to be used again later. The source of a Hook determines its strength, and the strongest Hooks come from Blackmailing someone over their most horrible secrets…

You might want to keep hold of a Hook once you have it, though, rather than spending it. Having a Hook on someone can prevent them from taking hostile actions towards you -- particularly useful when dealing with pesky vassals. Be warned, however. While having a strong Blackmail Hook on someone really gives you the upper hand, it will be lost if the Secret you are blackmailing over is exposed.

Blackmail

Select which of King Erik III's Secrets to use for blackmail

+4

Incestuous

May accept (80.00%)

Blackmail

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There are many types of Schemes, Secrets and Hooks in the game, and while it would be entirely possible to list them all, I think it would be way more fun for you to gradually discover them through future dev diaries or once the game is released.

Hopefully, it's clear by now how everything I have talked about hangs together. Maybe you want to murder someone, so you need some Agents. However, no one wants to join, so you dig for Secrets that can be converted into Blackmail Hooks. Meanwhile, you are running a Personal Scheme (such as Sway) to increase another potential Agent's opinion of you, so that you can convince them that - yes, their Liege really is that bad.

But what if everyone hates you (on account of all the murderin') and you are unable to find a single blackmail-worthy speck of dirt on anyone?

Well, in Crusader Kings 3 there might be something you can do about that…

- 🗡 Starts a Fabricate Hook Scheme against *Count Hendrik*
  UNDER DEVELOPMENT

Dev Diary 06: Council, Spouse Councillor & Powerful Vassals

Council

Your council still has five primary positions: a chancellor, steward, marshal, spymaster, and court chaplain, each relying on a particular skill (respectively, diplomacy, stewardship, martial, intrigue, and learning). Every councillor is either a vassal or a courtier of yours, and you are (mostly) able to hire and fire for these roles at will. Each of these council positions can be given different tasks, relying on an appropriate skill, which help your realm to survive and thrive. Theoretically.

Ok, so that should be pretty familiar to most of you. So, what is actually changed?

Firstly, state skills are gone. While they were not the worst thing in the world, you tended to forget they existed unless they were utterly abysmal, which was incredibly rare. Plus, personally, I could never get the mental image of your chancellor leaping in front of the king and clamping a hand over his mouth every time he thought of another dirty joke about the King of France out of my head.

Instead of affecting your character's skill in certain interactions, councillor skills now dramatically affect their efficacy at the tasks you set them. A skilled steward not only yanks coins from the hands of undeserving peasants as fast as the peasants earn 'em, they'll also be much more likely to receive positive minor events while doing it. Similarly, a terrible steward is not just slow, they will actively bungle things and make a mess of your accounts as they go. Choosing between the politically powerful idiot and the adroit courtier has never been quite so difficult.

Increase Development in County

Building Construction Time: ⏳ -1%
Holding Construction Time: -1%
Development Growth: +1.0/month

Possible Side Effects — *Councillor Skill*
• Efficient Taxation
• Increased Control
• Slow Construction
• Loss of Opinion
• Loss of Control
UNDER DEVELOPMENT

To compensate for this a little, merely being on your liege's council will give you a very minor bonus to the appropriate skill for your position. Even a truly terrible councillor has at least some assistants helping them out.

Further, tasks now do not reset when changing councillors. If you tell your steward to keep increasing the development in a particular county, they will stick at it until told to stop, pausing if you have no steward at all. Council tasks in specific counties will only stop if the county stops being a valid place to perform that task, such as because a time-locked action (e.g., religious conversion) was completed, or because you lost the county in a war.

Instead of listing all the possible tasks each councillor can take, let's keep things light and just have the most interesting/newest task each councillor can perform:

Chancellor	Integrate Title**,** speeds de jure drift of a valid title into your realm
Marshal	Increase Control in County, increase control gain per month in a specific county
Steward	Increase Development in County, reduce building & holding construction time in a specific county. Boost development growth per month in the same
Spymaster	Find Secrets, attempt to learn of secrets in a given court, including your own
Court Chaplain	Fabricate Claim on County, gain opportunities to acquire claims on a specific county

Ok, that was a lot of information on non-dramatic differences. Are there any really big changes we have got stored up?

Well now, that depends. Are you single and outside the reach of that meddlesome Pope? Then life might seem pretty smooth, at least for a while. On the other hand, if you're a married Catholic...

The first part of this is marriage, and, as you may have guessed from the title of this dev diary, the five classic slots are now joined by your primary spouse! Historically, spouses were often vital assistants in running the realm, providing counsel and advice even when they, strictly speaking, were not supposed to.

We model this by giving them a variety of council tasks, each one boosting your stats directly by taking some of the weight of leadership off of your shoulders. The default is a generic "assist ruler" task, simply helping out here and there, and providing a minor flat boost to all skills, for those rulers who feel like they can pretty much tackle the world unassisted. Discounting vassals as assistance, because, y'know, obviously.

If you need more specialized help, you can also have them boost a specific stat directly. This adds a large portion of their skill directly to yours, as you offload an immense amount of power and responsibility onto your spouse, lending them your authority in exchange for their skill. While focusing on this manner, they will only boost their assigned skill, so you will need to choose how they support you carefully.

Do not have a spouse? Well, that's ok, single feudal heirs are out there just waiting to meet you.

Have a spouse and they are landed? I am afraid they have got better things to do than finish your lordly homework for you.

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Duchess
Princess Morien

Assist Ruler	
Court Politics	📜 0
Chivalry	✕ 10
Manage Domain	🏛 5
Court Intrigue	🗡 2
Patronage	📖 7

Assist Ruler 🔄

Now, for the second of our two major differences: have you ever heard the phrase "Will no one will rid me of this turbulent priest"?

Well, have we got some turbulent priests for you.

Certain faiths (details on which, other than Catholicism, to follow in a later diary) replace the court chaplain with a bishop. If you still have a court chaplain, then they'll behave much like other councillors, though some faiths may still have a harder time firing them.

Bishops use a mechanic called leasing (though they're not the only ones to do so), whereby they control all levies and receive all taxes from every temple holding in your personal domain. Additionally, your bishop will receive a fraction of the taxes and levies generated by all of your vassals' bishops. All told, that's a lot of ducats the Church seems to be getting, isn't it?

Of course, as loyal subjects of the crown, your bishop will be very happy to hand over taxes and troops to you, scaling with quite how happy they are. A loyal bishop is a huge boon for your economy and military and can make the difference between unstoppable royal might and economic ruin.

A recalcitrant bishop, by contrast, is an utter pain. If they do not approve of you at least a little, they'll hold back taxes and levies until you meet their standards again, and if they actively hate you, may even begin conspiring with others to replace you with a more pious monarch.
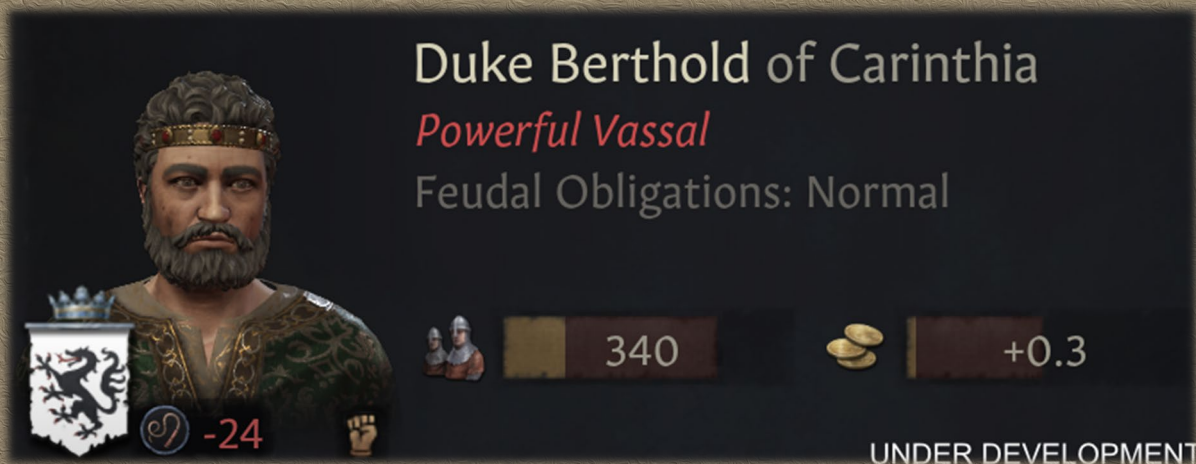
Of course, you're probably asking what stops you from firing your bishop and replacing them with, say, a good friend of yours?

Around these parts, that's what we call heresy. And you'll have to wait till the religious dev diary for details on exactly what your options are for legally sacking your bishop. As for illegally, well, no Pope can stop a knife to the base of the spine...

Turbulent priests indeed.

Duke Berthold of Carinthia
Powerful Vassal
Feudal Obligations: Normal

340   +0.3

-24

UNDER DEVELOPMENT

These should be familiar to many of you from CK2's Conclave expansion: powerful vassals are the wealthiest lords with the highest levy counts in the realm. They are powerful, influential, and unruly, and you ignore them at your peril. The higher your tier, the more of them you'll have to contend with, and eventually you're going to have to pick who you want to snub rather than how you want to please everyone.

As in Conclave, powerful vassals always expect a seat on your council. They are the greatest magnates of their day, damn it, and they demand to be heard! Leaving one out in the political cold will give you a huge opinion penalty with that character, since a council seat is theirs by right of might.

Not any particular seat, mind you, and just because they might not be able to organise an army to save their life, that's no reason for you not to give them the role of marshal. Power is basically the same as competence, right?

So, what do you actually directly get out of acquiescing to these uppity lords? Well, there is one very important function that powerful vassals tie into

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+18   -2

Approves   ✖ Opposes

directly: changing your succession. CK2 required you to have all vassals who both de jure and de facto belong to one of your titles approve of you before you could change your succession. In CK3, that veto belongs to your powerful vassals alone, and they very much know it.

Finally, powerful vassals are also hooked into a number of other systems in little ways, some of which may be talked about in later dev diaries, some of which we can talk about here. In elective successions, they usually receive more votes, as they have more sway over the realm's processes. When recruiting for schemes, powerful vassals make better agents, provided you can persuade them, and since they know this, they are also harder to use the sway scheme on. And, lastly, an unhappy powerful vassal in a faction is a far more worrisome prospect.

Dev Diary 07: Characters & Portraits

Characters

rageair
Design
43 Badges

Today we are taking a look at what makes up a character in CK3. As you already know, the game revolves around characters and all the things they get up to, so to make it interesting we have to make sure that they have as much personality as possible!

To start off; each character still has skills and traits, just like in CK2. Their skills determine how well they can do different things, a character with high Diplomacy will be well-liked, while one with high Martial will excel as a commander. The main source of these skills are traits, the foremost of which is the Personality Traits.

Unlike CK2, where personality traits were much like any other trait, we have decided to put more emphasis on the personality traits in CK3. In CK2 you could easily end up with 5-8 personality traits without much effort, but then what really defined you? It was hard to get a grip on who a character really was, something we have improved in CK3. Personality traits now have a massive effect on the behavior of each individual character, so when a character is Greedy you will really feel it. To emphasize this, characters tend to not have more than 3 personality traits so that you can at a quick glance tell who they are (other types of traits are of course still unlimited).
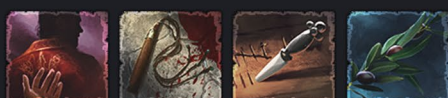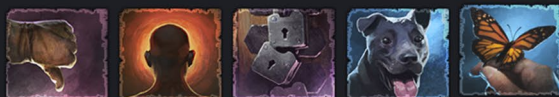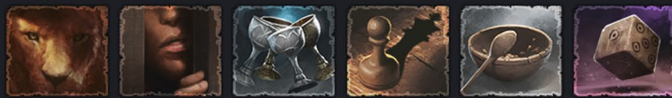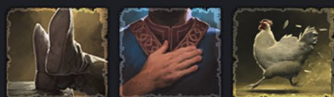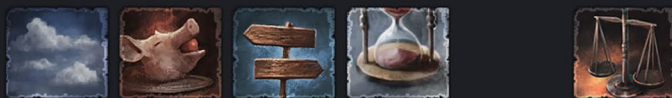
Personality Trait icons. Can you guess which one is which?

We have also added a feature where a character's personality is summed up in two words, which is then displayed in their character view. This is very useful when, for example, assigning vassals or getting agents. A 'Rapacious Blackguard' might not make for the most loyal vassal, but quite a good agent, while an 'Honorable Empath' would be the opposite!

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Prestige and Piety remain in CK3, though with a new element to them. In CK2, you accumulated prestige that you then spent on various things - this rarely made much sense, why would launching an invasion suddenly make everyone like you less, for example? Therefore, we have decided to split the currency part of prestige/piety from the perception part. In CK3, all prestige and piety accumulated by a character will contribute towards their Level of Fame/Devotion. These have various effects, for example, your Level of Fame increases the opinion of all secular rulers (as it did in CK2), give your more Knights, and unlocks special interactions - such as invasions should you be Tribal. Your Level of Devotion increases the opinion of the clergy and allows you to declare better Holy Wars among other things. These levels range between 0-5, with 0 representing disgrace. Instead of only losing prestige when doing truly dishonorable things, such as breaking a truce, you now also lose Levels of Fame, making the whole thing more of a hard choice. Accumulated prestige and piety can be used for various things as a currency, just like in CK2, prestige being used for vassal interactions, decisions, and war, while piety is the primary resource used when interacting with the church.

Level of Fame: 👑 Exalted among Men

Before moving on to the Portraits themselves, I'd like to mention genetic traits! Traits such as Strong and Genius were much sought-after in CK2, and you often went out of your way to breed those traits into your direct line. In CK3 this is even more involved, with genetic traits having multiple levels that you can improve with successive generations (which can be sped up by inbreeding!), and there's also more of them. Genetic traits will often have a visual effect on your portrait - the Beautiful line of traits will make your characters more-and-more symmetrical, for example. On the negative end of the spectrum, we have traits such as Ugly or Albino, which will reduce symmetry or alter your character's skin tone respectively (the Middle Ages were full of prejudice).

Now, without further ado, let's move on to the Portrait section, hosted by our very own portrait artist, Nils!

Portraits

So, when it comes to the visual presentation of characters in the game, we have chosen to switch out the 2D "paperdoll" style portraits of CK2 for full animated 3D characters in CK3. While the portraits in CK2 undeniably have their charm, going 3D just gives us so many more possibilities for all kinds of dynamic features.

Every character has a DNA in which their appearance is defined. Each facial feature that we can control has its own gene. And there's a great number of those to give us a lot of variations and an endless amount of possible faces. For example, the nose alone has over 10 different parameters that define its shape. Compared to just one in CK2.

Another thing we wanted to change is how much of the character we display in the UI. This is, of course, the middle ages we are talking about, where a person's clothes are a more important indicator of who they are than even their facial features. So, it made sense to show more of the body than just head and shoulders. How fancy and expensive a character's clothing looks will give you as player information about their rank. The larger frame also allows us to show different animated poses, and as Alex mentioned above they give a hint of the character's personality. Additionally, we can do more with body types as well. Characters have different heights (yes including dwarfism and gigantism) as well as different weights and body composition, something that is affected by their lifestyle and traits. So, if your character is a gluttonous hedonist, chances are they will have a body rather on the stout side of things while if they are a legendary warrior their pecs and deltoids will also likely be of the legendary variety.

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Other cool features that the 3D system allows us to do is seamless aging and disease overlays. Now you can see your toddler gradually change into an adult and eventually (barring any unforeseen incidents...) to an elderly 100-year old. Should your character, heavens forbid, catch a serious illness their appearance will reflect that with suitably repulsive skin texture overlays.

Dev Diary 08: Courts, Guests, and Wanderers

Courts and Guests

The courts of CK3 are very similar to those in CK2. The Court consists of your landless subjects, such as some of your Family, Knights, and Councillors. However, you will generally have fewer Courtiers than in CK2. Courtiers who don't have any duties or other reasons for staying will eventually decide to leave in pursuit of other opportunities. Fear not – they will let you know before they go. Courtiers leaving might feel like a bad thing, but I promise, it's actually a part of a really neat feature (more on that further down). In addition to enabling the neat feature, this also means your remaining Courtiers will be more relevant to you than before. No more random strangers at the dinner table!

Your Court will still be a bustling place, full of new acquaintances. In addition to the Courtiers, the core members of your court, you will also have Guests paying you visits. These individuals will interact with your Courtiers and appear in events. Guests stay for a few years before they leave. If you want a Guest to stick around, you can recruit them. Just remember to give them a reason to stay! Giving them a spot on the council or a shiny title never fails but seducing them also does the trick.

Recruit to Court

Effects on you

- Pays 🪙 115.0 to *Taljat Uqessun*
- Recruits *Taljat Uqessun* to his **Court**

Effects on Taljat Uqessun

- Gains **50** **Opinion** of **you** *(-1.20/year)* *(Grateful)*

Recruit to Court

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Guests look for opportunities and will be more likely to visit if they think you might recruit them. For example, Claimants will seek you out if you are strong enough to press their Claims, and suitors might appear if you or your adult children are unmarried. The interface will give you a handy overview to easily identify Guests with special Skills, Traits and Claims. You also have some influence over the type of Guests you attract. There are Invitation Decisions you can take to increase the chance of having good Knights and Claimants visiting, and there is a Dynasty Perk to increase the likelihood of useful Guests.

| Family | 3 | Relationships | 1 | Court | 7 | Vassals | 8 |

Akutla Uqessun
Your Guest
An experienced Diplomat (**15 Diplomacy**)

Dismiss | Recruit to Court

Baranis

-23

Kawsen Miknasid
Your Guest
A *Quick* man (**Congenital Trait**)

Dismiss | Recruit to Court

Baranis

-46

Taljat Uqessun
Your Guest
Has a useful **County Claim**

Dismiss | Recruit to Court

Baranis

-8

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Wanderers

But where do all these Guests come from? You see, when a mommy and a daddy love each other very much… Oh, you meant "where are they before they appear in my court"? Well, characters without a permanent home wander around on the map and visit Courts along the way. This is where characters leaving your court comes in - they will become Wanderers! For example, a son or daughter who is too far down in the line of succession to inherit might become a Wanderer to find a new Liege to press their Claims. Characters might also find themselves on the road by being banished or losing all their land.

All of this means that your guests often have interesting backstories. Many of them have families and relationships, and they keep developing during their journeys. If you check in on a family member who is out wandering, you might find that they have married or picked up some new skills (or a juicy secret…) since they left your Court. Perhaps they've even become a Mercenary Captain or the head of a Holy Order!

In the world of CK3, your ruler is the main character, but it is our hope that courtiers, guests, and wanderers will become a great supporting cast.

Dev Diary 09: Lifestyles

Now, to start off, the lifestyles of CK3 have very little in common with those in CK2. The system has been changed and is vastly improved and much more interactive than CK2's system. In fact, we have proper skill trees now, much like those you would find in an RPG. You will gather experience and unlock perks, which conveys all kinds of bonuses to your character! This allows you to tailor your character to your needs, immerse yourself in their story, and provides a lot of replayability, as it's not only about what perks you get, but also when you get them.

Lifestyle Categories

There are five Lifestyle categories, with each category containing three full skill trees. You first choose the Lifestyle you want, and then you select a focus within it.

Focuses

The focuses convey immediate bonuses, much like they did in CK2 - you usually pick the Focus that provides the modifier you most need at the moment. For example, if you desperately need piety you can pick the Theology Focus, while if you have just conquered a large amount of land the Authority Focus might be more appropriate. You can pick any Focus within a Lifestyle to gain experience within it, the Focuses do not correspond to specific trees.

Each Focus also comes with its own unique set of events, connected to the theme of the Focus. If you have the Temptation focus selected you might get events about subtly manipulating your vassals and guests, finding out their secrets or gaining hooks, while if you have the Wealth focus selected it might see you levy extra taxes upon your peasants, among other things. More on this in the next weeks DD.

Medicine Focus

An understanding of life, beyond the vagaries of the world upon the body.

Focusing on Medicine grants:
Learning: 📖 +1
Health: Small Boost
Learning Experience: 30/month

Scholarship Focus

The knowledge of those who have come before, the knowledge of those still living, and the knowledge of perpetual truths.

Focusing on Scholarship grants:
Learning: 📖 +3
Learning Experience: 30/month

Theology Focus

Faith and knowledge. Understanding the divine means understanding the world.

Focusing on Theology grants:
Learning: 📖 +1
Piety: 🕊 +1.0/month
Learning Experience: 30/month

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Perks

After you've picked a Focus, you will start gaining experience and can start unlocking perks!

Now, characters will not usually live long enough to unlock every perk. You will have to choose which path to go down, and you will unlock a new perk every few years. Perks are unlocked by spending experience, which is gained both passively (symbolizing that your character dabbles in subjects pertaining to their lifestyle during their free time) and actively (through choices in Lifestyle events, etc).

Perks are wonderful things that unlock all manner of possibilities and opportunities. Going down the right paths will unlock special modifiers, decisions, casus bellis, and even schemes. Some perks will modify existing systems to work differently for your character - for example, going down the Avarice path makes Stress (more on this in a later DD) have some positive effects. There are perks that make your troops fight better, that make factions stay in line, or that fortify your health. Really, you'll be spoilt for choice - and we'll go into more detail on what each Lifestyle is capable of in the coming weeks!

The final Perk in each tree always gives you a trait, which is very powerful (think the Master Seducer trait in CK2), nicely rounding them off. If you live long enough, you'll see yourself accumulate a few of these.

Diplomacy Lifestyle

Focus on understanding people and their motives, how to handle other realms, and how to win the unwavering loyalty of your subjects.

Because of your Diplomacy Education, you gain 30% more Experience in this Lifestyle.

Lifestyle Focus
Current: *No Focus*

Foreign Affairs Focus
One can never have too many friends, near or far.
Focusing on Foreign Affairs grants:
Diplomacy: +3
Diplomacy Experience: 39/month

Majesty Focus
Regality flows from ritual, tradition and glory.
Focusing on Majesty grants:
Diplomacy: +1
Prestige: +1.0/month
Diplomacy Experience: 39/month

Family Focus
Even if we do not choose them, those closest to us are the most important.
Focusing on Family grants:
Diplomacy: +2
Fertility: +25%
Diplomacy Experience: 39/month

Reset Perks

Diplomacy Experience: 0/1000   Diplomacy Perks unlocked: 2/27

Diplomat — Thoughtful, Ducal Conquest, Adaptive Traditions, Defensive Negotiations, Forced Vassalage, Flexible Truces, Embassies, Accomplished Forger, Diplomat

August — Benevolent Intent, Firm Hand, Inspiring Rule, Praetorian Guard, True Ruler, Writing History, A Life of Glory, Dignitas, August

Family First — Befriend, Groomed to Rule, Confidants, Familial Familiar, Flatterer, Thicker than Water, Friendly Counsel, Sound Foundations, Family Man

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Can you guess the traits? 15 of these traits are tied to the Lifestyle trees, the remaining can be gained through special events and activities.

While you won't start using Lifestyles and unlocking perks before you're an adult, it really begins during childhood. Depending on the education you get, you will have an affinity for a certain Lifestyle - now this doesn't mean that you're stuck with that Lifestyle, of course, you can choose any lifestyle regardless of your education. The education ranks directly correspond to a percentage increase in experience gained, a rank one education will give a 10% bonus, and a rank four one a 40% bonus, and so on.

When a character becomes landed they will select a focus and unlock perks based on their age - the older they are, the more perks they will have unlocked. They will select an appropriate Lifestyle based on their education (making it even more important to manage your children's education carefully), and perks based on their personality and traits. Do not worry though, if you're not satisfied with the hand you're dealt you can choose to reset all perks (within that Lifestyle) once per lifetime - though this will incur a massive amount of Stress (again, more on this in a later DD). Sometimes it's worth playing the hand you're dealt - perhaps going along with your lustful heir's seductive tendencies could open up a venue you hadn't even considered?

Dev Diary 10: Lifestyle Events

Baron von Shoes
Content Designer

We have already covered a good deal of how Lifestyles work from a systemic point of view, but how do they influence your character's story? What does your Lifestyle mean to your ruler beyond some bonus skill points and a handful of perks?

Lifestyle Focuses

Much like in CK2, when you pick a Lifestyle Focus you will begin getting events related to that Focus. Unlike in CK2, however, these events are not mere stepping stones toward acquiring a Lifestyle Trait, as that progression is handled by the perk system. Instead, Lifestyle Events in CK3 represent the various opportunities (or crises!) that have arisen as a result of the extra time and attention your ruler has been devoting to their Focus.

For example, if you pick the 'Stewardship - Domain' Focus, you will begin receiving events about the management of your ruler's domain and the holdings within it. You can choose to be strict or lenient, fair or corrupt, generous or greedy, etc. While there is rarely a 'correct' answer, the choices you make here will influence the prosperity of your realm, the size of your treasury, and how your ruler will be remembered in history books.

Then again, you might prefer to take the 'Intrigue - Temptation' Focus, where you will receive events about seduction, desires, and covertness. You can lead your courtiers and vassals on, manipulating them into doing favors for you or interceding with others on your behalf. You can sustain long-term affairs, planting agents in foreign courts who will do your bidding when the time is right. Or, just maybe, you're simply the type of person who wants to have a good time, seducing every lady or lord you desire, indulging in a wild revelry of stress-relieving hedonism and debauchery? The choice is yours to make!

A Sweet Farewell

"My lord it is... it was... I mean, it has been a pleasure to be your guest here in Upper Lorraine" *Amalie* stammers, as she readies for departure.

"I got to meet *you*. That alone made my stay worth it. But still, I beg you... would you spend a night of passion with me, before I leave?"

Amalie has fallen for my subtle manipulation! Now, how should I capitalise on this opportunity?

Yes, my love, I would do *anything* for you!

So, darling, that rumour about my vassal?

My sweet, would you speak to *Hedwig*?

Ah, I cannot... now off you go!

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There are many more Focuses besides these two, of course, such as 'Learning - Scholarship', where you will get the chance to delve into old books to study natural philosophy and run questionable experiments — here you can decide just how far you will go in the search for knowledge, and if it is worth it to push the boundaries of church doctrine to discover the secrets of nature...

Lead to Gold

The transmutation of lead to gold has long been the dream of alchemists across the world. Though many have attempted such a feat, nobody is known to have succeeded.

Despite this, I have come across some notes written in the margins of a book about plants. They claim that one can create "golden rain" by boiling lead sugar in a filtered solution of seaweed ash.

Could such a thing be possible?

If nothing else, it is worth investigating...

These scribbles are clearly a nonsensical prank.

I will not be tempted by the promises of witchcraft!

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...as well as the more practical 'Diplomacy - Family' Focus, where your attention to your family will give you opportunities to improve relations between relatives, enhance the prestige of your dynasty, and even take a more active role in molding your heir to be a worthy successor for your great legacy!

A Flaw of Character

Once I have departed this world my my son and heir
Cadwgan shall rule in my stead.

Unfortunately, rumors of **Cadwgan**'s unending
grudges have been spreading around my court. It
makes me wonder if he will manage to retain my
vassals' support once I am gone...

Attempt to rectify Cadwgan's flaws.

Talk up his good qualities instead.

Focus on myself and lead by example.

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In addition, your rulers are savvy individuals (or would at least like to think so); they won't just single-mindedly pursue their Focus at the expense of all else. You will also receive occasional events pertaining to other Focuses within the same Lifestyle, representing various opportunities you have discovered that you weren't necessarily pursuing, but would still be foolish to ignore. This will help mix things up a little and make keeping the same Focus for a long time more interesting.

Taken all together, Lifestyle Events become an integral part of the Lifestyles system in CK3 that define how your current ruler lives their life and what impact that has on their realm and dynasty. Many of the choices you will have to make have both pros and cons, which means what you decide to do as one ruler may be very different from what you do as another. Since each of your rulers will have different reasons for picking a Focus, this will lead to varied and interesting gameplay across multiple generations, as each subsequent ruler is presented with a wide variety of new and changing situations to take advantage of in pursuit of their ambitions.

Dev Diary 11: Seduction, Torture and the Intrigue Perk Trees

As covered in a previous dev diary, each character Skill has a Lifestyle, and each Lifestyle has three associated Focuses and three Perk trees, which is what we'll be diving into today.

Keep in mind that all values listed below are subject to change!

For Intrigue, the three focuses are:

Skulduggery Focus

Schemes, subversion and secrets.

Focusing on Skulduggery grants:
Agent Acceptance: **+10**
Intrigue: **+3**
Intrigue Experience: 30/month

Skulduggery Focus

Agent Acceptance: +10, Intrigue: +3

Temptation Focus

Seduction, desire and the gentle art of twisting people around your little finger.

Focusing on Temptation grants:
Fertility: **+25%**
Attraction Opinion: **+10**
Seduction Scheme Power: **+20%**
Intrigue Experience: 30/month

Temptation Focus

Fertility: +25%, Attraction Opinion: 10, Seduction Scheme Power: +20%

Intimidation Focus

Threats, both overt and subtle, guide the path to true power.

Focusing on Intimidation grants:
Intrigue: **+2**
Dread Gain: **+10%**
Natural **Dread:** **+20.0**
Intrigue Experience: 30/month

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Intimidation Focus

Intrigue: +2, Dread Gain: +10%, Natural Dread: +20

Each perk tree — Schemer, Seducer, and Torturer — concludes with the unlocking of its namesake trait. I know this might be an insurmountable challenge, but feel free to guess which is which:§§

(Ah, is there any greater torture than the desires of the heart...)

I'll also be running down the effects of every unlockable perk that leads to those, and I'm naturally going to start by talking about the Temptation focus, that eternal vice, and the Seducer tree, but first I want to describe its closely related Seduce Scheme.

The Seduce Scheme

Seduction is a little more complicated than it was in CK2, with factors such as the target's personal preferences playing a larger part. Indeed, Scheme Power is not merely affected by your Intrigue, but who you are, and who they are.

That also means that you have to be a little careful. If a target gets annoyed rather than enticed, and you suffer a Critical Failure, they may give you a hard rejection - preventing you from attempting to Seduce them again - or even publicly out you as the lecherous villain you are!

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The Seducer Tree

So how will the Seduce tree help you? A few Perks offer straightforward bonuses by increasing your Scheme Power or making you more attractive to those of an appropriate gender and sexuality.

[Enticing Opportunity — Seduction Scheme Power: +30%]
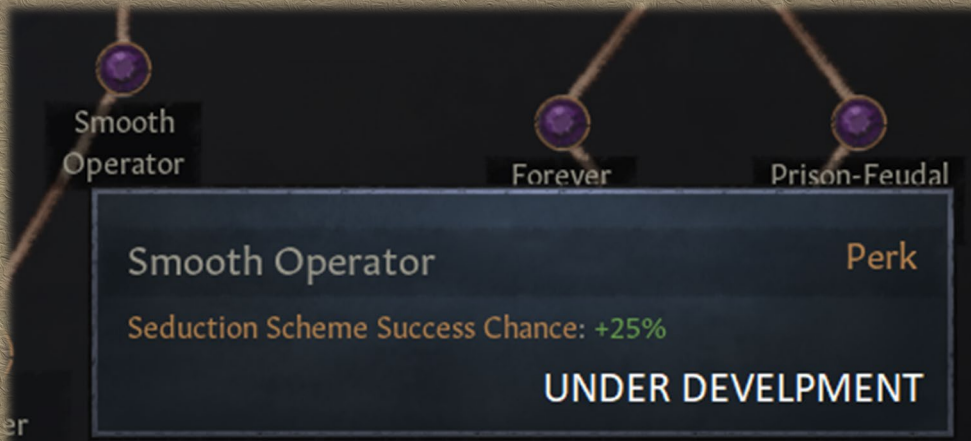
[Smooth Operator — Seduction Scheme Success Chance: +25%]
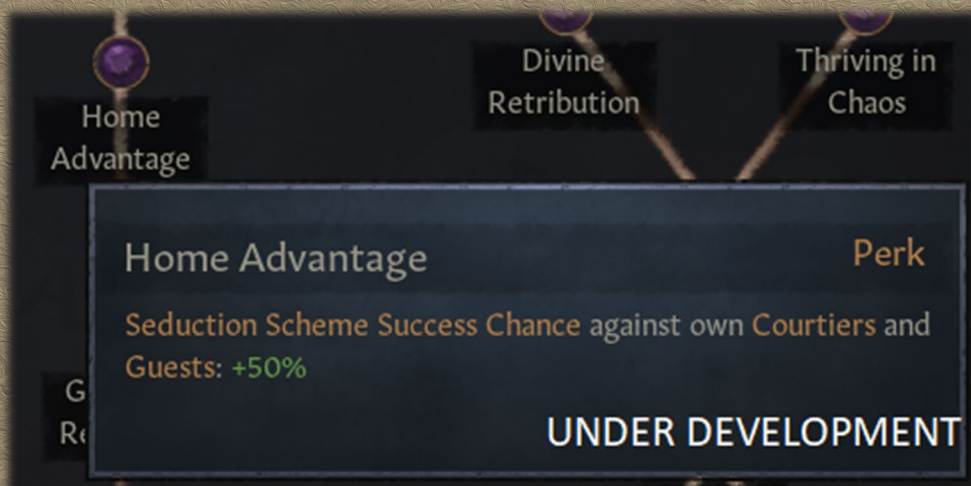
[Home Advantage — Seduction Scheme Success Chance against own Courtiers and Guests: +50%]

Others may expand your pool of... available targets.
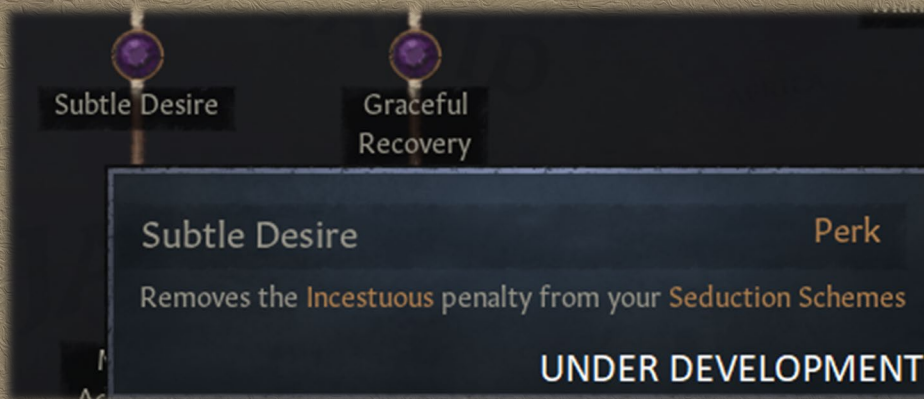
[Subtle Desire — Removes the Incestuous penalty from your Seduction Schemes]

Just to be clear, this affects the Scheme, not the relationship. If you're caught getting too close to family, you will still suffer consequences.

Similarly, if you find your own sexual preferences getting in the way of who you can Seduce efficiently, there are ways you can overcome that:

[Unshackled Lust — Removes your attraction penalties in Seduction Schemes]

(There's no way of overcoming your target's sexual preferences, though. I'm sorry, but your liege is Just Not That Into You.)

There are perks to help a different kind of "effectiveness" in your Seduce Schemes:

[Like Weeds in a Garden — Fertility: +30%]

And perks to mitigate the consequences of messing up:
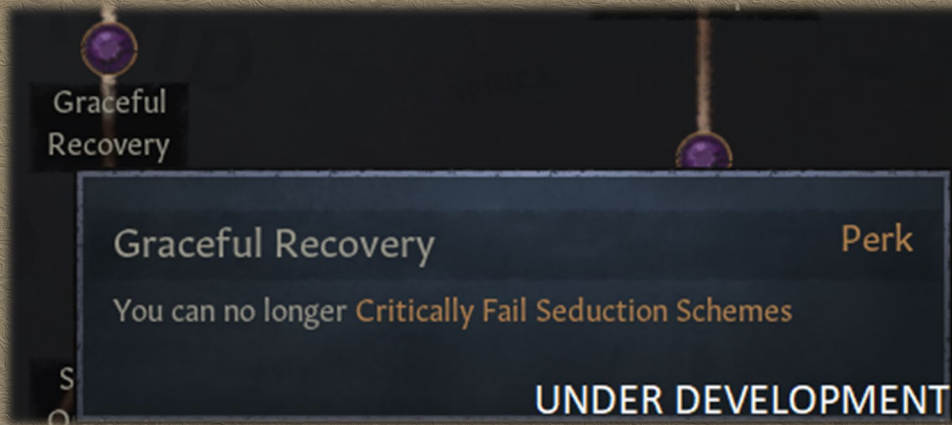
[Graceful Recovery — You can no longer Critically Fail Seduction Schemes]

Ah, the number of times I have desperately needed the Graceful Recovery perk...

Bringing a Lover to your court doesn't come entirely risk-free, of course, so we also have a Perk to minimise the risk to you, at the unfortunate cost of maximising the risk for them:
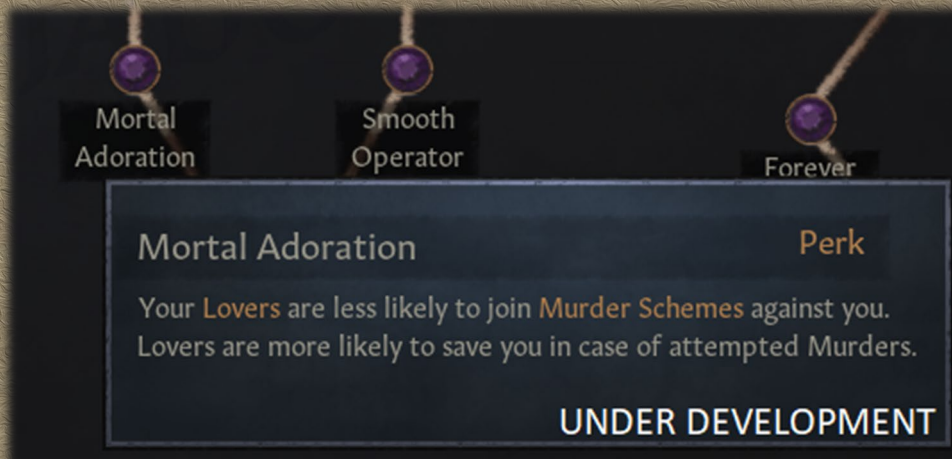
[Mortal Adoration — Your Lovers are less likely to join Murder Schemes against you. Lovers are more likely to save you in case of attempted Murders.]

What can I say? Not every love story has a happy ending.

The final perk in the tree is the one that grants you the Seducer trait. It comes with increases to Intrigue, Fertility, and a hefty boost to Attraction Opinion for anyone who finds themselves unfortunate enough to be of the relevant sexual orientation. Rulers of the world, lock up your wives! And husbands! And family members! Maybe also yourself for good measure!

The Torture Scheme

Of course, Intrigue does not merely embody pleasure, but also pain. I'm happy to announce that the fan-favourite of "Torture" is going to be making a return for CK3.

What is it good for? Well, being Dreadful, for one thing, making your vassals fear you. Another benefit is the possibility that a victim will try to bribe you with Secrets to get you to stop. You're going to need those Secrets for leverage anyways, since the victim's family will hold you in utter disdain. Being an avid torturer also comes with a Piety penalty and a loss of Clergy opinion (unless your Faith happens to make exceptions for this kind of thing…).

Torture

Effects on you

- Might discover a Secret, if _Count Elek_ has or knows about one
- Loses 🗡 10 Stress because you are _Sadistic_
- Gains 20 Dread
- Pays 👤 100

Effects on Count Elek of Csanad

- Loses 75 Opinion of you for 50 years _(Tortured Me)_
- ⛓ Crime — _Rightful imprisonment_
- Gains _Recently Tortured_ for 1 year

All Close Family Members and Spouse of Count Elek:

Torture

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The Torturer Tree

Now, we wouldn't let you take the pliers to flesh without giving you a way of getting really good at it, would we? The Torturer tree is all about making your vassals and peasants fear whatever might be going on in your dungeons! Or in your throne room. Or in your presence in general.

It has a series of Dread-increasing effects, as well as adding bonuses to various sources of dread.

[Dreadful — Dread Gain: +30%]
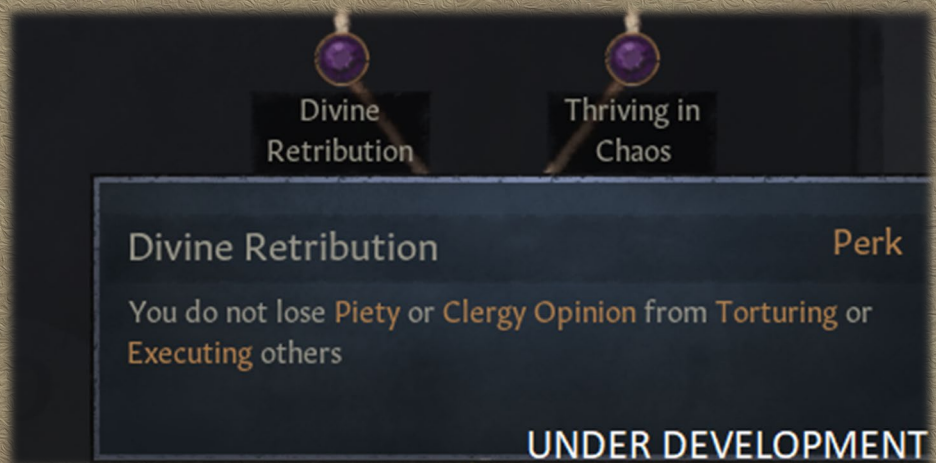
[Divine Retribution — You do not lose Piety or Clergy Opinion from Torturing or Executing others]
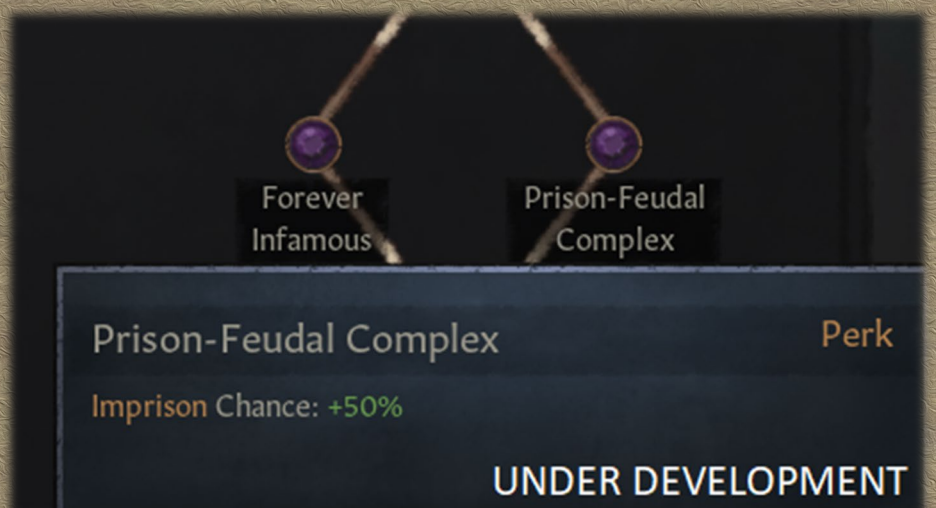
[Prison-Feudal Complex — Imprison Chance: +50%]

And, of course there are ways of making sure you keep that hard-earned Dread for as long as possible:

[Forever Infamous — Dread Decay: -100%]

Of course, once you start "going off the rails" (as my fellow developers assure me my playstyle should be described as) you need to make sure that it doesn't go unnoticed. Keep the faint of heart in line, and all that.

[Malice Implicit — Dread Gain Per Tyranny: +0.5]

It's not all about Dread, however. Intimate familiarity with human anatomy can help in other ways, too:
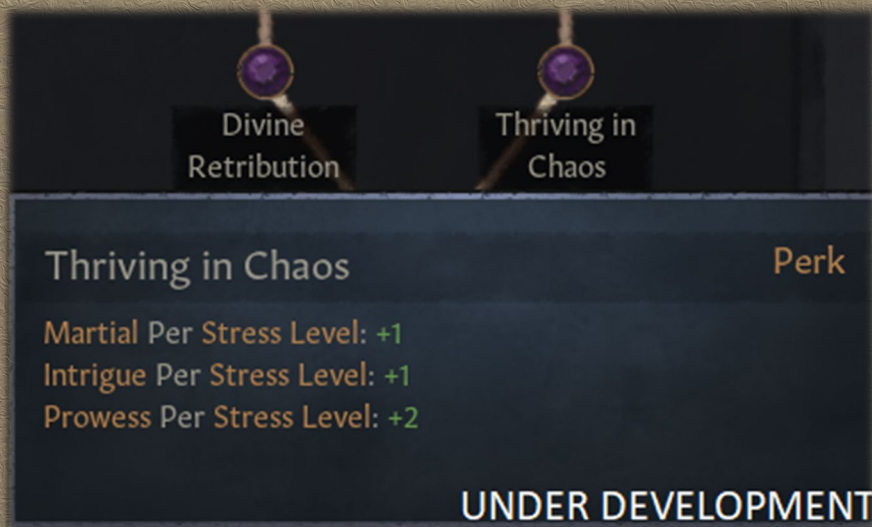
[Dark Insights — When you Torture someone: 50% chance to gain either 1 Intrigue or 1 Prowess]

While it's not a relief for Stress per se (unless you're particularly sadistic), the Perk tree offers additional side benefits for your poor coping methods:
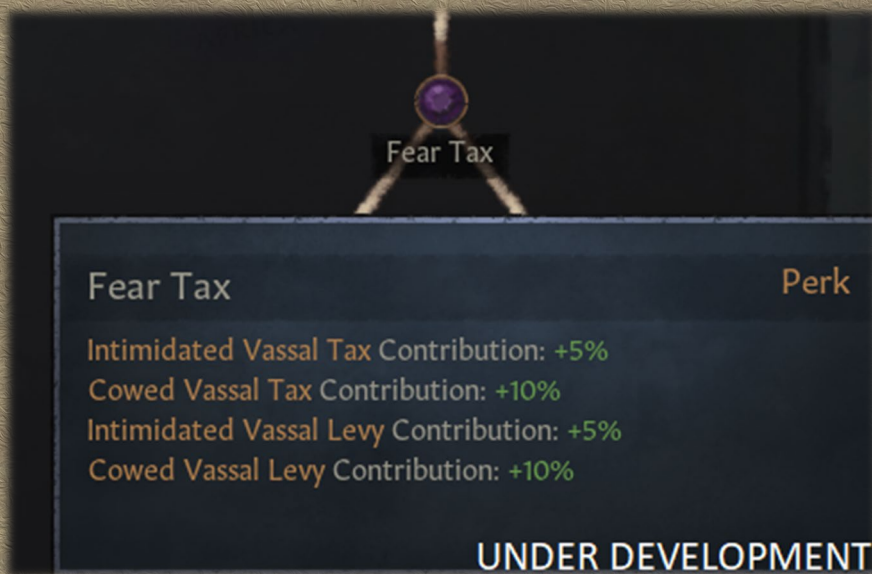
[Thriving in Chaos — Martial and Intrigue Per Stress Level: +1. Prowess Per Stress Level: +2]

Dread (and the actions that give it) is quite powerful on its own, offering alternative ways of controlling your vassals, but what if we could make it even better?

[Fear Tax — Increased tax and levy contributions from Intimidated and Cowed vassals]

The last Perk in the tree grants the Torturer trait, which offers a slight Levy and Prowess boost, along with an additional improvement to your Dread gain. This will allow you to keep your Dread exceptionally high as you imprison, revoke, torture and execute to your heart's content.

The Schemer Tree

Some of you out there are less bombastic in your methods, which brings us to our last tree for this diary. Skulduggery rules the shadows, keeping potential threats in line by more subtle tricks.
It provides a number of different bonuses to your Hostile Schemes, and to your Spymaster's tasks:
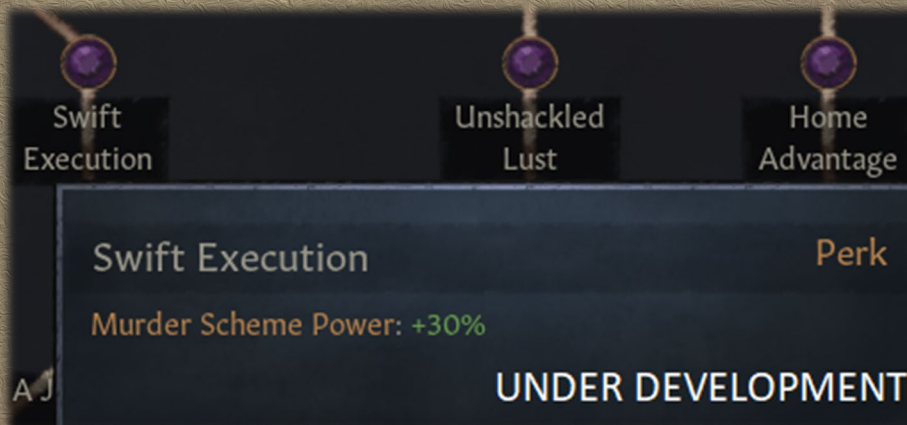
[Swift Execution — Murder Scheme Power: +30%]
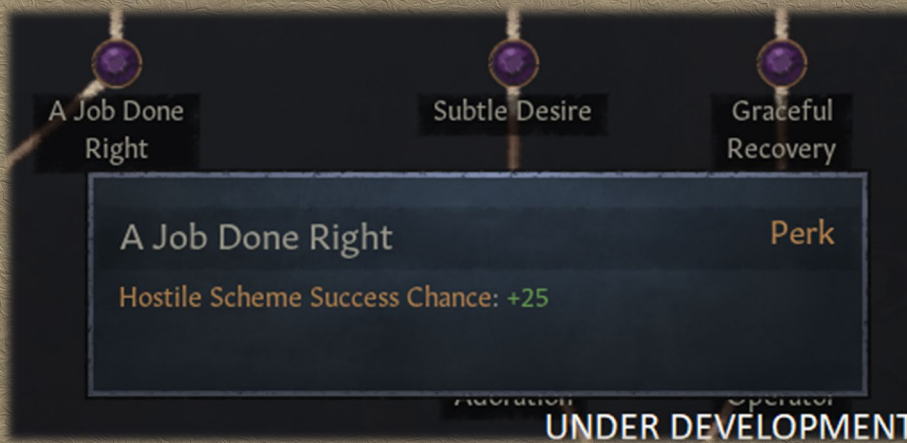
[A Job Done Right — Hostile Scheme Success Chance: +25]

(Hostile Schemes does not mean Schemes hostile against yourself, but rather Schemes that are categorised as Hostile instead of Personal.)

[Digging for Dirt — Find Secrets Progress Speed: +25%]

Find Secrets is the Spymaster Council Task you might remember from a few diaries ago.

There are also a handful of defensive measures, should your enemies come looking for revenge:

[Court of Shadows — Disrupt Schemes Effectiveness: +50%]

Disrupt Schemes is another —very useful— Spymaster Task.
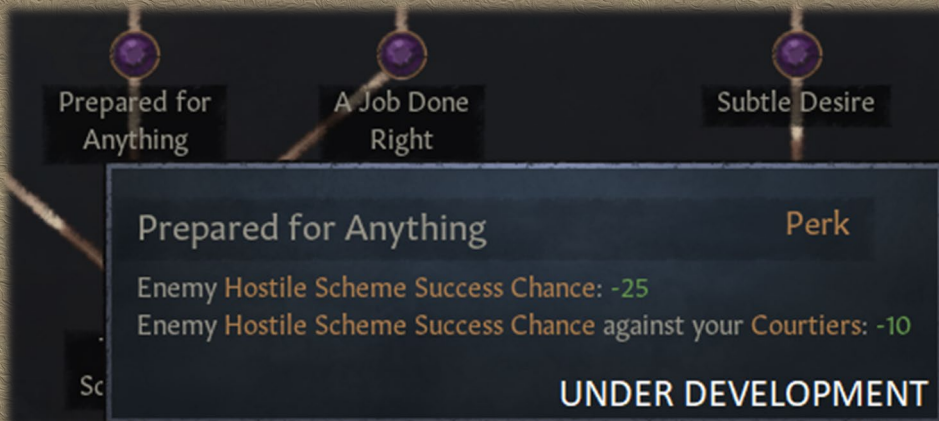
[Prepared for Anything — Enemy Hostile Scheme Success Chance: -25. Enemy Hostile Scheme Success Chance against your Courtiers: -10.]

Once you've unlocked this collection of perks, it will be very hard to turn your own methods against you. You will only really have to worry about people who are your equal as a Schemer. But you should be worrying about those people anyways.

In the previous dev diary about Schemes, you already got a sneak preview of a Scheme to Fabricate Hooks, which becomes available in the Schemer tree, and it's not the only scheme to be unlocked this way:
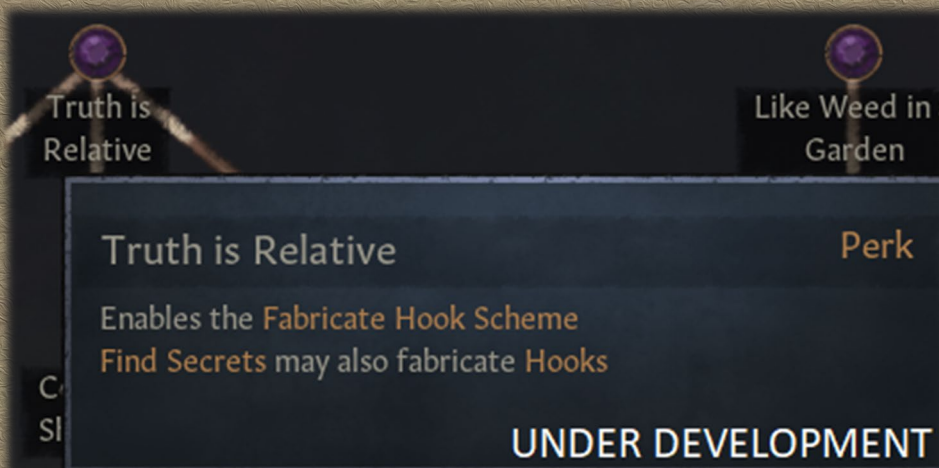
[Truth is Relative - Enables the Fabricate Hook Scheme. Find Secrets may also fabricate Hooks.]
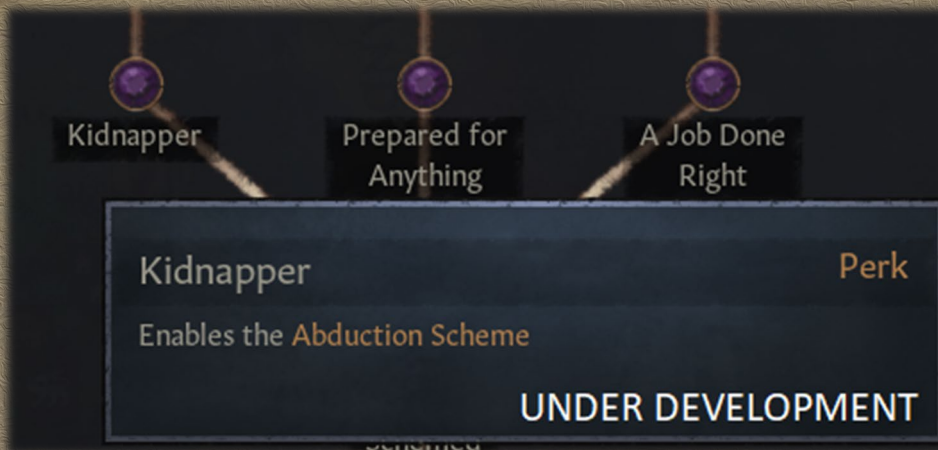
[Kidnapper — Enables the Abduction Scheme]

Abduction is a criminal scheme, and therefore secret. However, if you succeed, you're automatically discovered. They're not going to wonder for long whose dungeon they're locked in. You have nothing to worry about, though. The victim will be entirely at your mercy, after all.

But with all these Schemes, and only a single hostile scheme slot, what is a poor little Power Behind the Throne to do? Why, get yourself a second Scheme slot, of course!
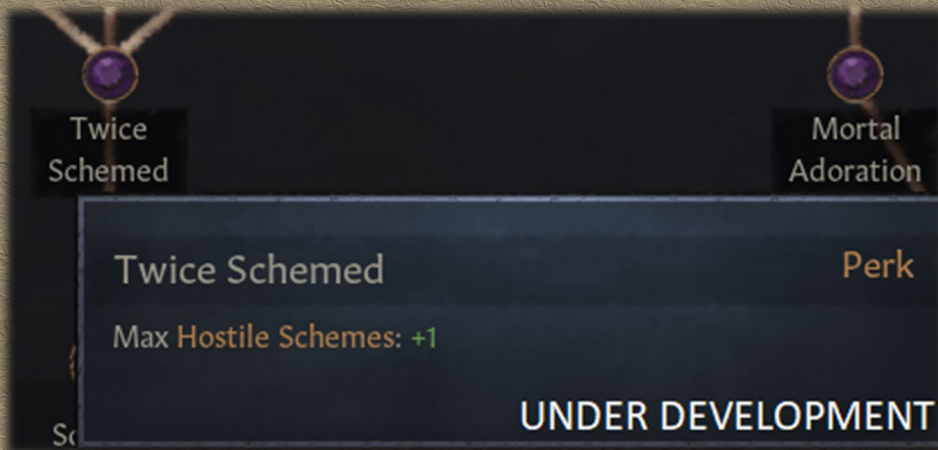
[Twice Schemed — Max Hostile Schemes: +1]

Lastly, this Perk tree offers up the Schemer trait. Not only does it grant a major bonus to your Intrigue in general. It also significantly boosts your Scheme Power, speeding up the inevitable success of your ingenious plans.

Dev Diary 12: The Stewardship Lifestyle

Stewardship covers all things gold, and all things relating to the development and management of your realm. The three focuses you can choose between are:

Wealth Focus

War, honor and loyalty are all means to an end: gold!

Focusing on Wealth grants:
Monthly Income: 🥟 +10%
Stewardship Experience: 30/month

Wealth Focus

Monthly Income: +10%

Domain Focus

My land, and the people under my care, is my strength.

Focusing on Domain grants:
Stewardship: 📜 +3
Stewardship Experience: 30/month

Domain Focus

Stewardship: +3

Duty Focus

The bonds of loyalty that bind us do not constrict; they show the way.

Focusing on Duty grants:
Stewardship: 📜 +1
Courtier and Guest Opinion: +20
Stewardship Experience: 30/month

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Duty Focus

Stewardship: +1, Courtier and Guest opinion: +20

Wealth	grants a flat bonus to income, for when you need that slight gold-making edge
Domain	increases your Stewardship, with the various internal bonuses that grants
Duty	gives a small increase to Stewardship, and a large increase to Courtier and Guest opinions. It can be very helpful when it comes to keeping those closest to you loyal.

Keep in mind that all values are subject to change as development continues!

The goal of the associated perk trees are to offer new ways of emphasising these areas - your income, your development, and internal people management (the "HR branch").

Stewardship
Lifestyle
Traits

Under Development

Avaricious

Avaricious is the course of gold, naturally enough, and it provides a number of new potential sources of income.

Golden
Obligations   Tax Man

Golden Obligations   Perk

You can Demand Payment for Hooks

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[Golden Obligations - You can Demand Payment for Hooks]

Golden Obligations lets you demand money in exchange for Hooks, rather than the usual demand of enforcing your will in some matter. Considering a Dynasty Head gains Hooks on all Dynasty Members, I am personally very fond of levying the "family tax" when I want to build something ostentatious.

If your Hooks don't provide enough gold, you can dig a little deeper for it:

It is MY   Defensive   Professional
Domain   Measures   Workforce

It is MY Domain   Perk

Can use the Extort Subjects Decision

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[It is MY Domain - Can use the Extort Subjects Decision]

Extort Subjects lets you demand money from your vassals, holdings, courtiers, etc., although while the money might seem free in the short term, there are usually tradeoffs that need to be made, depending on exactly how you're extorting it...

When using the Decision, you'll be offered a specific opportunity - targeting a specific Powerful Vassal, for example - and get to make a decision about how hard you want to lean on them. Sometimes you only need a little extra gold, after all.

Lastly, if you don't feel good about taking money while offering little in exchange, you can sell "titles" piecemeal instead.
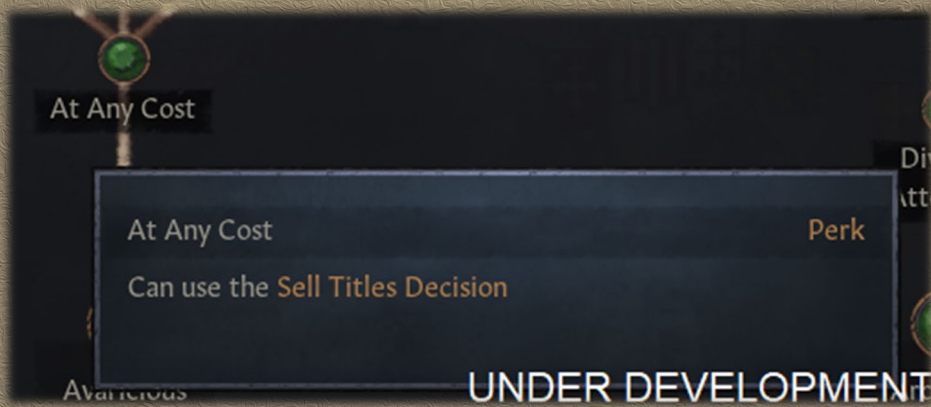
[At Any Cost - You can use the Sell Titles Decision]

Note that the Sell Titles decision does not involve selling your Landed Titles, but small meaningless knighthoods and honoraries instead. The cost is typically Prestige, or the dilution of the concept of nobility at all. How much you make depends on the gullibility of your subjects, or to what degree they find ways of turning the situation to their advantage or not...

So, with these perks, you'll have a lot of options when you need that extra pile of gold to pay for something.

There are also more passive sources of income as well, for the feinschmecker who prefers to have their existing wealth work for them.
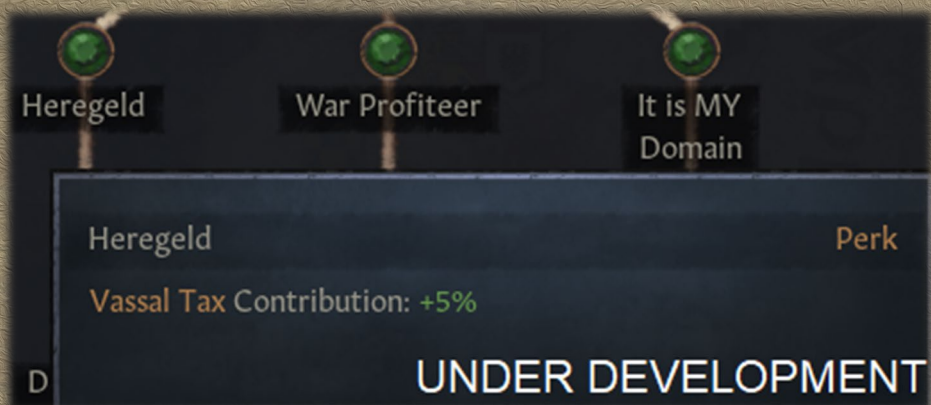
[Heregeld - Vassal Tax Contribution: +5%]

[Detailed Ledgers - Republican Ruler Opinion: +20, Republican Tax Contribution: +10%]

And what's this? The powerful getting richer by keeping their realm at war? What kind of silly fantasy world is it we've invented for this game?

[War Profiteer - Monthly Income while at War: +25%]

Speaking of keeping your realm at war, money can buy you a lot of things, but only Dread can buy you an eager and willing army.

[Fearful Troops - Men-at-Arms Maintenance per Dread: -0.5%]

Oh, wait! I guess that gold can also buy you an eager and willing army. We're gonna talk about Mercenaries in a future dev diary at some point.

If, after all that, you're still not getting enough money, you can have the Avaricious trait. It'll keep you going until you suffocate under the weight of your wealth, by providing you with a small boost to Stewardship, and a sound, direct boost to your monthly gold income.

Architect

But maybe it's not all about dying with the biggest pile of money? Maybe it's about leaving an imprint on the world? That might not be as crazy as it sounds. But what would that ever be?

The biggest buildings, of course! Let's see what the Architect tree has on offer.

To start with, there's a few perks to improve your ability to build things, naturally enough:

[Cutting Cornerstones -   Building Construction Gold Cost: -10%,
                               Building Construction Piety Cost: -10%,
                               Building Construction Prestige Cost: -10%,
                               Holding Construction Gold Cost: -10%,
                               Holding Construction Piety Cost: -10%,
                               Holding Construction Prestige Cost: -10%]

[Professional Workforce - Building Construction Time: -30%, Holding Construction Time: -30%]

This way you can build your realm up fast, and on the cheap, no matter what kind of constructions you're looking for.

You can also find improvements to the growth rate of Development in your capital:

[Centralization - Development Growth in Realm Capital: +0.2/month]

I'm getting wistful here. Once you've been a game developer for a while, any kind of "Development Growth" bonus is something you dream of every day.

Now, if you enjoy building, but your pesky Holding Limit is holding you back… Well, there's a Perk to help you out!
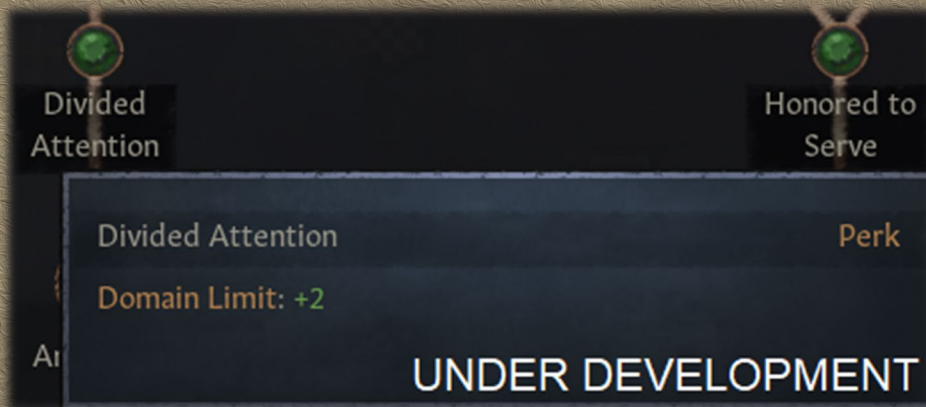
[Divided Attention - Domain Limit: +2]

It'll leave you with EVEN MORE LOCATIONS TO BUILD IN!

If you have this many titles, though, you might end up with a lot of uppity peasants under your control, and they might even get dissatisfied. Unbelievable, I know (considering everything you do for them, such as organise their money into neat stacks), but far more likely than you think. But don't worry! Popularity can, in fact, be bought:

[Popular Figurehead - Popular Opinion: +50]

Hopefully that will be enough to keep the peasants in line…

If the threats against you are external, rather than internal, there are organizational tools to help you deal with those, too. Never give in to those who want to take away what you've BUILT WITH YOUR OWN TWO hundred thousand peasant HANDS!

[Defensive Measures - Fort Level: +1, Garrison Size: +20%]

[Organized Muster Rolls - Levy Reinforcement Rate: +100%]

What's that you say? This dev diary has become too much about building things, and not enough about extracting wealth from things? Fine. Here, have a perk to help your Steward with that.

[Tax Man - Collect Taxes effectiveness: +25%]

All this adds up to Architect, a trait that is going to keep your realm constructing around the clock. Not only does it grant you a Stewardship bonus, but it further reduces the Building Construction time! Castles and towers will soon be sprouting across your realm like toadstools after the rain.

Administrator

Now, I wouldn't begrudge the more nobility-and-obligation-minded among you if you have started to think that Stewardship doesn't offer you anything. Making money is precisely why you have a Steward to assign work to, after all. But don't be so quick to judge! No matter who you are, you are going to have annoying vassals (and possibly lieges) to deal with. And boy do we have a tree for you.

[Likable - Direct Vassal Opinion: +10, Liege Opinion: +20]

[Positions of Power - Councillor Opinion: +20]

[Toe the Line - Your Vassals are less likely to join Independence Factions]

These passive bonuses are going to be a godsend when it comes to keeping your realm together.

If you want something more active, you can improve your Chancellor's efforts to foster good relations with your vassals:

[Chains of Loyalty - Domestic Affairs efficiency: +25%]

Sometimes, being viewed positively isn't quite enough, and you have to employ harsh measures that may or may not be perceived as "unjust", "vicious", or "tyrannical". Wouldn't it be great if people didn't get so hung up in the details, but focused more on the gifts you sent them afterwards?

[Soon Forgiven - Monthly Tyranny: -0.05]

But what's the point of having all these loyal vassals if they don't do anything for you? Well, loyal vassals do a lot for you, actually. But what if they did a little extra?

[Large Levies - Vassal Levy contribution: +10%]

And those who are offered the highest respect and esteem should also contribute the most, should they not?

[Honored to Serve - Happy Powerful Vassal Tax contribution: +25%, Happy Powerful Vassal Levy contribution: +25%]

A "Happy Powerful Vassal" refers to a Powerful Vassal who sits on the Council. You will have a really hard time making them actually happy, trust me. The ungrateful curs.

So, what if you don't have a bunch of vassals? Maybe you're not the top of the feudal heap, even though you clearly should be?

[Meritocracy - You can use Claim Throne against your Liege]

A Scheme called "Claim Throne" can obviously only ever be risky, but you can employ it against your Liege to get a claim on the realm. It's a lot easier to get put into power by a Claimant Faction than by generations of unpredictable inheritance, after all.

The Scheme itself is a Hostile Scheme that relies on Learning and Intrigue and uses agents. The most powerful agents will be your Liege's Council Members. You're going to need a lot of powerful support to convincingly stake your claim, after all. Even though you are obviously the rightful ruler.

Lastly, at the end of the path waits the Administrator trait. It's a slight mix of both worlds, improving your vassal's opinions of you, while also slightly reducing build costs.

Notes on modding

The structure and setup of the different perk trees is scriptable, which means that one can easily add things, move things around, set different requirements for each Perk, etc. And as someone asked, it's also possible to make all Perks in a lifestyle form a single big tree, instead of three separate ones, and it is possible to have multiple "entry points" and "end points" for a single tree.

When it comes to what a modder will be able to make a Perk do... well, pretty much anything. Giving character modifiers, running specific effects, being used as a trigger for other things... If you can think of it, there's probably a way of making a perk do it. You can also make entirely new Lifestyles, if you have a good idea for one!

I can think of half a dozen different uses for this system to a modder, and it wouldn't surprise me if they quickly find ways of using it that haven't even occurred to us. So, while you're patiently and excitedly waiting to play the game, I'm equally excited to see what the inspired people of our modding community are going to get up to!

Dev Diary 13: The Learning Lifestyle

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Seeking out information, acquiring knowledge, and reading everything you can get your hands on should resonate with a lot of you, seeing as that's more or less what you're doing right now. You might even have a theological bent and be praying for a release date announcement!
But your prayers will go unanswered for some time yet.

Here are the focuses that the Learning Lifestyle allows for:

Medicine Focus

Learning: +1, Health: Small Boost

Medicine Focus

An understanding of life, beyond the vagaries of the world upon the body.

Focusing on Medicine grants:
Learning: +1
Health: Small Boost
Learning Experience: 30/month

Scholarship Focus

Learning: +3

Scholarship Focus

The knowledge of those who have come before, the knowledge of those still living, and the knowledge of perpetual truths.

Focusing on Scholarship grants:
Learning: +3
Learning Experience: 30/month

Theology Focus

Learning: +1, Piety: +1/month

Theology Focus

Faith and knowledge. Understanding the divine means understanding the world.

Focusing on Theology grants:
Learning: +1
Piety: +1.0/month
Learning Experience: 30/month

UNDER DEVELOPMENT

Medicine	is the focus for those of you who want to shield yourself and your court from the vagaries of Medieval life. Life is short enough as it stands, and far more so if smallpox decides to take up residence in your castle, or if you're of the easily-stressed persuasion for that matter
Scholarship	is a good one for those who love to seek knowledge and understand the weirdness and wonder out there. It's effects are about knowing how to improve your own abilities, and how to improve the realm
Theology	is about the great questions. Who are, and what is the divine? Why does the divine want me specifically to rule the entire world? Its perks offer numerous bonuses to your interactions with your faith and the clergy

The perk trees themselves match these themes fairly well but provide you with more detailed options.

Theologian

I would like us to dive in head first into the realm of theology. Some of the perks here are the straightforward fare you might expect, making others of your faith like you more for being such a staunch practitioner:

Editors note: I started out strong by getting the screenshots wrong, didn't I. Faithful is now corrected, whereas for Church and State, the value in the comment is the currently correct one, not the one in the screenshot. Oh well! (And yes, I am also the editor. Sue me.)

[Faithful - Clergy Opinion: +10]

[Church and State - Realm Priest opinion: +30]

From the Council dev diary, you might remember the Realm Priest, who is appointed to give their approval or disapproval to the way you behave. You know, just so the gods can be absolutely certain that you deserve those sweet, sweet church taxes.

It is clear that this is a very powerful perk, but I can already hear you all shout out for answers: "Will this be useless if my religion doesn't use Realm Priests???"

Fear not, there is a variant of the perk for all those out there who prefer that approach:

[Church and State - Monthly Piety from Buildings: +100%]

Of course, whether your Realm Priest/Court Chaplain likes you or not is irrelevant to the fact that you can improve the way they build your religious relations by being equally good at all this god-stuff as they are:

[Clerical Justifications - Religious Relations efficiency: +20%]

Religious Relations is a Council Task, so check the Council DD for that one!

Once you're considered pious and a brilliant, shining example of an adherent of your faith... wouldn't you want even more acknowledgement?

[Radiant - Level of Devotion impact: +100%]

Now, Level of Devotion reflects how good of a believer others think you are. As with other similar values, it is increased by gaining Piety, but your "Devotion Experience" does not fall when you spend Piety, so it's an ever-growing measure of your life's accomplishments. Well, ever-growing as long as you do nothing to upset the church, important members of the clergy, or your god(s). At least while anyone's watching.

Theology isn't just about your own faith, however. It's also about how much better it is than every other faith. If you're going to be doing a lot of conversion, give the Theologian tree a look:

[Zealous Proselytizer - Convert Faith in County progress speed: +25%]

[Religious Icon - Convert Faith in County: The Fervor modifier never goes below 0]

Since the Fervor modifier can be so powerful, it can be an immense benefit to prevent it from ever being negative.

Now, it's really good that we have definitely told you everything about how religions and fervor and all those things work in CK3, otherwise I'd be telling you guys way too much right now.

Especially with perks such as this:

[Prophet - ...]

NOTE: Ooops, turns out I finally reached the end of the line, here. There's some things I can't say as much as I want about, apparently. I can't wait for you guys to get your hands on the religion DD...

Now, back to the perk tree! Towards the end you can get skilled enough to make some very convincing arguments for why imprisoning your vassals and revoking all their titles is exactly what your god(s) would want you to do!

[Defender of the Faith - Tyranny Gain: -25%, Same Faith Opinion: +5]

Interestingly enough, this perk changes depending on how tolerant your faith is of others. There's multiple variations, but here's one:

[Defender of the Faith - Diplomacy per Level of Devotion: +1, Monthly Piety: +20%]

At the very end, you'll get the Theologian trait, which will help provide all the Learning and Piety you could ever wish for. As befits someone who is in such close communion with the divine.

Whole of Body

So, maybe an eternal afterlife isn't your thing? Maybe you're more of an eternal current-life kind of person? Then the Whole of Body tree is for you! (Note that it does not confer actual immortality. That would just be a silly thing to have in a game like this, wouldn't it?)

First, happy news is that a familiar face is going to make a return in CK3: the Court Physician! (Pretend that was a completely new, surprising detail that you never could have guessed.) They work a lot like in CK2, but you can now do something to actually improve them:
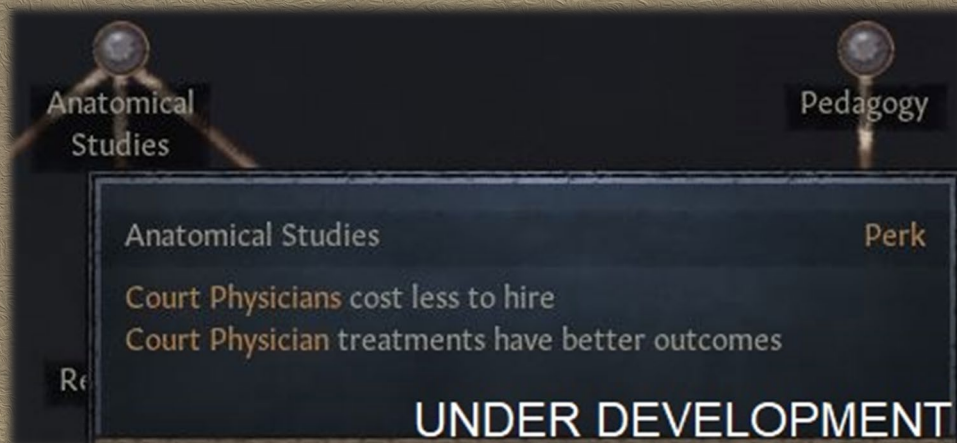
[Anatomical Studies - Court Physician costs less to hire, Court Physician treatments have better outcomes]

Of course, who needs a Court Physician, isn't it better to just avoid getting sick in the first place?

[Wash Your Hands - Reduced chance of contracting Illnesses, Reduced chance for Courtiers to contract Illnesses]

Never mind the confused looks as you're constantly cleaning your hands, and never mind the fact that your pox-ridden ancestors are turning in their graves at your foolishness. It'll actually help. At least it... might?

There's a couple other perks that improve your endurance as well.

[Iron Constitution - Disease Resistance (Fertility): +30%, Disease Resistance (Health): Massive Boost]

Disease Resistance refers to values that are only applied as offsets from disease modifiers. So they won't have any impact until you get sick, but once you do get sick, it won't keep you from running around and leaving children everywhere you go. And illnesses won't drag you into the grave so fast, either.

Lastly, if you want to improve your survivability even when you're healthy, just be Healthy!

[Healthy - Health: Significant Boost]

Sometimes the simplest solution is the best.

Health is not only about the body, however, but also about the mind. I know you guys are really excited to hear more about the details of the Stress system, so... we're going to leave you wanting for a few more weeks!

But there are perks that affect that as well:

[Carefree - Stress Gain: -25%]

[Mental Resilience - Time between Mental Breaks: +3 years]

"Agh, not knowing what it means is going to give me a mental break!!"

Then, there are two very cool perks, that both come in handy in a more active fashion. The first is:

[Restraint - You can take the Embrace Celibacy and Abandon Celibacy Decisions]

Just imagine! Once your children are starting to amass, you might want to start limiting the pool of competing claimants in the inevitable inheritance dispute, and if a few of your Strong, Genius heirs accidentally get thrown off a roof, you can get started on some new ones again!

And finally:

[Know Thyself - When Death of natural causes is 1 year away, you will receive a warning]

Yup, you read that correctly. It is actually possible to feel it when your time is approaching. I want to emphasise the "natural causes", though. Disease and cold steel might still take you by surprise, but if you can survive those, then you can be well-prepared by the time you kick the bucket, precisely to avoid the worst of those aforementioned inheritance disputes.

The perk from this tree, Whole of Body, is unusual in that it does not affect your skills at all. Instead, it improves your fertility, your health, and reduces stress gain. Let's just say that someone who finishes the tree will have a hard time getting killed by anything. (Except for murders and executions. Murders and executions are still pretty deadly.)

Scholar

At long last, the most sophisticated of the perk trees. The one about knowledge and answers, and wisdom for the sake of wisdom. Come with me on this journey into the unknown, where I will reveal to you… more perks?!?

In the Middle Ages, scholarship was undeniably tied to theology, and that means that being a good believer can aid you in being a good learner.

[Scholarly Circles - Learning per Level of Devotion: +2]

True wisdom is shown in who you surround yourself with, though. So you should surround yourself with servants who are smarter than you are:

[Learn on the Job - 20% of Councillors' primary Skill is added to your own]

It's not only your own skills which can benefit from your focus, either:
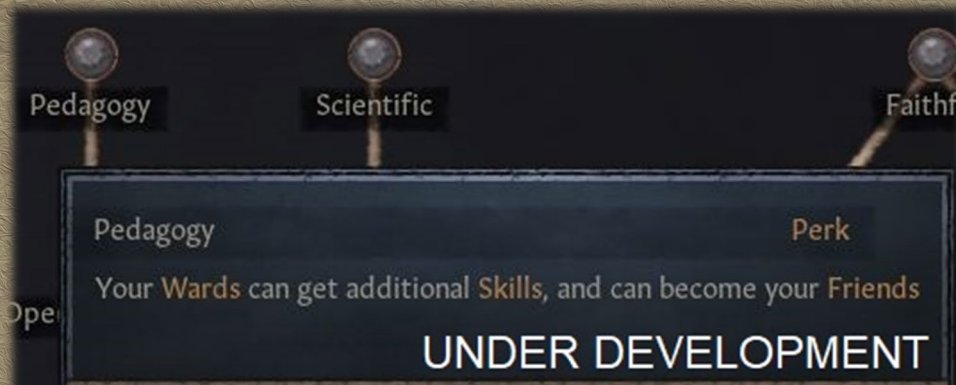
[Pedagogy - Your wards can get additional Skills, and can become your Friends]

Just imagine taking your neighbor's child hostage educating your neighbours child and ending up friends instead of enemies!

There are perks that help you more efficiently develop your realm:

[Planned Cultivation - Increase Development in County efficiency: 20%]

And there are other ways the tree helps you improve as well:

[Scientific - Cultural Fascination progress: +100%]

You're going to have to wait a while before you get to hear about any of what that modifier means, though. Sorry!

Other perks are good for making friends outside of your own circles:
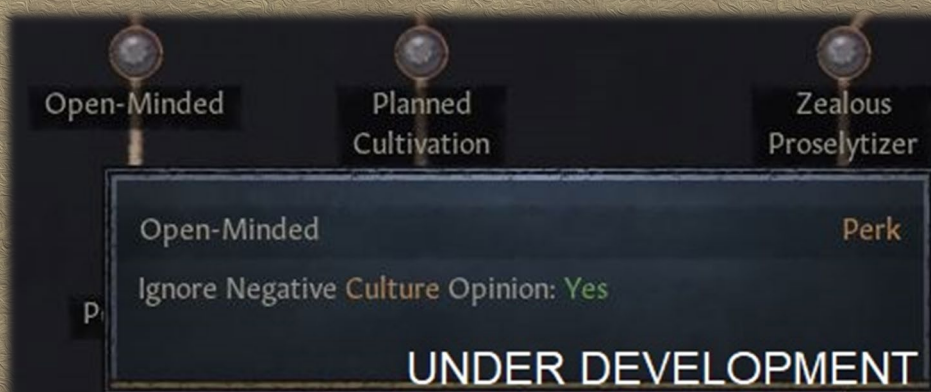
[Open-minded - Ignore Negative Culture Opinion]
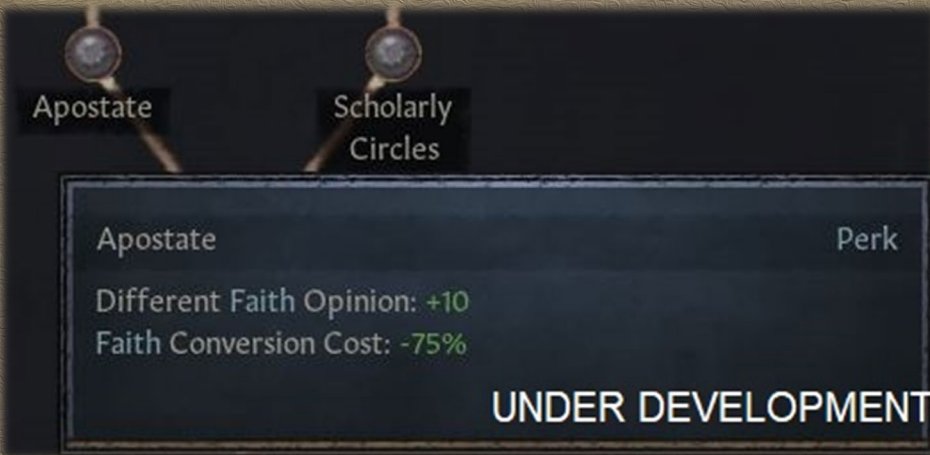
[Apostate - Different Faith Opinion: +10, Faith Conversion Cost: -75%]

Wow, those are some cheap conversions, for when your studious research helps you discover a faith you like better than your own!

Once you're an insufferable know-it-all, you can even talk your way into making religious authorities grant you claims in exchange for your hard-earned Piety.

[Sanctioned Loopholes - You can use the Buy Claim interaction]

It doesn't come cheap, but with this much Piety (and your well-formulated arguments), it doesn't matter what the Pope says.

Lastly we have the Scholar trait, which grants a solid boost to Learning, small boosts to Hostile and Personal Scheme power, as well as a modifier to Development Growth in your Counties.

Knowing stuff comes in handy in a wide variety of ways.

That's it for today! Knowledge, religion and long lives-

Exactly how long, you ask? *sigh*

Modding

Fine, let's talk about immortality

What follows here is about modding and is not used by the vanilla game!

Today I've been talking a lot about long lives, but not about eternal lives. Some people really enjoy seeing what their cruel tyrant-queen might get up to age after immortal age, or total conversion mods where magical creatures literally live forever. Well, we haven't left you out in the cold. We've added a simple means for mods to make traits grant immortality, by simply toggling a parameter.

```
immortal = yes
```

Immortality will come out of the box with convenient functionality such as value triggers for "effective age" and "real age", and ways of setting those.

To be clear, this will not be active for any traits in the vanilla game, but it makes it easy for mods to add it, should they want to.

Don't say we never did anything for you!

Especially not when I return next week with the Diplomacy Lifestyle, and some more tidbits about various related things. We're almost through our massive Lifestyle rundown, and the next DD will bring some of the most impactful perks seen thus far.

Until then!

PS:
A lot of people ask what life as a game developer is. It's pretty much constant hard work, as you try to fit together an impossibly complicated piece of art on an impossibly tight deadline. But occasionally the game hiccups in fun ways that you're lucky to get to see. When the character animations started reacting oddly the other day, Peter, one of our UX Designers, saw one of the most important relationships in his life reflected in his in-game marriage:

Dev Diary 14: The Diplomacy Lifestyle

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It should require little introduction. We've all been there, trying to befriend our neighbors while sending gifts to our vassals to keep them from being too annoyed. We'll also be looking at the flip side, of course. Considering the name of Paradox's engine, we are all too familiar with the aphorism that "war is the continuation of the Diplomacy Lifestyle by other means."

Diplomacy contains the following focuses:

Foreign Affairs

Diplomacy: +3

Majesty

Diplomacy: +1, Monthly Prestige: +1/month

Family

Diplomacy: +2, Fertility: +25%]

Foreign Affairs	For when you need that kick to your Diplomacy Skill to prevent your neighbour, vassals, liege and/or your own sons from declaring war on you
Majesty	When you need a little more Prestige to keep you going
Family	Diplomacy skill to keep the peace at home, as well as a fertility boost to make sure your home keeps growing

We might as well get diving straight into the trees that come with the Lifestyle:

Diplomacy Lifestyle Traits

Under Development

Family Hierarch

Of all the trees, I want to start with this one, because it starts off so strong.

[Befriend - You can use the Befriend Scheme]

Indeed, yet another Scheme unlocked by a perk, and this one can come in very handy. Not only does it seek to improve your target's opinion of you, but to make them your Friend!

It is a Personal Scheme that does not use Agents, which will (quite like Seduce) rely a fair bit on your target's personality. Your Diplomacy skill is also an important factor, of course. While there are many ways to end up with Friends, the Befriend Scheme might be the most reliable one of them all. As long as you're able to build your Success Chance high enough, of course.

You're all familiar with the Friend relationship, but in CK3 it will feel more present than ever. In addition to being a lot more present in events, they also offer a few mechanical bonuses, such as being better Councillors.

Of course, not only does the tree make it easier to make Friends, it helps them offer even more bonuses!

[Confidants - Each Friend adds: -15% Stress Gain]

[Friendly Counsel - Each Friend gives 2 random Skill points]

(Be sure not to lose them again, or they won't be able to advise you anymore!)

The tree itself offers ways of ensuring that you find more success with your Befriend Scheme, too.

[Flatterer - Befriend Scheme Power: +30%]

[Thicker Than Water - Personal Scheme Success Chance: +50% against family members]

Now that I've mentioned family, I can hear you shouting again... *"Isn't this tree called 'Family Hierarch'? This is all about Friends!"*

Well, my - dare I say - friends, is your true family not who you choose?

Actually, in CK3, the answer is absolutely *"no"*. You're stuck with the good-for-nothing lowlives you get. What better, then, than to make them less likely to poison your wine?

[Heart of the Family - Close Family Opinion: +20]

Even better, what about ensuring that future generations contain fewer of those lowlives than your current one does?

[Groomed to Rule - Children receive 1 to 3 extra Skill points]

But all these useless children, just lying around... what did they ever do for you? Well:

[Sound Foundations - Each living Child give 1 random Skill point]

It all culminates in the Family Hierarch trait - Patriarch for men and Matriarch for women. It comes with Diplomacy bonuses, further increased Fertility, Stress Gain reductions, and even more Close Family Opinion bonuses. It'll be a rare occasion when a family member betrays a Family Hierarch!

To move on, maybe family is not your main priority. I get it. It can get tough at times. The same goes for friends, honestly. Sometimes anyone can get lonely. Anyways, I recommend heading over to the official Crusader Kings Discord to meet up with people who share some of your interests. It's full of lovely people, so just join up, say hi, and be nice. Hang out for a while.

Anyways, I just thought it was suitable to throw in a mention there, while also using it as a segue to the next tree!

Diplomat

The Diplomat tree looks outwards, to a much greater degree, but one thing that is good with everyone is improving the quality of your gifts:

[Thoughtful - Opinion Gain from Send Gift: +100%]

As for those outwards-looking perks I promised...

[Defensive Negotiations - Fellow Vassal Opinion: +15, Independent Ruler Opinion: +15, Can propose one Alliance without a Marriage]

You read that right. You can straight up ask someone if they want an Alliance, and then expect the promise to be held, even if none of your family members are married! Crazy, I know. There are still a lot of restrictions on who you can enter an extra alliance with, but it gives you a little extra space to maneuver when your ratio of sons to daughters doesn't work out perfectly.

Alliances themselves also come with a little extra bonus now, to further sweeten the deal:

[Embassies - Each Alliance grants: +1 Diplomacy Skill]

If you still need better relations abroad after all that, there's a perk that helps your Chancellor do their job a little better:

[Adaptive Traditions - Foreign Affairs effectiveness: +25%]

It's not the only Councillor you can improve, either. And I know this one is likely to be appreciated:

[Accomplished Forger - Fabricate Claim on County Speed: +75%]

And here we're heading straight down into the less pleasant aspect of Diplomacy. This might be a bit of a surprise, but there are perks that unlock entirely new Casus Bellis:

[Ducal Conquest - You are able to use the Ducal Conquest Casus Belli]
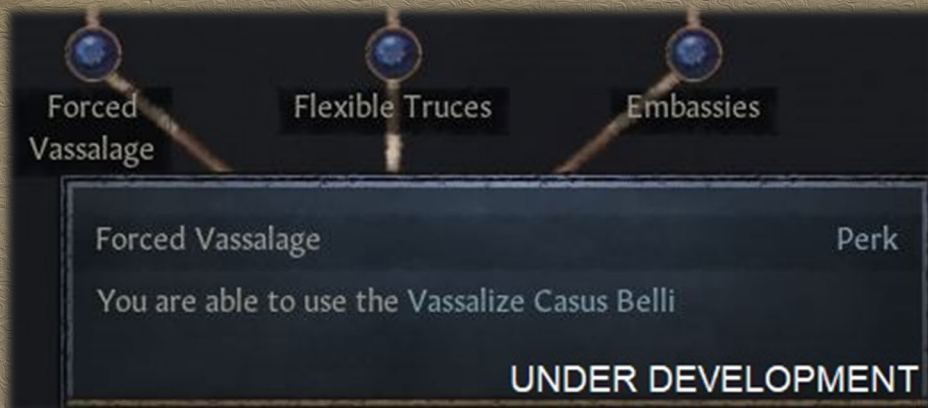
[Forced Vassalage - You are able to use the Vassalize Casus Belli]

Ducal Conquest lets you go to war to seize Counties required to create an as-yet Uncreated Duchy Title. Vassalize lets you… forcibly vassalise an independent ruler of lower rank. Be warned, they might not make for the happiest vassal afterwards, but that's what your dungeons are for, right? There are limits on how often these CBs can be used, and they're not the most universally useful ones, but in the right situations they can absolutely turn a realm around.

But what's the worst part of going to war and taking what you want? Having to "wait for truces" afterwards, of course.
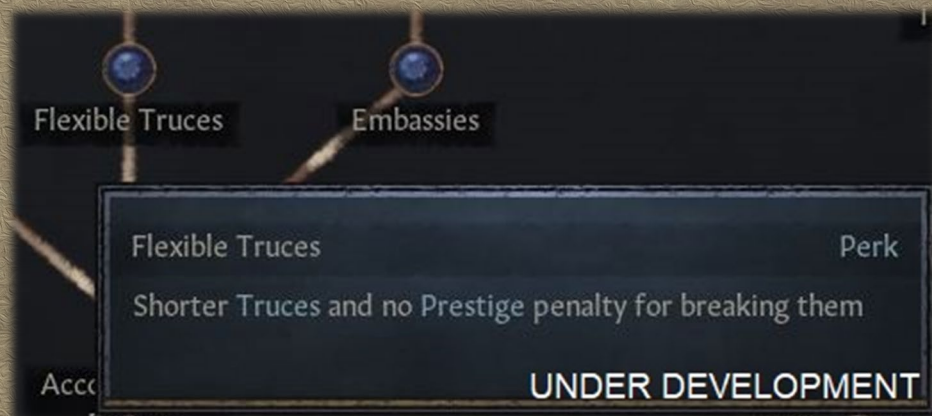
[Flexible Truces - Shorter Truces and no Prestige penalty for breaking them]

Pretty neat, huh? Remember that there will be other penalties, though, such as how willing others are to trust your word. This perk does not mean that Truce breaking is "free".

Finally, the trait unlocked at the end of the tree is Diplomat. It gives a hefty boost to Diplomacy, of course, but it also gives a nice little boost to Independent Ruler Opinion. That's how respected you can get.

August

Our last tree for today is for those who want to be respected and honored for their rule. Indeed, one of the key perks will help your fame precede you.

[A Life of Glory - Level of Fame impact: +100%]

As I'm sure you've all noted down in your textbooks, Levels of Fame are the levels you acquire by gathering Prestige throughout your life.

And speaking of gathering prestige throughout your life:

[Dignitas - Diplomacy per Level of Fame: +1]

Of course, living a famously powerful and honored life comes with benefits. People are more inclined to believe that you have honorable intentions, for example.

[Benevolent Intent - Sway Scheme Power: +30%]

[Firm Hand - Monthly Prestige per Dread: +1%]

No one says you cannot be both honored and a little feared.

With the August perk tree, those who serve you will also serve you better...

[Praetorian Guard - Monthly Prestige per Knight: +2%]

... and bring you greater benefits.

[Inspiring Rule - Monthly Prestige per Adult Powerful Vassal on the Council: +5%]

It even offers way of getting more people to serve you.

[True Ruler - Offer Vassalization acceptance: +25]

Just imagine that, people willingly bending the knee to join your realm. We all know you're the best ruler, of course, but who would have thought they knew?

Finally, here is one of my personal favourites, as a little extra at the end here. Who's better to direct the chronicle of you and your ancestors' lives than you?
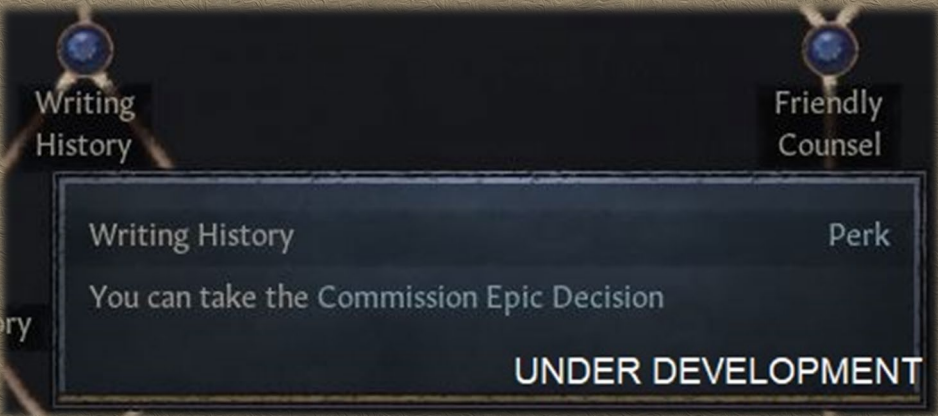
[Writing History - You can take the Commission Epic Decision]

Commission Epic starts a lengthy event chain where you can (in exchange for varying amounts of gold) commission a writer to write your family chronicle. There's quite a few different possible paths the effort can take, but you'll have plenty of choice when it comes to who authors it.

A Family Epic

What I need is a classical tale of the grandeur of my family. A poem about the origins of the *Hwicce* Dynasty, and how we are destined for greatness!

I only need someone who knows how to tell a story...

Ælfweard, the accomplished storyteller!

I will gather some of my best scribes.

Surely any lowly pantler could do it?

On second thought...

Will Happen
The composition begins...
Duke Morcar Ælfgarson of Northumbria:
• *Æthelwine* the servant composes the epic
• Low chance of an Exceptional Epic
• Loses 🪙 2

UNDER DEVELOPMENT

Depending on the quality of the composition, you will be able to acquire a lot of Prestige in the long run, once enough people have read it. Or at least when they keep it in their libraries.

Sometimes I ask myself why I felt so inspired when making events about the process of creating a massive piece of creative historical fiction on an unparalleled scale under impossible deadlines. I'm sure there's nothing deeper to examine, there, though.

Lastly, the perk tree offers up its trait, August. Uniquely, it does not only offer a Diplomacy boost, but also a tiny bump to Martial. Its great benefit, however, lies in the increase to monthly Prestige you get, ensuring that you can make the most of your Prestigious life.

Events

I want to mention a little about the Diplomacy Lifestyle events, because they contain some very unusual events in that they offer opportunities for slightly unusual ways of getting to know people. Several event chains are quite involved, and outcomes are not merely reliant on your stats, but also on the other person's personality.

Hospitality: A Warm Welcome

The modest *Duke Malcolm* is finally here! Tonight, we will have a feast to welcome our foreign guests.

I have been hard at work with the all the planning and preparations. Everything is almost ready and I have some time to add a final touch.

I know about a few specialties from Strathclyde.

It should be extravagant! More of... everything!

I will not risk anything by last minute changes.

Will Happen
• You lose 🪙 15
The outcome depends on Duke Malcolm's personality:
  Duke Malcolm appreciates the gesture, like most people would:
    • The court visit progresses well
  Duke Malcolm would have preferred something simpler:
    • The court visit progresses poorly

UNDER DEVELOPMENT

In this example, the outcome is not determined by chance, but by the Duke's traits. And since he's Gluttonous, it's fair to assume that he'll appreciate the effort...

Not all the events in the lifestyle are like this, but you'll see more of them than you will in the other lifestyles. They encourage a certain insight into your friends, vassals, and neighbours that will hopefully keep them feeling fresh time and again.

That's all for this week! A new Lifestyle, a new Scheme, Decision and CBs. Diplomacy has a lot to offer, and I suspect that a many of you are already considering how to make friends and influence people.

I'll repeat the mention of the CK Discord as well. It's a really lovely place, so be nice on there, and go make some friends!

Speaking of weathering it together, after last week there were a few questions about life as a CK dev, possibly related to the fact that I said it was a lot of work. One example of how it can get really hard is when stuff goes wrong, but it's all buried deep in script or code, with no one knowing why.

Last summer, I spent weeks looking for a single, humble error, somewhere in the script. Something you should know is that part of our testing process involves running "overnights", where we let the game play itself every evening, and then we look at the results the next morning. There's usually a bunch of errors (the game is unfinished, after all, and even a released game is rarely perfect...), and for a while, every overnight was haunted by dozens of the same error, localised on line 307 of the "contract_disease_effect".

Now, crucial to fixing a bug in a game is that you're able to reproduce it. You have to know how to make it fire to check what is actually wrong, and to check that it's fixed once you think you have fixed it. The problem was that none of us managed to reproduce it.

Cue a mad chase where coder Matthew (@blackninja9939) and I spent days trying to track it down in ever more elaborate ways. Every time it breached the surface, we thought we had it, only for it to slip away into the deep again. But we refused to give up. I refused to give up. No error message was going to do this to me and get away with it!

I had this illustration commissioned to immortalise the occasion:
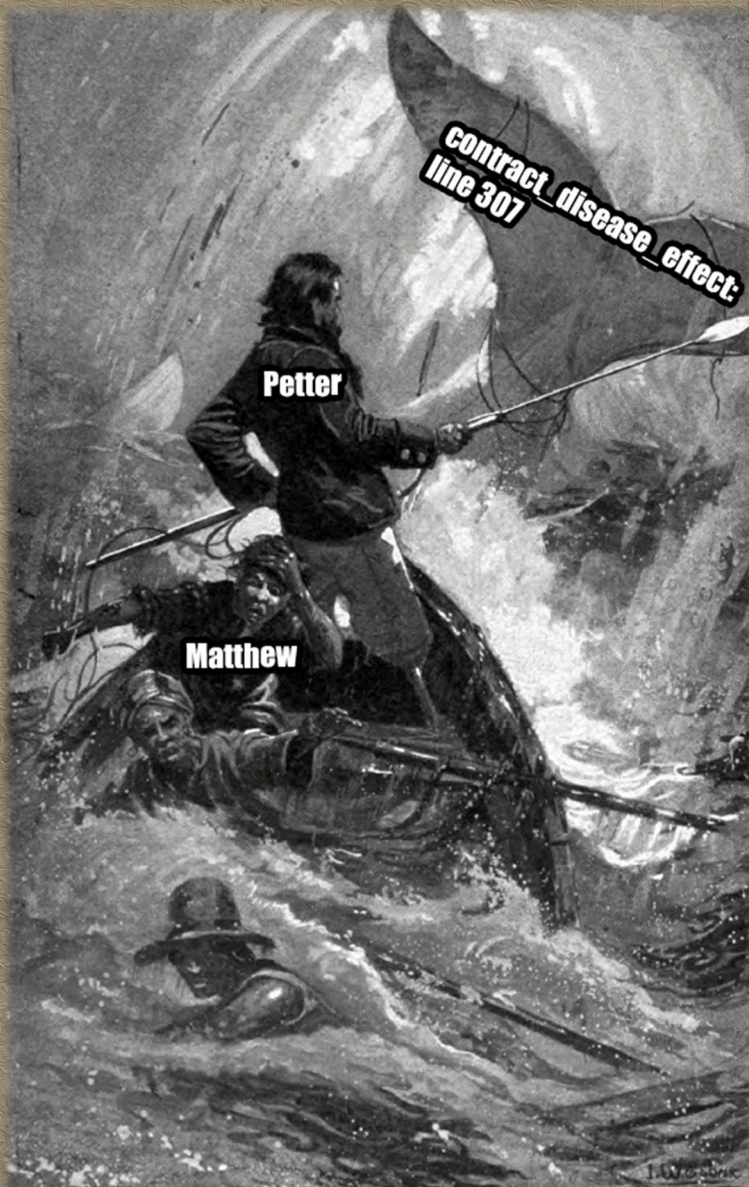
I am happy to announce that we did find the issue in the end. I won't bother you with the boring technical details*, but it was pretty much the equivalent of hunting a white stag or some other mythical beast. All over a minor technical issue.

Anyways, that's just a little story from the trenches to give you some slight insight into the creation of this… thing.

*[**Boring technical details**: Turns out a destroyed title would still keep characters in line to inherit, which meant the game was trying to send notifications to the holder of the destroyed title to tell them that their heir had contracted a disease. Naturally, it didn't find any holder, since the title no longer existed, and started complaining instead.]*

Dev Diary 15: The Martial Lifestyle

Let's have a look at the Focuses!

Heptopus
Content Designer
2 Badges

Strategy Focus

Luck can win a duel. A fool can win a battle. It takes more to win a war.

Focusing on Strategy grants:
Martial: ✗ +3
Martial Experience: 32/month

Authority Focus

To rule is to make all the aspects of a realm move in unison and work together.

Focusing on Authority grants:
Martial: ✗ +1
Control Growth: +0.3/month
Martial Experience: 32/month

Chivalry Focus

Victory comes not through blood or gold, but honor.

Focusing on Chivalry grants:
Prowess: ⚔ +3
Attraction Opinion: +10
Advantage: +5
Martial Experience: 32/month

UNDER DEVELOPMENT

Strategy

Martial +3

Authority

Martial: +1, Control Growth: +0.3/month

Chivalry

Prowess: +3, Attraction: +10, Advantage: +5

Strategy	Makes sense if you want to win, or even just wage, wars
Authority	Perfect for when you want to keep your realm under absolute control and cement your rule
Chivalry	The Code of Chivalry is good for lowering your chances to die on a battlefield and heightening your chances to attract the people around you. Treating people with respect pays off, it turns out

The trees themselves are very varied and offer some interesting bonuses. There's also a couple of Schemes that I'm really excited to tell you about at the end!

Martial Lifestyle Traits
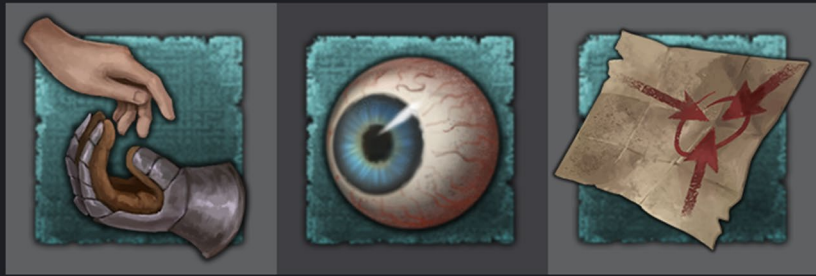
Under development

Strategist

This tree is, as one might expect, all about warfare. Some perks are fairly straightforward, such as improvements to your Men-at-Arms:

Parthian Tactics

Parthian Tactics		Perk
Light Cavalry Toughness: +30%		
Light Cavalry Pursuit: +30		
Heavy Cavalry Toughness: +30%		
Heavy Cavalry Pursuit: +30		
Skirmisher Damage: +20%		
Skirmisher Toughness: +10%		

UNDER DEVELOPMENT

[Parthian Tactics - Light Cavalry Toughness: +30%, Light Cavalry Pursuit: +30%, Heavy Cavalry Toughness: +30%, Heavy Cavalry Pursuit: +30%, Skirmisher Damage: +20%, Skirmisher Toughness: +20%]

Envelopment / Hit and Run / Living Off the Land

Envelopment	Perk
Men-At-Arms Counter Efficiency: +25%	

UNDER DEVELOPMENT

[Envelopment - Men-at-Arms Counter efficiency: +25%]

[Hit and Run - Retreat Losses: -25%, Heavy Infantry Damage: +15%, Heavy Infantry Toughness: +15%, Pikeman Toughness: +30%, Archer Damage: +30%]

Mitigating retreat losses can be really useful if you are unlucky in a battle (and we all know it is ONLY down to bad luck), so that you can bounce back faster and show the enemy what you're really made of.

[Organized March - Movement Speed: +15%, Heavy Infantry Screen: +5, Pikeman Screen: +5, Archer Screen: +5, Skirmisher Screen: +5]

Whether you're fleeing or attacking, this perk will make sure you do so in an organized manner. Useful when you want to hunt down the remnants of an enemy army, or protect the remnants of your own!

It's also not the only perk that can speed up a conquest:

[Engineered for Destruction - Naval Speed: +25%, Siege Weapon effectiveness: +40%]

So now that you have the speed, and you have the siege weapons, what more could you possibly need for a successful offense? Well, if you're more inclined to go for the drive-through approach (some people call it raiding), or if you often find yourself losing soldiers due to hunger, we have the solution for you!

[Living Off the Land - Raid Speed: +25%, Supply Capacity: +200%]

And if that's still not enough you can improve your army even further by making your MaAs bring shovels to the campaign:

[Sappers - Heavy Infantry Siege Progress: +0.1, Pikeman Siege Progress: +0.1, Archer Siege Progress: +0.1, Skirmisher Siege Progress: +0.1]

With an army this good, it would be a waste to only wage wars when you absolutely had to, wouldn't it? That's why we're making CBs easier to use than ever before:

[Bellum Justum - Casus Belli Cost: -50%]

At the end of the tree we find the Strategist trait. It gives a boost in both Diplomacy and Martial, allows you to cross water freely, AND increases the number of dead soldiers your enemy suffers when facing you in battle. In other words, this tree will make you unstoppable on the battlefield and rightfully feared across the land!

Overseer

If you want to focus on your own realm more, and make sure it's completely under your control, then this is the tree for you. To start it off we have some perks that will give you more stable ground to stand on, such as:

[Strict Organization - Increase Control in County Progress Gain: +20%]

[Serve the Crown - Control Growth: +0.3/month]

And if you're going for real stability you can tighten your grip on the population of a county so hard that you squeeze out benefits in the form of both gold and levies!

Absolute Control   **Peacemaker**

Absolute Control — Perk

- Enables Absolute Control for Counties

UNDER DEVELOPMENT

[Absolute Control - Enables Absolute Control for Counties]

Absolute Control means that all of the counties you have full control over will give you 10% more taxes and levies as long as you maintain your iron grip on the populace.

Hard Rule   **Promising Prospects**   **Never Back Down**

Hard Rule — Perk

Siege Progress against Revolts: +50%
Independence and Liberty Faction Discontent: -50

UNDER DEVELOPMENT

[Hard Rule - Siege Progress against Revolts: +50%, Independence and Liberty Faction Discontent: -50]

And when vassals, or peasants, try to turn against you… Well, let's just say that you will make it harder for them to succeed.

But what if the threat isn't coming from within your own realm, but from outside it? Don't worry, we've got your back:

A Woman's Home   **Strict Organization**   **Courtship**

A Woman's Home — Perk

Controlled Territory Defender Advantage: +5

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[A Man's Home/A Woman's Home - Controlled Territory Defender Advantage: +5]

[Enduring Hardships - Fort Level: +1, Enemy Occupations do not lower Control]

[Prepared Conscription - Army Maintenance: -15%, Friendly Territory Levy Reinforcement rate: +100%]

If you need an extra push to push out an insistent enemy, you can always trade gold for swords:

[Soldiers of Lesser Fortune - Mercenary Hire Cost: -30%]

And, to top it all off, we have the trait Overseer. It grants you a boost in Martial, Stewardship, and Control Growth Factor, so the hold you have over your realm will be cemented for decades to come!

Gallant

Romance, prowess, and bravery… ah, the marks of a true charmer! This is the tree for those of you who want to focus on the more "elegant" side of warfare, while still giving your war efforts a boost:

[Chivalric Dominance - Knight Effectiveness: +100%]

[Stalwart Leader - Prowess: +4, Reduces the risk of Commanding Armies]

[Kingsguard - Number of Knights: +4]

[Never back Down - Friendly Fatal Casualties: -20%, Advantage: +5]

When you tire of fighting and it's time to negotiate for peace you will be more persuasive than ever:

[Peacemaker - Peace Acceptance: +10]

[Promising Prospects - Marriage Acceptance for yourself: +50, Marriage Acceptance for your Extended Family: +25]

For friendlier times your gallant behavior attracts suitors for both you and your family, suddenly making those ridiculously good alliances possible!

Even your own spouse isn't immune to your charms:

[Loyalty and Respect - Spouse Opinion: +50, Skills from Spouse Council task: +25%]

Of course, love is not always found in an arranged marriage, and the rumors about your gallant behavior aren't limited to just your own court. If your dearly beloved needs to be charmed, or if you just can't wait for permission to marry them, you can get some help along the way:

[Courtship - Romance Scheme Power: +30%, Elope Scheme Power: +30%, Romance Scheme Success Chance: +30%, Elope Scheme Success Chance: +30%]

I think this is the first time we mention these schemes? They're a real treat!

The Romance Scheme finally lets you enter a chivalric romance with a character, seducing them in a court-approved manner. Just imagine a knight pining after his lady, his heart full of longing, neither of them acknowledging the smoldering feelings between them... Now that can be you! If you succeed in this scheme, and resist the temptations of the flesh (at least in public), you and your beloved become Soulmates, a more powerful version of the Lover relationship.

And if you cannot bear to be apart, even though her liege will never approve of a marriage between you, do not fear! I bring you: Elope, marriage without any pesky relatives or lieges involved. However, in contrast to marriage, your partner actually has to like you for the union to work out, so you still have some work ahead of you. And make sure you're not caught...

My love,

You have told me to be brave, but I cannot contain my fears any longer. What if *King Salamon* finds out about our plans? Whenever he appears, I go stiff and speechless. It is only a matter of time until he notices!

We are running out of time. Please, my dearest Bolesław, make haste!

Signed,
Jácinta

+100

We will speed up the plans, my dearest.

Trust me — everything is under control.

You shouldn't be sending letters, then!

UNDER DEVELOPMENT

This tree culminates in the Gallant trait. It affords you extra monthly Prestige, as well as some Attraction Opinion, and of course a healthy boost to both Martial and Prowess. With all this helping you along, neither foe nor maiden will stand a chance!

Dev Diary 16: Tutorials and Tooltips and Encyclopedias, Oh My!

CK2 is one of my favourite games, even before I started working here, and I've sunk thousands of hours into modding and playing it. But I think we can all be honest here together and admit something, it had a UI with what one might describe as questionable usability.
I know when I started playing CK2 that I very quickly had to stop and go watch many hours of tutorials online because the UI was hard to use and buried relevant info without ever giving you an inkling of where to look.

This is something we very much want to avoid for CK3 for obvious reasons, the strategy and challenge of the game should come from mastering its systems not finding which button you need to click or which number you need to tooltip...

I'd like to quickly give a big shout out to our wonderful User Research team who has done lots of play tests with players of various experience levels in strategy games and given us lots of great feedback, all which has been invaluable in ensuring the various features of this dev diary can help to guide a new player who is unsure of what to do whilst also letting an expert to blaze through with doing what they want.

A lot of work has been put in to make the interfaces clearer and display relevant information to you so let's dive right in and explore it in the way that most of you probably will, when you first launch the game!

Tutorials

The first thing that will confront you when you open up and choose where to play is an option of if you want to start the guided tutorial or just dive in on your own. We are going to go down the guided tutorial otherwise this dev diary would lose quite the chunk of content!

In the tutorial you will take control of Petty King Murchad mac Donnchad of Munster: yes, we have fully embraced tutorial Ireland as our starting location.

The tutorial will guide you through various parts of the interface and mechanics of the game, it will open the windows you need to see and highlight relevant pieces of information. Such as how to navigate the map, interacting with characters, and getting married.

All of this takes place in game, so it will be showing you the exact places in the UI you are meant to be looking at and interacting with instead of lumping just walls of text or screenshots at you.

Camera (I - Basics)   1/4

Use the keys W, A, S, and D to move around the map. You can also move the cursor to the edge of the screen to pan. Pressing the 'Home' key takes you to your Realm Capital.

To zoom in and out on the map, use the Scroll Wheel.

Zoomed in, you have the ability to select and manage your Holdings. Zoomed out gives you an overview of all Realms.

Back   Skip Lesson   Next

I am not going to go through every piece of information here, as that is best served by going through the tutorial yourself once the game is released than me parroting the text here. But suffice to say it will give you a good starting grasp on how to use the UI and the core mechanics to get you started and playing.

Tooltips

One of the new features in CK3 is Tooltips in Tooltips, the aim of this is that relevant information can just be a mouse move away whenever you see blue highlighted text in game. Instead of making you need to dig through a wiki to find out what a Game Concept means you can just mouse over it and get an explanation!

UNDER DEVELOPMENT

Tooltips in Tooltips (I - Basics)   3/4

Sometimes you will see blue Highlighted Text like this. This means you can hover your cursor over the words for more information.

Some of these words can lead to other highlighted words, which can then show even further information. Duchy can lead to County, which can lead to Barony.

To continue:
☐ Place your cursor over a Highlighted Text

Back   Next

For example, if you tooltip the word Duchy here you get this popup:

👑 Duchy   Title

A Duchy is a Title ranking below a Kingdom and above a County.

The Holder of a Duchy has De Jure rights to its constituent Counties and can have Counts as Vassals.

Duchies may be dormant and have have no current Holder. Such Titles can be created by a Ruler who controls at least half of its Counties.

information. Duchy can lead to County, which ca
lead to Barony.   UNDER DEVELOPMENT

This behaviour is nesting so you can get more and more information, so all the blue highlighted Game Concepts in this can also be highlighted to explain what a Ruler is and then what a Title itself is etc.

Title

A Title is essentially a certificate of land ownership.

The smallest unit of land on the map is the Barony. Baronies are organized into larger areas called Counties. Counties De Jure belong to a Duchy, duchies to a Kingdom, and Kingdoms to an Empire.

Duchies, Kingdoms and Empires do not always have a Holder, but are titles that be created by a ruler who controls enough of the corresponding territory.

Duchy

A Duchy is a Title

Ruler

A Ruler is a character who holds at least one Title.

Such Titles can be created by a Ruler who controls at least half of its Counties.

information. **Duchy** can lead to **County**, which can lead to **Barony**.

To continue:
☑ Place your cursor over a **Highlighted Text**

Back   Show Me Again   Next

UNDER DEVELOPMENT

There are two different modes for Tooltips in Tooltips, timer lock and action lock with the former being the default. These modes determine what causes the Tooltips in Tooltips to lock in place and stay, either a timer which is configured in the settings menu or by clicking in the middle mouse button to manually lock them in place.

We have these two modes so that once you get more comfortable with the game you can turn the tooltips in tooltips into an opt in mode with the action lock for when you come across something you want to see instead of it being more present trying to aid you.

Once you finish the guided section of the tutorial the Reactive Advice section begins. These are bits of advice that appear as a purple info icon during normal gameplay, they will give you mini tutorials based on your current state in the game. If you remember from the tutorial selection popup the second option was to dive in on your own, that option skips the guided tutorial and jumps you right in to play and receive in the game advice.

For example, if your Bishop is not endorsing you and refusing to give you those taxes and troops that you rightfully deserve, as mentioned in Dev Diary #6, then you can click the bubble and get a run down of what that means for you instead of needing to find it on the wiki or find the relevant dev diary.

As with the guided tutorial, this advice will highlight relevant interface elements to show you where to look as well as give examples of actions you could potentially take.

The reactive advice can be reset in the settings menu to show advice you've already seen again if you feel like you are forgetting information and need a quick refresher. The reactive advice is also usable in multiplayer so your friends you just introduced the game to, can play with you and still get the advice they may need.

Throughout the course of the game other pieces of information will appear in this top bar, as with our other games alerts about things that require your attention will appear such as prompting you go get married or that you have no heir of your dynasty and risk the game ending on your death. These alerts are all something that can be solved by you by taking relevant actions to make them disappear, which clicking them will take you to a suitable action, they are not a status reminder of something constant such as being at war or having a truce expiring soon, as sometimes happens in our other games because those are not things you can take an action to fix.
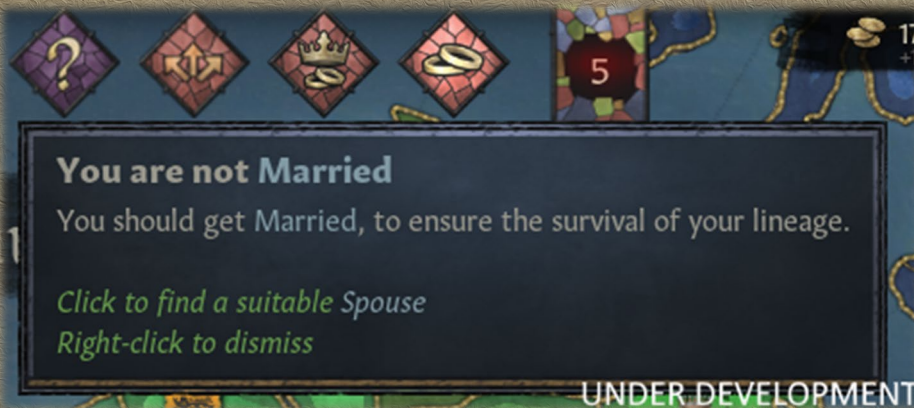
Alongside the Alerts and Advice in the top bar is the Issues tab, this shows some summaries of your current situation such as claims you can press, duchies you can create or the fact you have emptied the realm's cofferts and are bankrupt and in desperate need of money.

These are things you may wish to take action on but are not an urgent thing to fix, or potentially not something you can instantly fix like bankruptcy, you can think of them almost as mini-alerts.

Alongside these are Suggestions of things you can do, they will appear and based on your current situation give you a task you may wish to do, every few months they will appear and can be dismissed as you see fit or entirely disabled in the settings menu once you feel you can work without them.

In our play tests this feature has proven useful for both new and old players, as it gives guidance to new players of things they can do in this big sandbox world and for the more experienced players it acts as a good checklist whilst playing for things you know you want to handle.

For less long term information or pressing things to solve there are two more methods of showing new information, Notifications and Toasts.

A Notification is what it says on the tin really, like the message feed in CK2, smaller pieces of information which are sent over, they are not necessarily some big situation you need to pay attention and generally relate to the happenings of other characters that you may care to see. Only a few will be displayed at a time and minimise themselves to allow room for the next one before automatically dismissing themselves after some in game time has passed.

[Link to gif](#)

Toasts on the other hand are slightly more bombastic compared to their more timid sibling Notifications, they appear at the top of the screen and inform you of good things to celebrate, and sometimes less good things to commiserate about.

They are used for things like the outcomes of events, to tell you what outcome in that dice roll you got without throwing up a huge event window or having it appear as a small notification, and for feedback on actions you've taken.

Unlike notifications, they will only show one at a time in a timed queue to show the next, of course if you mouse over one of them that timer will stall itself until you move the mouse away again to let it progress and fade away.

[Link to gif](#)

Encyclopedia

Now last, but in my opinion not least, is the new in game Encyclopedia. It acts as a central place where information on many different parts of the game can be found. From the highlightable Game Concepts mentioned before, to recaps of the guided tutorial and reactive advice, to the various types of terrains and traits present in the game and their effects.

The Encyclopedia contains various pages and is fully searchable as well as including a history of searches and the pages they were on which can be used to scroll back and forward between searches.

All the information on these pages is automatically generated by the game from our script files, so unlike pages on a fan wiki they will automatically update if any values or descriptions change.

Something I'd like to mention about all the new features I've talked about here is that they are entirely moddable. Mods are free to create new game concepts which will hook in to the tooltips in tooltips and Encyclopedia automatically, make new lessons in the tutorial to cover their new systems, add more reactive advice or alerts, make new suggestions and situation descriptions, and hook in more notifications or toasts in the script.

One of the aims of CK3 is to be even more moddable than CK2, which is already a very moddable game, and one of those things we've looked at improving a lot is the interface modding. In CK2 at best you could change some textures and move things a few pixels but you could rarely add new things, in CK3 we've made a lot of things more easily scripted so you can by and large create any new things just as we can.

So in conclusion we've worked on a lot of stuff to make the depth and strategy of our games shine through in the choices you make, not the 20 minutes you spend trying to find the information to help you make those choices because the interface is obtuse.

If you wanna chat more then I highly recommend joining our CK Discord Server as well.

Bonus Dev Story!

Once a month at the development studio we all spend a day (if your project is not extra busy for a milestone or release) doing whatever we decide to grow our professional skills, this is how the Encyclopedia came about as my little baby over multiple of these personal development days. I thought it would be fun to briefly walk people through its evolution from just an idea to a full feature!

To start with, it only included the game concepts, and looked a lot less pretty as art had yet to bless me with their time and wisdom, here is a little screenshot of the "greybox" version that simply vomited out un-formatted text and had a search bar:

GAME_CONCEPTS

Abandon Celibacy
A Decision that allows a character to lose the *Celibate* Trait at will.

Abduction Scheme
The Abduction Scheme is a Hostile Scheme that aims to Imprison its target. It is a Secret Scheme based on Intrigue, that can recruit Agents.

A successful Abduction Scheme will result in the Scheme Target being imprisoned by the Scheme Owner.

CENSORED

Adult
An Adult is a character of at least 16 years of age.

Aftermath
The Aftermath phase of a Battle occurs whenever either side has won. The victor will attempt to run down as many of the fleeing Soldiers as possible.

Men-at-Arms with high Pursuit is able to kill more Soldiers during the Aftermath,

UNDER DEVELOPMENT

Moving on from there I wanted to reorganise it into this concept of "Pages", so we could also show information on things like all the traits in the game instead of you needing to find someone with the trait to discover what it does, I worked on that and one of the artists generously used some of their time to give the whole thing a much needed makeover:

UNDER DEVELOPMENT

Our QA has then gone over this through the various iterations raising any issues, especially once it was in a more beta state to give more suggestions for polish and find bugs for me to fix.

Now that I had the text formatted nicer and some suggestions from QA I started adding more and more pages to get to the ones we now have, as well as adding some more luxury features like a search history, better interaction with hotkeys, showing all pages at once, and some debug functionality.

One of the technical problems I ran into was the hot reloading of files crashing the game now, in our debug builds we attach file watchers to all game files so if you change the values of a trait or add a new building type then the game will update its databases internally and update or add those new things. But the problem with that is the Encyclopedia was pointing now to the invalid memory of the old entries we had deleted, the solution to this was adding reload callbacks to fix up the encyclopedia by flushing out its old data and regenerating it, internally this just means that the encyclopedia instead has to register a bunch of page generators that it can re-run instead of using the actual database objects which can get corrupted if modified and the pointers invalidated.

Then with a little bit more polish and tweaking we finally get it in the state it is now which will hopefully prove useful to you all whilst playing!

Dev Diary 17: Governments, Vassal Management, Laws, and Raiding

Governments

Meneth
Crusader Kings 3
Programmer
128 Badges

Let's start off with a familiar concept from CK2: governments. For the player, we have three playable governments: Feudal, Tribal, and Clan, which each have some significant differences in how they play.

The Feudal government type is based on European feudalism, and is heavily based around the idea of obligations: you owe service to your liege, and your liege owes you protection in return. It is the most common government form in the game. Feudal realms play pretty similarly to CK2, focusing on claims and inheritance more so than the other government forms.

A new addition in CK3 is Feudal Contracts. Every feudal vassal (except barons) has an individual contract with you, rather than obligations being set realm-wide. These contracts have three levels; Low, Medium, and High, with Medium being the default. High will provide more levies and tax at the cost of an opinion hit, while Low provides less but improves opinion. Higher levels are usually better (though perhaps not if you're at risk of your vassals revolting) but cannot be imposed unilaterally.

You'll need to have a hook on your vassal in order to increase their obligations unless you're fine with all your vassals considering you a tyrant, but you can always lower them. As a result, this means you can significantly increase your power if you're able to obtain hooks on your vassals; perhaps a bit of judicious blackmail might be in order?

[Modifying a Feudal Contract]

Furthermore, we have the Clan government form. This government is the rough equivalent of the Iqta government in CK2, though in CK3 it does have a more Feudal bent than it did previously.

The Clan government type is used by most Muslim realms. This government puts more emphasis on the family rather than the realm, with most vassals being members of your dynasty. Obligations are heavily based on opinion rather than being contractual, with happy vassals providing significantly more taxes and levies than unhappy ones. A happy family is a powerful family.

Clan governments also have access to the Clan Invasion casus belli, which can be used once in a lifetime at the highest level of Fame to invade a kingdom, providing a powerful boon for a well-established clan ruler.

Finally, we have Tribal realms. Much like in CK2 these have their own Tribal holding type, providing more troops but less tax. Additionally, most tribals are able to go on raids, which you can read more about below. Tribal realms are unaffected by development, and cause non-tribal realms to have lower supply limits in their lands, making them a tougher nut to crack, but reducing their influence as the years drag on. Tribal realms also pay for men at arms using prestige rather than gold, allowing smaller realms to punch above their weight.

Tribal rulers base their obligations on levels of Fame rather than on contracts or opinion; the more famous your ruler is, the more troops and money your vassals will be willing to provide for your pursuits.

Finally, Tribal rulers have a once-in-a-lifetime Subjugation casus belli, allowing them to forcibly vassalize an entire realm.

As the game goes on, you can eventually reform out of Tribalism, becoming a Clan or Feudal realm instead.

Vassal Management

The ~~Holy~~ ~~Roman Empire~~

Feudal Empire   Realm Size: 233

Crown Authority

| Domain | Vassals | Succession |

Feudal   Theocracy   Republic

Duke Berthold of Carinthia
Powerful Vassal
Feudal Obligation Level: Normal

259   +0.4   Feudal Contract

-43

Duke Otakar of Steyermark
Powerful Vassal
Feudal Obligation Level: Normal

197   +0.7   Feudal Contract

+32

Duke Alberto-Azzo II of Lombardy
Powerful Vassal
Feudal Obligation Level: Normal

81   +0.1   Feudal Contract

-38

Duke Dedo of Lausitz
Powerful Vassal
Feudal Obligation Level: Normal

283   +0.4   Feudal Contract

Vassal Limit: 41/60   Dread: 0

	Taxes	Levies
From Domain	3.5	1187
From Vassals	11.1	4127

[The vassal management tab]

To get an easy overview of your realm, we in CK3 have the Realm screen. Let's start with the Vassals tab of this screen where all your vassals are shown. This gives you a clear overview of where your levies and taxes come from, who might be a threat to you, and allows you to renegotiate feudal contracts.

This is also where you change your crown authority (or tribal authority), which I'll talk more about later in this dev diary.

Lastly, the screen shows your Powerful Vassals. Much like in CK2's Conclave DLC, your realm will have some powerful vassals; these expect to be seated on the council, and will make their displeasure known if that is not the case.

The **UNDER DEVELOPMENT**

Feudal Empire   Realm Size: 233

Crown Authority

Domain	Vassals	Succession

Duchy of West Franconia

County of Klingenberg   Development: 8 Control: 100%

Klingenberg - Castle Holding   2.0   313
Can construct Building

Duchy of East Franconia

County of Würzburg   Development: 8 Control: 100%

Würzburg - Castle Holding   0.7   418
Can construct Building

County of Bamberg   Development: 8 Control: 100%

Bamberg - Castle Holding   0.4   328
Can construct Building

▶ Empty holdings: 1

Domain: 6/6 Holdings

	Taxes	Levies
From Domain	4.2	1686
From Vassals	11.1	4439

[The Domain Tab]

Then we have the Domain tab. This lets you easily inspect your domain, showing where you're earning money and levies, and where you can build more buildings. It also shows the level of development and control in the counties you personally hold, letting you easily tell where you can make improvements.

Finally, we have the Succession tab. Due to being a bit of a work in progress, I'm afraid I can't show you a picture of it right now. Here you can change your succession laws, see your heir(s), and check what titles, if any, you will lose when you die. If you hold any elective titles, you'll be able to easily get to the election screen from here.

Laws

Now with all these mentions of laws, let's go through what laws exist. We've trimmed down the number of laws from CK2 as much of what used to be law is handled on a more individual level now, but some still remains.

Like in CK2, we have crown authority for Feudal and Clan realms, and tribal authority for Tribal realms. Higher levels of authority unlock mechanics like imprisonment (for tribals, the others start with it), title revocation, restrictions on internal wars, and heir designation. However, increasing these levels will make your vassals unhappy. Tribal authority is significantly less powerful than crown authority, representing how Tribal governments over time gradually got supplanted by Feudal and Clan governments.

[Changing succession law]

Then there's succession laws. To no one's surprise, Gavelkind is making a return, though we've renamed it to Partition to make it more obvious what it actually means. This is the default succession form of most realms in both 867 and 1066.

For added fun, there's now three variants of Partition. We've got regular Partition, which functions like Gavelkind in CK2; your realm gets split roughly equally between your heirs, and any heirs that end up a lower tier than your primary heir becomes a vassal.

However, many realms start with a worse form, especially in 867. This is Confederate Partition, which will also create titles of your primary title's tier if possible. So, if you as Norway have conquered all of Sweden but destroyed the kingdom itself, it will get recreated on your death so that your second heir becomes an independent ruler. Tribals are typically locked to this succession type, with some exceptions.

Finally, we have an improved version of Partition: High Partition. Under High Partition your primary heir will always get at least half your titles, so it doesn't matter if you've got 2 or 10 kids; your primary heir will get the same amount of land.

We've also done a lot of tweaks to the internal logic of who gets what titles, which tends to lead to far nicer splits than in CK2; border gore will of course still happen, but to a lesser degree than before.

Then we have the other succession forms. There's Oldest Child Succession (replacing Primogeniture), Youngest Child Succession (replacing Ultimogeniture), and House Seniority. A notable difference from CK2's Seniority Succession is that under House Seniority, the oldest eligible member of your house inherits, not of your entire dynasty.

We also have a number of variants on elective succession, ranging from Feudal Elective, to Princely Elective (HRE succession), and a handful of cultural variants. Each of these have different restrictions on who can vote, who can be elected, and how the AI will select who to vote for.

Additionally, we've got a full suite of gender laws, corresponding to the gender laws in CK2. These are: Male Only, Male Preference, Equal, Female Preference, and Female Only.

Raiding

Finally, we have raiding. If you're a Norwegian like me, sometimes you feel your Viking blood coursing through your veins, the noise of it drowning out everything else. Times like this, there's only one solution: go on a raid.

Fans of Pagan gameplay in CK2 will be glad to hear that not only have we implemented raiding in CK3 as well, we've made some improvements to it to make it more fun to play with, and less unfun to be on the receiving end of.

The core system is very similar to CK2. If you're a Pagan or Tribal ruler, you have the ability to raid other rulers' lands. To do so you raise a raid army, and march or sail over to your target. Only the Norse can raid across sea; other raid armies will simply be unable to embark.

[Raising a raid army]

Once at your target your army will start looting the barony they're in. This is a pretty quick process, but during it your army will be unable to move, preventing you from running away from any counter-raiding force. This change makes it a lot simpler to deal with raiders if you've got enough men and can raise them quickly enough, as the AI won't just immediately run away.

[A raid in progress]

While in CK2 raiding was done on a county level, in CK3 it is on a barony level. Another difference is that in CK3 raiding no longer uses the siege mechanics directly, but rather a similar system where things like siege engines do not have an impact since you're raiding the countryside, not a heavily fortified castle.

Another significant change is that if you beat a raid army, you receive all the gold they're carrying. This means that even if you cannot respond instantly to a raid, it is still very much

worth it to beat up the raiders. Like in CK2, you also become immune to raiding by that enemy for several years.

Just like in CK2, a raid army is limited in how much loot it can carry based on the army size. Loot is deposited once the army is back in friendly lands, after which you might either disband or go raiding once more.

On the quality of life side, we now show on the map what provinces have already been raided when you have a raid army selected. This makes it easy to see what places to avoid. Hovering over a province will also tell you how much loot raiding it would provide.

[Northern England in its natural state]

Dev Diary 18: Casus Belli, Men-at-Arms and Mercenaries

Casus Belli

One thing that is as it ever was, however, is that you need a Casus Belli to go to war, and that CB determines what happens when the war is won (or lost!). The most common ones are for pressing claims, as you're familiar with from CK2. In different situations there will be different options, of course, and some are even unlocked in special ways, such as the ones unlocked by perks, as shown off in the Diplomacy Lifestyle dev diary.

Voffvoffhunden
Rouge Game Dev - Former CK3 Content Designer
54 Badges

War Declaration Cost

One thing that has changed a little is the fact that different CBs come with different "declaration costs" attached to them. This is usually Prestige or Piety, depending on whether you are starting a war against a fellow believer or someone from another faith. On the other hand, we don't want to keep you from taking advantage of a great opportunity just because you're missing 10 Prestige at a crucial moment, so the costs are optional, in a sense.

You can declare a war without paying its cost, at which point you'll instead pay something bigger, such as a Level of Fame or Devotion.

Levels of Fame/Devotion brings their own benefits, so ideally you want to avoid this, but it's not as big a problem as - say - truce breaking. It's not going to cripple your play, just set you back a little bit in exchange for getting to raise your armies and take some new titles while your enemy is weak. This is also one of the ways that Piety and Prestige gain has become more valuable than it was in CK2. You want to use it for more stuff, and it's always useful to have lying around!

Men at Arms

We have talked about armies before, where we talked about the difference between your levies and your Men-at-Arms. Your levies are your unwashed masses, indistinguishable peasants more than willing to die for the few measly pieces of gold you throw their way. Men-at-Arms, on the other hand, are more specialist troops, and the component that gives you more control over precisely how you win your wars. They are in many ways your elite troops, ready to march through mountains and marshes for you.

You have a maximum number of Men-at-Arms regiment slots for your army, and in addition they have an upkeep cost. It's small when they're unraised, but the moment you have them stand up to go to war, they'll demand a lot more pay!

Even though you can max out your MaA slots, there are other ways you can expand your army. Each MaA regiment can be increased a set number of times, to field even more of your deadly warriors. This will naturally increase their maintenance cost as well (both raised and unraised) so, think twice before hiring twice as many soldiers!

Create Men-at-Arms Regiment ✕

Skirmishers		50
Bowmen		75
Light Cavalry		115
Pikemen		100
Heavy Infantry		125
Onagers		80
Heavy Cavalry		225

Heavy Infantry   100 (Size 1)

⚔ 32	🛡 22	⟫ 0	🏹 0

Type: **Heavy Infantry**

Heavy Infantry Counters these Types:
Pikemen

Terrain Effects:

No terrain effects

Heavily armed and well-trained, these troops specialize in smashing massed infantry.

Full Maintenance: 1.20/month

Unraised Maintenance: 0.36/month

Will reinforce from 5 Soldiers (of 100)

Create (125)

UNDER DEVELOPMENT

There are many different types of MaA regiments, and what their type is determines a number of things, such as what terrain they are good at fighting in, and what kind of MaA Regiments they are good at countering, or get countered by. Over time, you may also be able to acquire new types of MaA Regiments. This means that the bulk of armies are likely to be quite different if you start in 867 compared to when you reach the end of the game.

MaAs also include siege engines, which is one of the easiest ways of speeding up your land grabs. However, siege weapons are almost useless in regular combat, and taking them uses up one of your MaA slots, so it's a decision that has to be carefully thought through.

In addition to a standard slate of MaA types, different cultures gain access to different unique MaAs. These will vary greatly across the world, but are generally specialised in the conditions of warfare that's typical for the culture in question.

Onagers

Unraised

Size 1/8

10

⏫ Increase Size to 2   👤 +10

Destroy

Unraised
At Full strength
Paying Unraised maintenance

Full Maintenance: 🪙 *0.30/month*
Unraised Maintenance: 🪙 0.10/month

🔥 +0.3/day

Effective up to Fort Level 7

These small torsion catapults can tear down enemy fortifications by hurling stone projectiles over a distance.

UNDER DEVELOPMENT

In addition to a standard slate of MaA types, different cultures gain access to different unique MaAs. These will vary greatly across the world, but are generally specialised in the conditions of warfare that's typical for the culture in question.

Create Men-at-Arms Regiment ✕

⚔ Mubarizun	💰	125
🛡 Skirmishers	💰	50
🏹 Bowmen	💰	75
🐴 Light Cavalry	💰	115
⚔ Pikemen	💰	100
🛡 Heavy Infantry	💰	125
⚔ Onagers	💰	80
🐪 Camel Riders	💰	115

Camel Riders   👥 100 (Size 1)

⚔ 30   🛡 20   »» 30   🛡 30

Type: **Light Cavalry**

Camel Riders Counters these Types:
Light Cavalry, Archers

Terrain Effects:

🟢+ 🟢+ 🟢+ 🟢+ 🔴− 🔴− 🔴−

Better suited to desert warfare than traditional cavalry, these riders dominate the sands.

Full Maintenance: 💰 0.84/month

Unraised Maintenance: 💰 0.25/month

Will reinforce from 5 Soldiers (of 100)

Create (💰 115)

UNDER DEVELOPMENT

You will also be able to look at battle reports to get an indication of what kind of impact specific types of MaAs have on your battles. This can let you figure out whether your strategies are paying off, or whether it's finally time to get some Pikemen to counter the Light Cavalry that your rival is always fielding.

So, to sum it all up, Men-at-Arms are great for countering specific troop types, adjusting to specific types of terrain, and directly bolstering the number of soldiers in your army! Sometimes, strategising and countering isn't enough, however, and that's where Mercenaries come in!

Mercenaries

Mercenaries are familiar to any CK2 player, of course, but they have changed a little now.

First of all, you no longer pay monthly maintenance for them. Instead you pay their cost for three years up front, and then they're yours for that time to use as you see fit. They'll stay with you through thick and thin (although mostly the thick of battle).

Border Reaver's Band

Danish Mercenary Company
Capital: Ringkøbing

Strength

2484 Soldiers   4 Knights

Regiments

Levies
1418

Huscarls
354

Light Cavalry
354

Skirmishers
354

Mercenary Captain

Captain Mogens of Border Reaver's Band

✕ 10

684 for a **3 years** contract

Hire

UNDER DEVELOPMENT

Once the three years are almost up, you'll receive an alert warning you that the Mercenaries are about to pack up and get on their way! You'll then have the opportunity to pay them for another three years of service. This also means that they aren't going to betray you the second you go into debt, which I know will sadden a lot of you, but this new system makes it a lot easier to keep track of what you have and don't have during war.

So, Mercenaries are an expensive way of doing warfare, but sometimes it's the only way you'll survive. However, in order to find a Mercenary Company that fits you in both size and shape, we have a new system for generating them to make sure there's always a wide range to choose from.

Each culture generates between one and three Mercenary companies depending on the number of counties of that culture, with each additional company being bigger and more expensive than the previous one. They will also pick a county of their culture to keep as their headquarters, and will be available to be hired by anyone within a certain range of that county.

With each culture generating Mercenaries, their names and coats of arms are either picked from a generated list of names specific to their culture so that you can get historical or particularly flavourful companies in there.

On top of everything else, Mercenary companies come with one or more specific Men-at-Arms types, which means that you may want to consider not only which company is the biggest one you can afford, but which is the best suited for the war you're about to fight.

This should all offer you a lot of varied strategies for how you go about your wars. Is it worth saving up for the CB cost or mercenary-Gold ahead of time? What Men-at-Arms should you be using against your ancestral enemies? Who would win in a fight between the White Company and the Company of the Hat??

Dev Diary 19: Factions and Civil Wars

Much like in CK2, vassals who are unhappy with the current state of affairs in the realm will create a Faction that other vassals can then join. Factions that grow large enough will eventually deliver an ultimatum to their liege, demanding certain concessions in exchange for continued peace.

Anatomy of a Faction

[A screenshot showing a Claimant Faction with Faction Members, Discontent, and Military Power displayed]

All Factions have a Military Power rating, which is a ratio between the combined military strength of all members and the military strength of their liege. Factions also have a Discontent score, which gauges how close the Faction is to sending their ultimatum.

Factions will begin accruing Discontent once their Military Power goes over a certain threshold, typically 80%. Stronger Factions acquire Discontent rapidly in an attempt to seize the moment, while weaker Factions hem and haw a little in the hopes that more supporters will join their cause. Either way, once Discontent reaches 100% the Faction will soon deliver their ultimatum; at that point, their liege must either accept their demands or fight all joined faction members in a civil war.

[A screenshot of the map showing several Faction Members at war with their liege, who is the player]

Unlike in CK2, when a civil war is declared faction members do not form a new temporary realm. While they nominally remain vassals of their liege, they will immediately stop providing taxes and levies to them, and their liege will lose access to certain powers (such as imprisonment).

During a civil war, the faction members turn hostile to both their liege and all non-faction vassals, though they will focus on fighting their liege. The exact war goal varies depending on the Faction type, but both sides earn war score by defeating hostile armies and sieging down hostile provinces.

Once one side emerges triumphant, they will enforce their demands. A victorious Faction will enforce their ultimatum with some additional concessions thrown in, while a victorious liege will imprison all faction members and gain title revocation reasons against them. If a white peace is agreed to, things largely go back to the way they were, though the liege gains an imprisonment reason against all the rebels. Actually, imprisoning the rebels is another matter entirely, as a failed imprisonment attempt can trigger another rebellion.

Types of Factions

There are currently 5 distinct types of Factions, each of which has its own goals.

- The Independence Faction, seeking to gain independence from their liege.
- Claimant Factions, seeking to replace their liege with a new one.
- The Liberty Faction, seeking to reduce Crown Authority in the realm.
- Populist Factions, seeking to form a new realm of their religion and culture.
- The Peasant Faction, seeking to pay fewer taxes to their liege.

Vassals only join The Independence Faction if they feel like they do not belong in their liege's realm. This can be due to a variety of reasons, but it generally boils down to a combination of three major factors: not being a de jure vassal of their liege, not sharing their liege's culture [group], and their religious hostility towards their liege (more on that in a future Dev Diary!). As a result, Independence Factions tend to be 'clumpy', forming distinct regional blocs within a realm.

[A screenshot of an ongoing Independence Faction War against the HRE, showing the clustering of rebels within Italy]

Claimant Factions, on the other hand, are all about opinion. Vassals who personally dislike their liege while still feeling like they belong to their liege's realm will favor this type of Faction. Of course, Claimant Factions are also an area where opportunistic vassals can push to acquire titles for themselves or their relatives!

The Liberty Faction is the place for vassals who are almost happy with the current state of affairs. They want to lower either the realm's crown authority laws or their obligations to their liege and are typically the easiest Faction to manage.

Populist and Peasant Factions are special in that they are not created by unhappy vassals. Instead, they are created by unhappy counties.

[A screenshot of the Faction Tab showing an active Kurdish Apostolic Populist Faction and a Peasant Rabble Faction]

Much like vassals, counties have an opinion of their holder which is influenced by culture, religion, events, and war. When the opinion of a county drops too low, they will join one of these two factions. Like the other factions, if these factions gain enough Discontent, they will send an ultimatum, and will revolt if the ultimatum is refused. This completely replaces the random province revolt chance that existed in CK2 — gone are the days of *"Duke McPeasantFace has declared the 19th Orthodox Uprising on you."*

Populist Factions are the more dangerous type of county faction and form when counties wish to be governed by a ruler of their own culture and/or religion. While Populist Factions are created by and primarily consist of counties, sympathetic vassals in your realm may also pledge loyalty to their cause. A successful Populist revolt will cause all member counties and vassals to break away and form a new realm!

While an Independence Faction causes all members split off into their own separate realms, a Populist Faction will create a single realm with all members united under one ruler. That ruler will always share the Faction's culture and religion, and as a hero of the liberation war they will almost always be a competent commander. In addition, a successful Populist Faction will automatically usurp or create an appropriate title for their leader to hold, which can even generate new Kingdom-tier titles in certain circumstances!

[A screenshot of the Kingdom of Jüterbog, split off of the HRE by a successful Polabian Popular Revolt]

All of this taken together means that any realm formed by Popular Revolt will end up being a formidable foe that likely has several De Jure claims on its neighbors. This can substantially alter the balance of power in your region — even if you weren't the initial faction target!

On the other hand, Peasant Rabble are the simplest and least dangerous type of Faction. Unlike all other Factions, there is no minimum Military Power requirement for the Peasant Rabble to revolt, and its Discontent will always tick upwards at a constant rate. When the Rabble inevitably revolt, they will almost certainly be weaker than the liege they are targeting — but don't let that lull you into a false sense of security! Every time the Rabble's forces occupy a county, all of that county's levies will immediately join them. What started as a minor uprising can quickly balloon out of control if left unchecked! Luckily, their only demands are to pay reduced taxes and provide fewer levies to their liege, which is an annoying if manageable setback.

Faction Management

So as a ruler, how do you manage all of these Factions? Well, there are several ways!

For starters, any alliances you have made with your vassals will prevent them from joining a Faction against you. This makes arranged marriages within your realm valuable even if you don't benefit as much militarily as you would from a foreign marriage.

Adding to this, any vassals you have a hook on will be unable to join a Faction against you, whether that hook is due to them owing you a favor or due to blackmail.

You can also attempt to intimidate vassals away from their Faction, as a high Dread will lower their willingness to be in one. If the threat of imprisonment and torture doesn't work, actual imprisonment will — vassals in your dungeons can not be part of any Faction. Just be careful, as an unjust imprisonment attempt may provoke a powerful Faction into revolting early, regardless of their Discontent!

[A screenshot warning the player that imprisoning this vassal may trigger a Faction Revolt]

Finally, if all else fails you can actually address the grievances your vassals have with you. Vassals who are happy enough will never join any kind of faction, which means improving their opinion of you and fixing structural issues in your realm will ensure that nobody challenges your rule!

Blooper Reel: The Extremely Popular Revolt

Very early on in CK3's development, I started looking into ways to make Popular Revolts more challenging. No matter how large a revolt got, their forces would always be spread out across all of their member counties, making it trivial to pick off their armies one at a time.

To help remedy this, instead of letting each county spawn its own army I made it so each duchy would spawn a single army based on the combined military power of all faction counties inside of it. However, I made a mistake — instead of adding up the military power of all counties in a duchy, I accidentally added up the military power of all counties in the world... per duchy.

It turns out that no matter how many knights you have or how good of a commander you are, 8.8 million angry peasants will overwhelm you in battle every time.

Dev Diary 20: Religion and Faith

Religion

Baron von Shoes
Content Designer

While parts of the religion system in CK3 may seem familiar to fans of the previous games, the system itself has been completely rebuilt from the ground up. As a result, there is little point in talking about changes from CK2; instead, I will start diving into how religion works in CK3 and what that means to you as a player.

The Religious Hierarchy

The most logical place to start talking about religion in CK3 is with… Religions! As a game concept, a Religion is defined by four main things:

- What Traits are considered Sins and Virtues (3 each by default)
- What Religion Family it belongs to (Abrahamic, Oriental, or Pagan)
- What the standard religious Doctrines are for its Faiths
- What Tenets are available to its Faiths

Individual characters and counties will never believe in a whole Religion — they believe in a Faith instead, with each Religion having several Faiths under it. For example, Catholicism and Orthodoxy are Faiths under Christianity, while Theravada and Mahayana are Faiths under Buddhism.

[Screenshot showing a selection of either Christian Faiths, including distinct Coptic and Apostolic Faiths]

Similar to the way that Faiths belong to a Religion, Religions belong to a Religion Family. Religion Families are little more than groups of Religions, but this does serve an important purpose, as it plays a significant part in how Faith Hostility is calculated (more on that in a later Dev Diary).

Anatomy of a Faith

So. if a character believes in a Faith, what does that mean for them? Well, each Faith is based on its parent Religion and inherits those attributes, but will be differentiated from other Faiths by its Tenets, Doctrines, and Holy Sites.

Tenets

Tenets are mechanical representations of the most important rites, rituals, and traditions of a Faith. Every Faith has exactly 3, picked from a total of around 50 different Tenets in the whole game. Tenets are the things which make a Faith special and unique, the things that set it apart from the other Faiths even within the same Religion (and especially outside of it).

[Screenshot of the Catholic Faith's 3 Tenets - Armed Pilgrimages, Communion, and Monasticism]

Taking Catholicism as an example, we see one of their Tenets is that of Communion. This Tenet is what allows the Catholic Pope to excommunicate rulers, as well as allowing rulers to buy Indulgences from the Pope.

Communion

• Characters may Seek Indulgences from their Head of Faith to exchange Gold for Piety
• Spiritual Heads of Faith may Excommunicate other characters of their Faith
• Makes Honest a Virtue
  Catholic Opinion: +10
  Piety: +1.0/month
• Makes Deceitful a Sin
  Catholic Opinion: -10
  Piety: -1.0/month

UNDER DEVELOPMENT

Our rituals are not merely symbolic — they invoke the very presence of the divine itself. Those who cannot or do not join us in their practice cannot be true believers.

[Screenshot of the Communion Tenet, promoting values of honesty and community among adherents]

You may notice here that Communion also modifies what traits are considered Sins and Virtues by the Faith. While every Faith inherits 3 Sins and Virtues from its parent Religion, Tenets can add, modify, or remove these.

While some Tenets are unique to a single Faith, others are shared among multiple Faiths. For example, both Catholicism and Orthodoxy have the Communion Tenet. However, it is important to note that no two Faiths have the exact same combination of Tenets — as a result, every Faith will play at least a little differently, and some drastically so!

Sacred Lies

• Adherents earn piety for successfully completing Intrigue Schemes
• Adherents are more willing to become Agents in the Schemes of other characters
• Makes Deceitful a Virtue
  Adherent Opinion: +10
  Piety: +1.0/month
• Makes Honest a Sin
  Adherent Opinion: -10
  Piety: -1.0/month

UNDER DEVELOPMENT

Lying is the most profound art in existence. Those who can convince others of their lies are holy. Those who can successfully lie to themselves are unstoppable.

[Screenshot of the Sacred Lies Tenet, promoting scheming and treachery among adherents]

Doctrines

While less impactful than Tenets, Doctrines are still a crucial part of each Faith. A Faith's Doctrines determine both its clerical structure as well as what its adherents can and cannot legally do.

Every Faith has at least 18 Doctrines, with a few extras depending on the circumstances. While every Religion has a default stance for each Doctrine, these should be considered guidelines more than actual rules; individual Faiths can and do break away from standard dogma when appropriate. The different Doctrines are broken up into 4 categories:

- Main Doctrines
- Marriage Doctrines
- Crime Doctrines
- Clergy Doctrines

Main Doctrines

| Male Dominated | Righteous | Theocratic | Ecumenism |

Marriage Doctrines

Marriage Type	Divorce
Monogamous	Must be Approved
Bastardry	Consanguinity
Legitimization	Avunculate Marriage

Crime Doctrines

Same-Sex Relations	Male Adultery
Shunned	Shunned
Female Adultery	Kinslaying
Criminal	Close Kin is Criminal
Deviancy	Witchcraft
Criminal	Criminal

Clergy Doctrines

Clerical Function	Clerical Gender
Control	Only Men
Clerical Marriage	Clerical Appointment
Disallowed	Spiritual, for Life

Special Doctrines

Teachings of Jesus — **UNDER DEVELOPMENT**

Current Head of Faith	Head of Faith
Pope Alexander II	Spiritual
	The Papacy

[Screenshot of the Catholic Doctrines]

Main Doctrines cover how a Faith is organized on a fundamental level. These include things such as the traditional gender roles of a Faith, if the Faith has a Religious Head or not, how accepting (or unaccepting!) the Faith is of other Faiths and Religions, and if its priests must be part of a dedicated theocracy or if lay clergy are permitted.

Marriage Doctrines cover who is allowed to get married and how: if rulers can have multiple spouses, if concubines are permitted, if and when divorce is permitted, if extramarital relations can result in legitimate heirs, and who can even get married in the first place.

The Crime Doctrines cover what acts, if any, are considered immoral or even outright criminal. Characters who are publicly known to have violated these principles are Shunned, suffering an opinion penalty with all characters of that Faith, and may even be considered an outright Criminal who can be lawfully imprisoned and punished for their violations against divine law.

Finally, the Clergy Doctrines determine how priests must behave and what their primary role in society is. The Clergy Doctrines also determine what power, if any, secular rulers have over the clergy within their realm.

Holy Sites

Finally, every Faith has some number of Holy Sites that this Faith considers to be more sacred than the rest. Controlling these Holy Sites will give a bonus to all characters of that Faith; this can create a significant source of conflict in the game, as many different Faiths can share specific Holy Sites, and every one of them wants to be the one in control!

Each Holy Site held by a Orthodox Ruler gives a bonus to all of Orthodoxy

Jerusalem

County Conversion Speed: +20%

All Orthodox:
Monthly Piety: +20%

Constantinople

All Orthodox:
Direct Vassal Opinion: +5

Rome

All Orthodox:
Monthly Piety: +10%

Alexandria

All Orthodox:
Learning: +1

Antioch

All Orthodox:
Monthly Piety: +10%

UNDER DEVELOPMENT

[Screenshot showing the five Orthodox Holy Sites and their corresponding bonuses]

Moddability

I'm going to go on a quick tangent here and talk about modding Faiths and Religions in Crusader Kings III. Primarily, I want to mention that everything I have talked about so far is completely modular! This means Religion Groups, Religions, Faiths, Doctrines, Tenets, and Holy Sites can all be swapped in and out, modified, changed, or new ones added with even just a basic knowledge of scripting.

```
faiths = {
    catholic = { ... }
    }

    orthodox = { ... }
    }

    coptic = {
        color = { 0.7 0.7 0.1 }
        religious_head = d_coptic_papacy

        holy_site = alexandria                    UNDER
        holy_site = jerusalem                 DEVELOPMENT
        holy_site = antioch
        holy_site = aksum
        holy_site = napata

        # Core Tenets
        doctrine = tenet_monasticism
        doctrine = tenet_alexandrian_catechism
        doctrine = tenet_communal_identity

        # Doctrine Changes
        doctrine = special_doctrine_ecumenical_christian
        doctrine = doctrine_pluralism_pluralistic


        holy_order_names = {
            { name = "holy_order_order_of_saint_anthony" }
        }

        localization = { ... }
        }
    }
```

[Screenshot of a script snippet showcasing the Coptic Faith's parameters]

This is one of the primary reasons we settled on the Faith, Tenet, and Doctrine system for CK3. Even though religion has a massive impact and touches dozens of game systems, it is easy for even new modders to dip their toes into the pool and start adding or changing things as they see fit. For experienced modders, this setup improves productivity and reduces the risk of introducing bugs. This has also had the side-effect of improving our productivity here at the office, which brings me to...

This is my Faith. There are many like it, but this one is mine.

At current count, we have 99 different Faiths in Crusader Kings III, all of which are fully playable. That more than doubles the number of playable religions we had in CK2 after Jade Dragon released.

[Screenshot of Egypt and Nubia, showing the diverse number of Faiths in the region]

Remember what I said earlier about how no two Faiths have the same combination of Tenets, and how every Faith would play at least slightly differently?

Yeah.

Your options are quite extensive:

- You can play as the good ol' Catholics, or one of their heresies like the Cathars.
- You can play a different branch of Christianity, such as the Coptic Church or the Armenian Apostolic Church.
- You can play as a more unusual branch of Christianity like the Adamites.
- You can play not just as Sunni or Shia, but as individual religious movements or schools within them such as the Ash'ari or Maturidi, and the Isma'ili or Qarmatian.
- You can play as various Jewish movements, such as the Karaites or Rabbanists.
- You can play as a Dualist sect, such as Sabianism or Manicheanism.
- You can play as individual branches of Hinduism, such as Vaishnavism and Shaktism, or make the choice between Therevada, Mahayana, and Vajrayana Buddhism.
- You can play as one of three different schools of Confucianism, shaped by differing philosophies and focuses.
- You can play as a distinct African pagan Faith such as Bori Animism or the Senegambian Roog Sene.
- You can play as either Tengri or Magyar steppe pagans each with their own special traditions.
- You can play as one of the Indian or Tibetan pagans as well, extending beyond Bon and into other regional and cultural Faiths.
- Finally, don't forget the old favorite pagan Faiths like Norse (now called Asatru)!

While many of these faiths will have some similarities and common elements

(especially within the same Religion), none of them are identical to each other. They all differentiate themselves mechanically in at least one way, and often in many ways. But… let's say you've looked at every single one of these Faiths, and none of them are quite right. What, then, is a soul-searching medieval ruler to do?

Dev Diary 21: Custom Faiths and Pagan Reformation

Baron von Shoes
Content Designer

To start us off, I'm going to go into how the process of creating a new Faith or reforming a pagan one works. After that, there will be a teaser of some Tenets and Doctrines that you may be interested in picking for your newly-founded Faiths

Faith Creation

Creating a new Faith is no easy task. Only the most pious rulers will be able to convince the clergy within their realm that they alone know the true will of the divine and, in doing so, take the first steps towards establishing a new Faith. However, with a little bit of devotion and a lot of time, you too will be able to reshape your Faith to suit your dynasty's needs!

When looking at your own Faith's tenets and doctrines, you will see a button at the bottom labeled 'Create New Faith'. Clicking this button will open the Faith Creation window, which can be viewed at any time — even long before you have acquired the means to actually create a new Faith! This will allow you to play around with the different options and get a feel for what is possible, allowing you to set long-term goals for yourself.

[Screenshot of the Faith Creation window showing modified Tenets and Doctrines]

You can change every single Tenet and Doctrine of your hypothetical new Faith on this screen, though the list of what Tenets are available to pick varies from Religion to Religion. For example, Tenets based on the concept of Dharma are exclusive to Oriental Religions, whereas Monasticism was common practice and is thus available to everyone. This means when creating a new Faith, you must first ensure you are a member of the Religion that you want to base your new Faith off of.

Beyond simple availability, it is also easier for some Religions to accept certain Doctrines than others. For example, Islam is used to polyamory and will happily accept a new Faith espousing it.
In contrast, a new Christian faith that claims God intended us to have multiple spouses will be met with a little more skepticism...

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The way this plays out in CK3 is that each Tenet and Doctrine has a Piety cost associated with it. The further you deviate from your original Faith, the more Piety you will need in order to convince the priests that yes, you actually have had a vision from the divine and yes, you actually are enforcing their will and not just trying to make some weird personal sex cult.

[Screenshot of the scaling costs for the Cosanguinity Doctrine]

After you have made all the changes you want, you will be given the total amount of Piety your character needs in order to create their new Faith. This cost can get quite high, meaning that creating a new Faith or reforming a pagan one ends up being a life-long goal for most characters. It is highly recommended to attempt this with characters who have a Learning education and/or who have multiple Virtuous personality traits, and having the ability to go on frequent pilgrimages or donate gold & troops to holy causes helps too! Finally, timing your divine revelation to completely coincidentally occur when your Faith is suffering from low Fervor will make it much easier to get everyone to buy into your new canon (I will talk more about Fervor in our future Dev Diary on heresy outbreaks).

Once you are happy with your Tenets and Doctrines and have accumulated the necessary amount of Piety, you can officially convert to your new Faith. You and your capital county will adopt it immediately, but it won't be easy for a ruler to convince their vassals and subjects to adopt this strange new Faith — they might be more inclined to stage an uprising and depose their mad king from the throne! After all, if you die before your new Faith gains a foothold in the world, there is a good chance your Faith will die with you...

Pagan Reformation

Pagan Faiths in Crusader Kings III start out with the special 'Unreformed' Doctrine.

This Doctrine grants notable bonuses to Tribal rulers early on, but it locks them into the Tribal government type and provides substantial Opinion penalties to any non-Tribal vassals they acquire. Since Tribal realms are notoriously unstable, successful chieftains will eventually want to look into either converting to a reformed religion so they can feudalize, or reforming their pagan religion into a true organized faith.

Like with Faith Creation, rulers must earn a substantial amount of Piety to organize their Faith's disparate shamans into a coherent clergy. In addition, they must have at least 3 of their Faith's holy sites located within their realm.

[Screenshot showing 3 of the Vidilist Holy Sites]

Once you accomplish this, the process is quite similar to creating a new Faith of an existing reformed Religion. Your vassals may still be reluctant to convert to your newly reformed Faith, but because reformed Faiths gain a bonus to conversion against unreformed Faiths, you will have a much easier time convincing them to go along with your reformation than a heresiarch within in an existing Faith would have with making a new heresy.

The Vidilist Reformation

UNDER DEVELOPMENT

At long last, I have managed to gather every important vaidilė in the world together so that they can discuss our beliefs and establish an official doctrine to guide our faith into the future.

These Vidilist vaidilos are encouraging cooperation and tolerance, even towards non-believers, and many ancient superstitions and mythical stories have been canonized in the official doctrine.

I have chosen to personally lead this burgeoning Vidilist movement and have assumed the title of Kriwe, an exalted position that I will pass down to my descendants.

The world will see that Dievas favors us!

[Screenshot showing a Vidilist reformation event]

Tenet and Doctrine teaser

To finish this off, here are a few choice tenets and doctrines which you can pick when creating a new Faith in CK3. Many of these are also used by already existing Faiths, but some are only available to custom Faiths created by players. As you can see, there is a lot of variety in the kinds of custom Faiths you can create — ultimately every kind of playstyle should have some set of Tenets and Doctrines to support it!

War	Peace	?!?!?

Warmonger
• At Peace Opinion instead of Offensive War Opinion
• Rulers have a Conquest Casus Belli against neighboring rulers
• Prestigious Rulers can use an Invasion Casus Belli once per lifetime
• If one exists, the Head of Faith can declare Great Holy Wars, provided this Faith is Organized
• Members of the Clergy can serve as Commanders or Champions
 	
Faith and war go hand in hand. One who refuses to fight in the name of the divine cannot be called a true believer.
	Dharmic Pacifism
	• County Conversion Resistance: +20%
	• Can not declare Holy Wars or Raid
	• Opinion of other Pacifists: +10
	• Makes Calm a Virtue
	  Theravada Opinion: +10
	  Piety: +1.0/month
	• Makes Wrathful a Sin
	  Theravada Opinion: -10
	  Piety: -1.0/month
	
	All Theravadans:
	Domain Limit: +1
	
	We are all a part of the cosmic order. Violence against anything is violence against everything, oneself included.
		Carnal Exaltation
		• Makes Lustful a Virtue
		  Adherent Opinion: +10
		  Piety: +1.0/month
		• Makes Chaste a Sin
		  Adherent Opinion: -10
		  Piety: -1.0/month
		
		All Adherents:
		Fertility: +25%
		
		The pleasures of the flesh are sublime in a way that transcends other earthly experiences, bringing us closer to the divine. We should glorify our sexual desires and seek out opportunities for us to fulfill them.

Fundamentalist • Adherents of other Faiths will have opinion penalties of 200% • County Conversion Speed: +20% • Counties of other Faiths are more likely to join Factions • Increased danger from heresies when at low Fervor • Can revoke landed titles from Hostile and Evil infidels without incurring Tyranny Our faith is the one true faith, our word the one true word. Any deviation from the Quran is inherently blasphemous.	**Pluralist** • Adherents of other Faiths will have opinion penalties of 50% • County Conversion Speed: -20% • Counties of other Faiths are less likely to join Factions • Reduced danger from heresies when at low Fervor • Winning a Holy War will vassalize infidel Rulers in the target area instead of seizing their land It is utter folly to say that there is only one right interpretation of divine will, and that all the others views are wrong. Each of us has our own way of worshiping Allah.	**Divine Marriage** • Adherents who are married to a Close Family member have +10 Opinion from Vassals of the same Faith • Marrying a Close Family member for the first time grants a large amount of Piety The blood of the divine runs through the veins of our kings and queens. Keeping our bloodlines pure is the best way to ensure our family's reign continues for centuries to come.

Human Sacrifice
• Executions earn Piety instead of costing Piety
• Grants the Raid for Captives Casus Belli against neighboring realms
 	
The best way to prove our devotion is through the act of sacrifice. The most valuable sacrifice we can offer is the sacrifice of human life.
	Christian Syncretism
	• Considers Christian Faiths and is considered by Christian Faiths to be Hostile instead of Evil
	• Mutual Opinion bonus with Christian Faiths
	• Makes Compassionate a Virtue
	  Adherent Opinion: +10
	  Piety: +1.0/month
	• Makes the following traits Sins: Callous, Sadistic
	  With the following effects:
	  Adherent Opinion: -10
	  Piety: -1.0/month
	
	Jesus of Nazareth may not have been true divinity, but he was still an upstanding and virtuous figure. We should honor and respect his teachings.
		Kūdikis Lemti
		• Mothers are less likely to die in childbirth
		• Children are less likely to be sickly or stillborn
		
		All Vidilists:
		Fertility: +10%
		
		The bathhouses where mothers give birth must be cleansed and prepared with the proper rituals, in order to encourage the divine to grant us their blessing during childbirth.

Ritual Cannibalism
• The Cannibal trait is no longer considered Criminal
• Makes Cannibal a Virtue
  Adherent Opinion: +20
  Piety: +2.0/month
 	
Mankind is blessed to have been bestowed with the spark of the divine. Human flesh is therefore sacred, its presence something to be savored, not buried or burned.
		Under Development

[Screenshot of the Tenets Warmonger, Human Sacrifice, Ritual Cannibalism, Christian Syncretism, Dharmic Pacifism, Carnal Exaltation, Divine Marriage, Sacred Childbirth, and the Doctrines Pluralism and Fundamentalist]

Dev Diary 22: A Medieval Tapestry

Heptopus
Content Designer
2 Badges

Virvatuli
Private
45 Badges

We are huge believers in allowing players as much freedom as possible to shape the game world in their image, which is reflected in the Paradox slogan *"We make the games, you create the stories."* Of course, when trying to model history reasonably accurately as we do in CK3, your starting environment might be a far cry from the just and equal Realm you wish to rule, but determined players should be able to change the mores of their society over time - if that is their fantasy.

As you might suspect, the CK3 team consists of some very nerdy, passionate and compassionate people. Some of the things we're outlining in this Dev Diary were part of the regular development process, and some have been passion projects. It has been very important for us to represent our players, the team behind the game, and the people who don't feature heavily in most history books and media. We want everyone to feel welcome and to empower you to play your fantasy.

CK3 truly is a diverse game; it spans a map of nearly half the world and almost six centuries of history. This world is inhabited by a myriad of titles, cultures, faiths, and characters. It's been our goal to represent all of these things with a great level of detail and accuracy to give you all a deeply immersive experience with more dynamic elements and player choice than ever before. Will you recreate history, build a brand new world, or something in between? It is all in your hands.

But we haven't just added more diversity; that variety is also much more readily available than it was in CK2. For example, all Faiths and Cultures on the map are playable on release, and the dynamic Faith system will give you much greater power to change the world. We've also added many different Game Rules which allow you to tailor your CK3 experience. If you would rather play as a Queen than a King from day one, the Game Rules let you do that, without having to create a custom Faith during your campaign. There are other challenges out there to conquer and stories to explore!

We are incredibly proud of all the stuff we've made for you, so without any further ado, let's jump into the juicy, juicy details!

Gender Options

All gender-related restrictions in CK3 are controlled by the Faiths, either directly or indirectly. As we have an awesome dynamic Faith system, all such restrictions can be changed during a playthrough. Our design philosophy for Faith Tenets related to gender has been to have the exact same options available for men and women. For example, the "View on Gender" Tenet has the settings "Male Dominated", "Equal" and "Female Dominated". All the restrictions for women in Male Dominated Faiths are applied to men instead in Female Dominated Faiths.

Male Dominated	Equal	Female Dominated
• Enables Laws: *Male Only* and *Male Preference* Succession • Claims of women can only be pressed against other women, children, or incapable rulers • Women do not get Claims on their parents' titles • Women cannot be granted Titles • Only men can be Commanders and Knights • Only men and Vassals can be appointed as Chancellors, Stewards and Marshals	• Enables Laws: *Male Preference*, *Equal*, and *Female Preference* Succession • Both men and women can be Commanders and Knights It is foolish to deny skilled people a role in government purely because of their gender. We shall allow all who are able to govern our society. *Click to Select Equal*	• Enables Laws: *Female Only* and *Female Preference* Succession • Claims of men can only be pressed against other men, children, or incapable rulers • Men do not get Claims on their parents' titles • Men cannot be granted Titles • Only women can be Commanders and Knights • Only women and Vassals can be appointed as Chancellors, Stewards and Marshals
All *Catholics*: Opinion of Female Rulers: -10		**All *Catholics*:** Opinion of Male Rulers: -10
Men are stronger and better equipped to lead us in this harsh and unforgiving world, so we shall entrust them with governing our society. *Click to Select Male Dominated*		Women have proven time and time again that only they have the wisdom and prudence necessary to properly govern our society. **UNDER DEVELOPMENT** *Click to Select Female Dominated*

Even when men historically held the highest titles and womens' rights were limited, women still had a vital impact on the world around them. In many parts of the medieval world, it was not uncommon for women to rule in their husbands' absence, they were often advisors and took care of estates. We have chosen to represent this with the Spouse Council Position. Your Spouse's skills have a direct impact on your realm, and you will see events about your Spouse handling all sorts of duties, from negotiating with factions to raising additional troops.

Spouse: The Guard

I am a little confused as to why my wife wants to present a "grand gift" to me in the courtyard. I soon understand, however, as Queen Gwenllian orders a group of soldiers into line. "A complete regiment, raised from my own lands, ready to serve you."

This *is* a grand gift!

More troops to bolster the army!

They will serve as my personal guard.

UNDER DEVELOPMENT

Like in CK2, we have a Gender Equality Game Rule, but with some improvements and added variation. The "Equal" setting (corresponding to "All" in CK2) covers more areas and has fewer exceptions than it did in CK2, largely thanks to our dynamic Faith system and the design philosophy mentioned above. It also comes with an "Inverted" setting where the historical gender statuses are turned on their head and women become the dominant gender in most religions.

UNDER DEVELOPMENT

UNDER DEVELOPMENT

Maharani Olimatiyâr of Tamilakam, 21
Gracious Zealot
10 11 3 6 1 5
Vaishnaist
Tamil
Chola

High Chieftess Wyszeslawa Sviatoslavovna of Chernigov, 19
This is you
9 13 3 3 8 3
Orthodox
Russian
Rurikid

UNDER DEVELOPMENT

UNDER DEVELOPMENT

Queen Urraca Fernandez of León, 33
This is you
4 4 6 18 7 2
Catholic
Asturleonese
Jimena
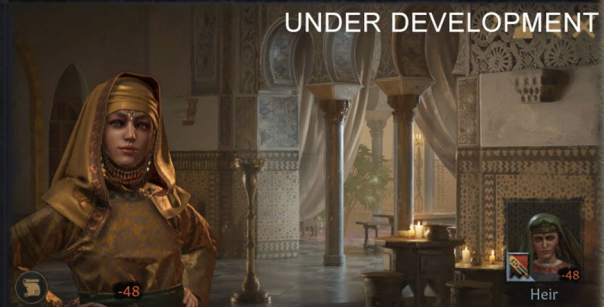
Matriarch Aamira of the Aamirid Clan, 28
Insane Adventurer
18 11 7 0 2 4
Muwalladi
Baranis
Aamirid

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Women are also more visually present in Crusader Kings than ever before. We have some awesome loading screens with a diverse bunch of characters, for example, but the biggest impact comes from the new event window. In CK2 we had lovely event illustrations, but the drawback was the lack of variation when it came to characters. In CK3 we use our gorgeous character models to bring the events to life, which will showcase the rich diversity of the cast of your playthrough in the event windows.

Sexuality

Sexuality provides added spice to character behavior and motivations, both in real life and in CK3, and it will also affect what is considered sinful or even criminal in a Faith in the game. It's great for drama and intrigue, and in CK3 we've given sexualities more granularity. In addition to heterosexuality and homosexuality from CK2, characters can also be bisexual and asexual. Sexuality is no longer defined by a trait, but has its own system, which makes it easier to handle for us and more visible in the interface for you. It also means that we do not frame heterosexuality as the default in CK3, which was also important for us.

Children develop their sexualities around the age of 10 and once set, it will not change. It's worth noting that we don't model sexual and romantic attraction separately in the game, so a character's sexuality sets both their sexual and romantic preferences.

We do however differentiate between sexual preference and sexual behavior in-game. A character's sexuality in and of itself can never be criminal, but certain sexual acts can be. For example, if a Faith's "View on Same-Sex Relations" is not set to "Accepted", two men who have sex will get the "Sodomite" Secret (no matter their sexuality). While the AI doesn't pursue romance or sex with someone they're not attracted to, the player can sometimes choose to act against their sexual preference (albeit with a penalty, and it can never lead to a lover relationship). This means a player's heterosexual male character could get the "Sodomite" Secret if they seduce a homosexual or bisexual man.

We have two Game Rules related to sexuality: "View on Same-Sex Relations" and "Sexuality Distribution". The former is very similar to the "View on Gender" rule I mentioned above; it can change all Faith's "View on Same-Sex Relations" from their historical defaults to "Accepted". The latter can change how common each sexuality is. The settings are "Default" which means Heterosexuality is the most common sexuality, "Equal" which makes all four sexualities equally common, and one setting each for Homosexuality, Bisexuality, and Asexuality which makes them the most common sexuality instead of Heterosexuality.

Faiths

As the dev diaries of the last couple of weeks have shown we have given Faiths a lot of attention, and as you might already know, all Faiths will be unlocked at game start. The dynamic Faith system has allowed us to add plenty of variation at release; we hope you'll find that each Faith has its own flavor and quirks.

Even better, we now have more distinctions between different non-Christian Faiths, especially in Africa and India! African Paganism from CK2 has been replaced with at least six new Faiths; Roog, Bori, Siguism, Akom, Waaqism, and Kushitism, all with their own Tenets and flavor. For example, the Bori have a long history of matriarchs and worship the spirits. As they believe in spirit possession and that spirits can be either feminine or masculine, they are accepting of same-sex relations. The Siguics, on the other hand, worship their ancestors and believe that twins are blessed.

Adorcism
• Enables the 'Seek Aid of The Spirits' Decision
• Makes *Possessed* a Virtue
  Bori Opinion: +20
  Piety: +2.0/month

The spirits of this world can do great works of both good and evil. By honoring and respecting them we can only hope that they will do their good to us and their evil to our foes.

Bhakti
• Rulers can Decide to pick a personal avatar to venerate, gaining a related bonus

Mortals cannot live up to the full glory of the divine, but by selecting a single aspect of divinity to emulate, worship, and devote oneself to, we can come closer to them than would otherwise be possible.

Ancestor Worship
• Prestige from Level of Splendor for newborns: +100%
• Prestige from Level of Splendor when getting Married: +100%
• Maximum Long Reign opinion bonus: +50%
• Characters of this Faith gain an additional bonus upon the successful completion of a Pilgrimage

All *Siguists*:
Close Family Opinion: +5

Our ancestors watch over us from beyond the grave, guiding us and showing us the way forward. For this we must respect and honor them.

Dharmic Pacifism
• County Conversion Resistance: +20%
• Can not declare Holy Wars or Raid
• Opinion of other Pacifists: +10
• Makes *Calm* a Virtue
  Theravada Opinion: +10
  Piety: +1.0/month
• Makes *Wrathful* a Sin
  Theravada Opinion: -10
  Piety: -1.0/month

All *Theravadans*:
Domain Limit: +1   UNDER DEVELOPMENT

We are all a part of the cosmic order. Violence against anything is violence against everything, oneself included.

Hinduism has been split into seven different Faiths. In addition to expanding upon and fleshing out the four main traditions of Hinduism (Vaishnavism, Shaivism, Shaktism and Smartism), CK3 also sees the addition of less well-known Hindu traditions such as Krishnaism and Advaitism. Buddhism has five Faiths, Jainism three, and many Religions across the map have received similar diversification. We have also added a Dualism Religion with seven different Faiths, for example Manicheanism, Mandeanism, and Sabianism.

And as you can create your own Faiths, you will be able to create the kind of society you want to play in. As I have mentioned, some things can be preset through Game Rules, but the challenge of changing the world to your liking can be a really satisfying experience.

For example, we have the Game Rules "Faith Acceptance" which makes religious wars and disagreements a thing of the past, and "Randomized Faiths" which gives everyone in the world a random Faith. For those of you who are sensitive to border gore, please proceed with caution as the following screenshot contains graphic imagery. For the rest, how many Faiths can you spot in the screenshot?

UNDER DEVELOPMENT

Ethnicities and Cultures

We have expanded the amount of portrait asset sets from the two in the CK2 base game to a grand total of seven in CK3! On release, there will be a visual distinction between Western Europe, Northern Pagans, the Middle East/North Africa, Byzantium, the Steppe, Sub-Saharan Africa, and India. We will also have an even greater number of ethnicities, so you will see variations within these seven groups.

Thanks to the new portrait system, ethnicities now blend seamlessly. When two characters of different ethnicities have a child, the children will look a bit like both parents.

Baron von Shoes
Content Designer

Dev Diary 24: Fervor, Religious Hostility, and Doctrine Showcase

Fervor

Every Faith has a Fervor score, which is a representation of how strongly adherents of that Faith believe in the righteousness of their religious and secular leaders. While Fervor has a slow ticking increase over time, it is primarily influenced by the virtuousness or sinfulness of that Faith's leaders. Virtuous priests can inspire a populace and rally the people behind themselves, while sinful ones (especially religious heads) can cause massive scandals that damage the faithful's trust in their religious institutions.

Scandalous Priest

UNDER DEVELOPMENT

The Catholic world was appalled to learn that Pope Alexander himself was caught 'in flagrante delicto' with several young servants in his home! The poor aide who discovered them had to avert his eyes while the culprits rushed to grab their clothes and get dressed.

While scandals among the clergy are nothing new, many are aghast that the head of our faith would succumb to such temptations.

Condemn him for his transgressions!

Defend his character publicly, even at risk to myself!

Maybe I should just stay silent about this...

[A screenshot of the Pope looking very guilty after being caught in flagrante]

Adherents of a Faith with high Fervor are willing to fight and die for their beliefs. They gain bonus resistance to attempts to convert them to another faith, and both secular and religious leaders can declare Holy Wars to spread their Faith across the world. However, while these Holy Wars are ostensibly waged in the name of the divine, in practice they often tend to be little more than opportunistic land-grabs — as a result, every Holy War declared will slightly damage a Faiths' Fervor, while losing land to hostile Holy Wars will actually increase your Faith's Fervor as the embattled faithful dig in and fight for their way of life!

When a Faith's Fervor drops, adherents of that Faith become vulnerable to conversion. Characters are more willing to accept a Demand Conversion when their Faith's Fervor is low, and the Court Chaplain's 'Convert County' task gains a scaling bonus against Faiths whose Fervor is lower than their own. In addition, if Fervor drops low enough, a Faith becomes vulnerable to heresy outbreaks!

Heresy Outbreaks

A heresy outbreak is what happens when a ruler becomes disillusioned with their current Faith and is swayed to join a different one. If there is already a heretical Faith present nearby, they will convert to that one automatically. If no suitable heresies are around, they will become a heresiarch and start espousing the doctrines of a brand new Faith, which is typically (but not always), one from their Religion.

A ruler who converts to or founds a new heretical Faith will then attempt to convince nearby rulers of their old Faith to join them, with the success rate of this being dependent on how low their old Faith's fervor has fallen. This means that while heresy outbreaks can vary wildly in size, converts to the new heresy will tend to remain clustered together in a specific region — this both protects the burgeoning Faith while simultaneously limiting its influence in distant lands.

[A screenshot showing an outbreak of Lollardy, originating in southern England]

As you can imagine, heresy outbreaks are incredibly divisive events; nobody wants to sit on the fence when your immortal soul is on the line! As a result, after a heresy outbreak occurs both the old Faith and the new heretical Faith will gain a substantial increase to their Fervor score. As this is likely to encourage Holy Wars for both sides, it is not uncommon for a new period of religious violence to follow as the two Faiths fight for supremacy!

Ultimately, the flow from scandal to heresy to zealousness and back will cause Fervor to vary wildly over the course of a game of CK3. Unlike the relatively static Mortal Authority in CK2, this means that even the big dominant religions will have periods of weakness, making them vulnerable to fractures and religious violence.

Religious Hostility

Speaking of religious violence, how does that work? With so many different Faiths and Religions in Crusader Kings III, how do they view each other? What is the difference between how an Orthodox ruler views a Catholic, a Bogomil, and an Ash'ari?

In Crusader Kings III this is all handled by the Religious Hostility system. For characters of a given Faith, every other Faith in the game will receive one of the following rankings:

1. Righteous
2. Astray
3. Hostile
4. Evil

Righteous is how a Faith views itself and, in a few rare circumstances, other Faiths that have certain things in common with it. Righteous Faiths have no penalties at all with each other.

Astray is how a Faith views other Faiths that have similar goals and ideals but are just a little… wrong. For example, Orthodoxy and Catholicism consider each other to be Astray. Astray Faiths have only a minor opinion penalty with each other.

Hostile is how most Faiths view their heresies and other significantly divergent Faiths. Opinion penalties are more substantial at this level, and rulers gain the ability to declare Holy Wars against rulers of Hostile Faiths. However, intermarriage is still common when it is politically convenient, and alliances can still be forged between rulers of Hostile Faiths.

Evil Faiths are considered to be an anathema, and cannot be tolerated. Evil Faiths suffer the most severe opinion penalty possible, and Holy Wars against each other become commonplace. Rulers will almost never accept marriages with characters of an Evil Faith, making alliances all-but-impossible.

So how is Religious Hostility determined? The primary factor is what Religion Family both Faiths belong to:

Faith's Religious Family	Same Family Same Religion	Same Family Different Religion	Different Family Different Religion
Abrahamic	Hostile	Evil	Evil
Pagan	Astray	Hostile	Evil
Eastern	Astray	Astray	Hostile

[A screenshot of a spreadsheet showing how base Religious Hostility is calculated, with Abrahamic Faiths being the least tolerant and Eastern Faiths being the most tolerant]

But wait, if Abrahamic Faiths view other Faiths within the same Religion has Hostile, why do Catholicism and Orthodoxy only see each other as Astray? The answer to that, my friend, is Doctrines!

Doctrine & Tenet Showcase

Now we're going to take some time to reveal a bunch of the various Doctrines and Tenets available for Faiths in Crusader Kings 3. For starters, the Catholic, Orthodox, Apostolic, and Coptic Faiths all have the 'Ecumenism' Doctrine, which changes the Hostility of any other Faith with the same Doctrine to just 'Astray', thus allowing these Faiths to have cordial relations with each other.

Ecumenism — **UNDER DEVELOPMENT**

• Other Christian Faiths that have the Ecumenism doctrine are considered <u>Astray</u> instead of Hostile

Our religious leaders have historically been engaged in inter-faith dialogs to increase cooperation amongst the different Christian denominations.

[A screenshot showing the Ecumenism doctrine, which reduces Hostility between certain Christian Faiths]

In a similar vein, the various Muslim Faiths all have a doctrine representing their belief in the true succession for Muhammad. The various Sunni Faiths all see each other as Astray, with the same being true for the collective Shia Faiths and the collective Muhakkima Faiths.

The embattled minority of Gnostic Faiths have an ever stronger version of this; having always struggled to have their beliefs accepted, they see all other Gnostic Faiths as being fully 'Righteous'. This allows us to have coalitions of Faiths within or even outside of a Religion that see some Faiths as allies and others as enemies, completely changing the dynamic of how religious relations play out in Crusader Kings III.

Gnosticism   UNDER DEVELOPMENT

• Considers other Gnostic Faiths to be <u>Righteous</u> instead of **Hostile** or **Evil**
• Giving away Titles relieves a proportional amount of Stress
• Makes <u>Temperate</u> a Virtue
    Manichean Opinion: +10
    Piety: +1.0/month
• Makes <u>Gluttonous</u> a Sin
    Manichean Opinion: -10
    Piety: -1.0/month

All <u>Manicheans</u>:
Stewardship: -2
Learning: +2

Through knowledge, the divine spark that rests inside all humans may be liberated and returned to its heavenly source in the spirit-realm.

[A screenshot showing the Gnosticism Tenet, which among other things eliminates Religious Hostility between Gnostic Faiths]

Finally, there are other Tenets which can modify how your Faith sees, and is seen by, Faiths in other Religions.

Syncretic Folk Traditions

• Considers <u>Unreformed</u> Faiths, and is considered by Unreformed Faiths, to be <u>Hostile</u> instead of **Evil**
• Mutual Opinion bonus with <u>Unreformed</u> Faiths
• Makes <u>Humble</u> a Virtue
    Nangchos Opinion: +10
    Piety: +1.0/month
• Makes <u>Arrogant</u> a Sin
    Nangchos Opinion: -10
    Piety: -1.0/month

Who are we to tell others that their traditions are untrue? It is not our place to lecture them about customs they have practiced for centuries: instead, we should learn quietly about their ways.

Click to Select Syncretic Folk Traditions

	UNDER DEVELOPMENT
Christian Syncretism	530
Eastern Syncretism	265
Islamic Syncretism	530
Jewish Syncretism	530
Syncretic Folk Traditions	906

[A screenshot showing various Syncretism Tenets, which reduce Religious Hostility across entire Religions]

Diplomacy not your thing? Try some warfare!

Recruitment **UNDER DEVELOPMENT**
• Members of the Clergy can serve as Commanders or Knights

All Catholic Clergy:
Prowess: +2
Domain Taxes (Same Faith): -3%
Levy Reinforcement Rate (Same Faith): +30%

Every able-bodied person has a duty to take up arms and defend our faith, and it is the responsibility of our priests to remind everyone of this.

Pursuit of Power
• Rulers have a Conquest Casus Belli against neighboring rulers
• Prestigious Rulers can use an Invasion Casus Belli once per lifetime
• Makes Ambitious a Virtue
  Adherent Opinion: +10
  Piety: +1.0/month
• Makes Content a Sin
  Adherent Opinion: -10
  Piety: -1.0/month

All Adherents:
Tyranny Gain: -50%
Title Creation Cost: -50%
Direct Vassal Opinion: -10

What is and is not righteous is transient, defined by those who currently hold power. This means that the pursuit of power is the only truly righteous cause.

Armed Pilgrimages
• It costs Rulers of this Faith -20% less Piety to declare Holy Wars
• If one exists, the Head of Faith can declare a Great Holy War when the Faith has high Fervor
• If no Head of Faith exists, adherents gain a bonus to the Convert Faith in County Councillor Task per controlled Holy Site
• Characters of this Faith gain an additional bonus upon the successful completion of a Pilgrimage

Our pilgrims travel across the world to visit our sacred holy sites — we will gladly take up the sword to keep them safe from any who would harm them

Struggle and Submission
• If one exists, the Head of Faith can declare a Great Holy War when the Faith has high Fervor
• If no Head of Faith exists, adherents gain a bonus to the Convert Faith in County Councillor Task per controlled Holy Site
• Piety and Devotion from winning Holy Wars is increased by 50%
• Characters of this Faith gain an additional bonus upon the successful completion of a Pilgrimage

Divine will is the source of all good, so a good existence is based on submission to that will, expressed through the struggle to enact it.

[A screenshot showing various warfare-focuses Doctrines and Tenets, including Armed Pilgrimages which enables Crusades]

Or is all of this just too secular for you? After all, isn't religion supposed to be about spiritualism, a belief in otherworldly entities beyond our understanding? Well then maybe one of these tenets would suit you...

Astrology

• Allows adherents to Divine the Stars and predict their future

All Adherents:
Naval Speed: +25.0%

The night sky is our window into the realm of the divine. The great secrets and mysteries of the world are written there, open for all to learn if they know where to look.

Auspicious Birthright

• Children can rarely be born with the Miracle Worker trait
• Makes Miracle Worker a Virtue
  Magyar Opinion: +50
  Piety: +5.0/month

Every one of us is born with a destiny, the most important of which is that of the Táltos — those who are chosen from birth to wield magical powers and become great spiritual leaders.

Sky Burials

• Rulers can give their ancestors a Sky Burial, gaining Piety pleasing their Vassals

All Tengrists:
Disease Resistance (Health): Small Boost

The dead should not be imprisoned underground — it is far better to allowed them to be consumed by scavenging birds, where in a final act of generosity they can feed the world which fed them.

Esotericism   UNDER DEVELOPMENT

• Children can be given an Esoteric Education
• Makes the following traits Virtues: Wise Man, Mystic, Miracle Worker
  With the following effects:
    Adherent Opinion: +10
    Piety: +1.0/month

The great mysteries of the divine may be beyond mortal comprehension, but that is not an excuse for ignorance. Their very existence compels us to seek knowledge and understanding of the world around us.

Sun Worship

• Hosting Feasts in the summer months earns Piety
• Imprisoned Criminals can be sentenced to a Sun Trial

All Zunists:
Attrition Taken in Desert: -25%
Attrition Taken in Desert Mountains: -25%

The light-bringer, the live-giver, the ever-burning flame — it reigns high in the sky as the true sovereign of the world.

Reincarnation

• County Conversion Resistance: +20%
• Children have a chance of being considered as the reincarnation of an ancestor, giving bonuses to Piety and Opinion

We have lived many lives before this one, and will continue to live many lives after it. Every death is only the beginning of something new.

[A screenshot showing various Tenets of a more spiritual nature: Astrology, Auspicious Birthright, Reincarnation, Sun Worship, Sky Burials, and Esotericism]

Of course, this is just a sample of the Tenets and Doctrines that we have in Crusader Kings 3. It would take too long to go into this level of detail for all of them, but here is a teaser of some available Tenets on the Faith Creation screen, showing both some previously revealed and unrevealed Tenets.

Adaptive	250		Legalism	750		

Ancestor Worship	250	Mendicant Preachers	750
Asceticism	750	Monasticism	750
Astrology	250	Natural Primitivism	1000
Carnal Exaltation	500	Pacifism	500
Christian Syncretism	500	Polyamory	500
Communal Identity	250	Pursuit of Power	500
Communion	750	Reincarnation	500
Consolamentum	500	Religious Law	750

[A snippet of a handful of available Tenets from the Faith Creation screen]

Dev Diary 25: Map Features and Map Modes

Terrain

Let's start with the terrain, which has a significant impact on several parts of the game. Different terrain types allow for different buildings to be constructed. For example, farmland allows for superior economy buildings, while mountainous terrain unlocks rather impressive defensive structures. They also have an effect on development, making development change faster or slower over time. Expect it to be a massive undertaking of developing the Sahara, while developing the fertile fields of India will be a much easier task.

As for combat, one of the most noticeable effects is that of combat width. When you are fielding a much larger army than your opponent, you will favour a high combat width, so you'll want to seek to engage the enemy in plains or drylands. On the other hand, fighting in rough terrain like mountains or wetlands will restrict the number of units that can simultaneously engage the enemy, allowing small armies with powerful Men-at-Arms to truly excel. Terrain also affects army movement speed, along with the usual defensive bonus you would expect in rough terrain types, which is gained in the form of increased Advantage at the start of a battle.

The terrain types we have available are the following:

Farmlands	Has access to many different and powerful buildings, allowing you to easily customize your holding the way you want to. Paired with high development speed, farmland provinces are highly desirable to hold in your domain.
Floodplains	Another desirable terrain type used in certain areas, such as along the Nile. Similar in power to farmlands, but with some minor differences.
Plains	One of the most common terrain types, plains exist almost everywhere and provide a wide range of building options.
Drylands	A variant of plains with slightly different buildings available.
Desert	While deserts don't offer a whole lot in terms of taxes, supply limit or development, it does have access to levies and a unique building chain increasing your number of available Knights.
Oasis	These exist only in certain areas. The terrain has access to similar buildings as desert, but without the penalties in supply limit or development.
Steppe	Mostly used by tribals on the wide steppe, this is where Horse Archers reign supreme. The steppe starts with low development and has a significant penalty in development growth.
Forest	Has lower combat width and supply limit, but offers great buildings for improving archers and skirmishers.
Taiga	A variant found in the very northern parts of the map, with slightly lower combat width and supply limit than forest.
Jungle	Mainly found in India and offers even less combat width and supply limit. It does, however, have access to a unique building chain for improving your Knights and heavy cavalry.
Hills	Hills offers a small Advantage bonus in combat, and has access to both fortifications and decent tax buildings.
Mountains	Has access to great fortifications and defensive buildings, making it a long and risky business to siege down holdings.
Desert Mountains	Similar to mountains, but for desert areas (obviously), with lower supply limit, development growth, as well as a bonus that allows defending armies to take less casualties when retreating.
Wetlands	While wetlands still allow for some decent buildings, it's a terrain type you don't want to fight battles in if you can avoid it. Especially if there's a risk of being on the losing side...

County of Korosten
County in Kingdom of Ruthenia

De Jure Hierarchy

County Holder:
Count Dmitriy

Control: 100
Development: 4
Popular Opi
Culture:
Faith:

-6

Lelchytsy
No Holding
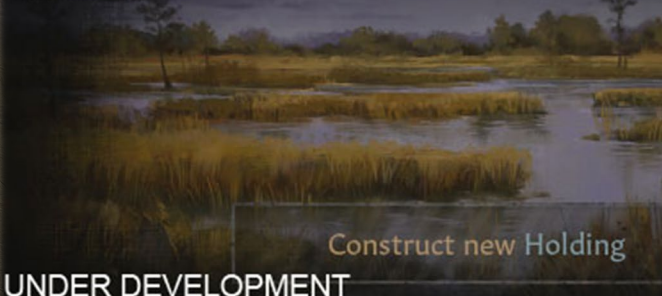
Wetlands

County Effects:
Supply Limit: -25%
Development Growth: -25%/month

Military Effects:
Movement Speed: 70%
Combat Width: 60%

Attacker Modifier:
🐎 Retreat Losses: +25%
🐄 Friendly Fatal Casualties: +20%

Defender Modifier:
🐎 Retreat Losses: +25%
🐄 Friendly Fatal Casualties: +20%

Construct new Holding

UNDER DEVELOPMENT

Earldom of Middle Seaxe
Your County

De Jure Hierarchy

County Holder:
You

Control: 100
Development: 13
Popular Opinion: 0
Culture: Anglo-Saxon
Faith: ✝ Catholicism

Gore
No Holding

Farmlands

County Effects:
Supply Limit: +50%
Development Growth: +20%/month

Military Effects:
Movement Speed: 100%
Combat Width: 100%

Construct new Holding

UNDER DEVELOPMENT

Context Sensitive Selection

We want it to be easy to gain information directly from the map. Whenever you change map modes, or have something "selected", we update the map accordingly and allow you to often interact with the map itself. Clicking on the map on any given realm, will open that ruler's character view. This in turn allows you to see rulers he is at war with, his allies, or direct vassals. All of this is shown directly on the map and is selectable, though you do not have to rely on finding it on the map; we still show relations and everything in the interface as well.

This applies to everything we show on the map. Regardless of your map mode, you can always click to select the "entity" you are looking at. If you have the faith map mode active, you can click on a faith to open the interface for it, as well as seeing where its holy sites are located.

Realm Map Mode

Your bread and butter map mode is what we simply call the Realm map mode.
When zoomed in you'll encounter what we call the detail level, and will see the map for what it is.
Terrain of individual baronies, rivers, and holding graphics are all clearly visible.

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Zoom out a bit and you'll transition into the Realms layer, your typical political map mode. Realms are clearly highlighted with their colour, allowing you to easily see all independent realms at a glance, while still showing the coat of arms of your direct vassals, to allow for easy realm management.

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Zoom out further and you'll enter the paper map. This is the place to go for a rather fancy overview of the world (or excellent screenshots)! Only independent realms are shown, without any vassal breakdowns. For now, I'll just tease you with a partial picture, as we'll show the entire thing in a later DD. And yes, we got the mandatory sea monsters!

Other Map Modes

Our other map modes remain consistent in the information they show as you zoom in and out, and do not have the level dependency of Realms. If you have the faith map mode open, you are gonna want to see faiths regardless of your zoom level. You'll still get the spectacular paper map when you zoom further out, but the information shown on the map will remain the same.

De Jure	As you'd expect, we have dedicated map modes for showing the De Jure areas of duchies, kingdoms, and empires.
Faiths	Allows you to easily see what faiths are spread out around the world.
Cultures	For that nifty culture overview.
Houses	Since it's a game about characters and dynasties, we want it to be easy to see which house is governing the different realms.
Counties	Highlights individual counties in their respective colour.
Terrain	Shows all terrain types in different colours, for that quick and easy overview of the dominant terrain in any given area. Very useful if you have several Men-at-Arms options available with different terrain bonuses.
Governments	The map mode for viewing what kind of government rulers have.
Development	Gives you an overview of what the development level is across the map.

House Jimena
House of the Jimena Dynasty
"Above All"

Founded in 791 AD by Ximeno

Dynasty Head and House Head

King García Fernandez of Galicia
Also Dynasty Head of the Jimena Dynasty

House Head Heir: King Sancho of Castille

+18

Part of the Jimena Dynasty

✝ Reputable

Next Level of Splendor: ✝ Well-known

Open Dynasty Tree

40 Members (20 Living) ▶
2 Houses ▶

Dynasty Legacies

🌳 906 Renown

Open Legacies

UNDER DEVELOPMENT
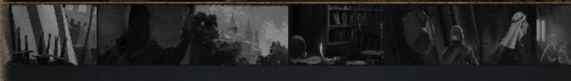
Dev Diary 26: Map Scope

Europe

Europe has been reworked from the ground up. We made sure to give all of Europe proper attention when painting baronies and counties. It was important for us to make sure we have a good and consistent quality level across the map. I'm sure you'll find eastern Europe in particular fleshed out with a lot more detail than what you may be used to in CK2.

Servancour
Game Designer
4 Badges

UNDER DEVELOPMENT

UNDER DEVELOPMENT

Special Buildings

Since we've already shown bits and pieces of Europe in screenshots and videos, let's have a look at a few specific locations, and what special buildings they have available. Starting with France, it felt like an obvious choice to include Notre-Dame, one of the most recognizable cathedrals of the time period.

Construct New Special Building

Notre-Dame
Preview

💰 1000   ⏳ 5 years   Construct

Also known as 'Our Lady of Paris,' this magnificent cathedral is dedicated to the Virgin Mary. Constructed in the Gothic style, it impresses with numerous statues and enormous colorful rose windows.

On the outside, the cathedral is covered with sculptures vividly retelling biblical stories, allowing even illiterate peasants to understand the glory of God!

Level I: Notre-Dame

This Holding:
Tax: 💰 +2.0/month

This County:
Holding Taxes: +20%
Development Growth: +30%/month
Development Growth: +0.2/month
Popular Opinion: +5

Your Realm:
Stewardship Per Level of Devotion: +1
Piety: +1.0/month
Monthly Renown: +5%

UNDER DEVELOPMENT

UNDER DEVELOPMENT

UNDER DEVELOPMENT

Next up, Iberia. Featuring two major rivers, plenty of hills and a few special buildings. In the county of Granada you'll find Alhambra. While merely an old ruin at game start, it can be upgraded to offer some of the highest fortifications in the game.

UNDER DEVELOPMENT
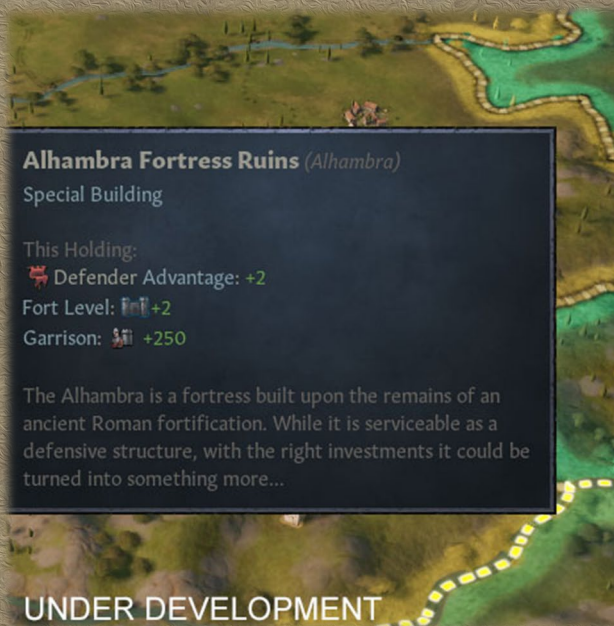
Alhambra Fortress Ruins *(Alhambra)*

Special Building

This Holding:
🐂 Defender Advantage: +2
Fort Level: 🏰 +2
Garrison: 🛡 +250

The Alhambra is a fortress built upon the remains of an ancient Roman fortification. While it is serviceable as a defensive structure, with the right investments it could be turned into something more...

Royal Palace of Alhambra *(Alhambra)*

Special Building

This Holding:
🐂 Defender Advantage: +8
Fort Level: 🏰 +8
Garrison: 🛡 +1000

This County:
Development Growth: +25%/month
Development Growth: +0.2/month
Control Growth: +1.0/month

Your Realm:
Monthly Prestige: 👑 +10%

The Alhambra has since its days as a mere roman ruin been upgraded to a royal palace befitting an emperor! A shining example of local architecture, the color of the buildings in contrast with the surrounding woods lead poets to describe it as "a pearl set in emeralds."

Speaking of special buildings. The city of the world's desire, features not one, but two, special buildings. This makes Constantinople a very spectacular holding, and if that isn't enough, it also has the highest development level in the game.

Theodosian Walls *(The Theodosian Walls)*

Duchy Building

This Holding:
Fort Level: +5
Garrison Size: +100%
Garrison: +1000

This County:
Hostile Raid Time: +50%
Levy Size: +300%
Holding Taxes: +300%
Development Growth: +20%/month
Development Growth: +0.3/month

All your Holdings in the Duchy:
Levy Size: +15%
Holding Taxes: +15%

The Theodosian Walls were built during the reign of Emperor Theodosius II in the early 5th century, but they still remain some of the most formidable fortifications built by human hands.

UNDER DEVELOPMENT

Hagia Sophia Cathedral *(Hagia Sophia)*
Special Building

This County:
Development Growth: +20%/month

Your Realm:
Learning: 📖 +2
Intrigue Per Level of Fame: +2
Piety Per Knight: +0.1
Monthly Renown: ♱ +5%
Number of 🪖 Knights: +2
Knight Effectiveness: +20%

The Hagia Sophia is a true marvel of engineering, with a massive dome standing out as the most impressive feature. Completed in AD 537 by emperor Justinian I, it now houses the Ecumenical Patriarch and stands as a monument to Christianity.

And so it will remain for all eternity, for surely nothing could ever topple the might of Rome.

UNDER DEVELOPMENT

UNDER DEVELOPMENT

Before moving on, I'll just leave this culture screenshot right here:

The Middle East

The Middle East has seen the same level of attention and rework as Europe, with some particular attention spent on updating history across the region. For example, the Seljuks control a vast empire in 1066, properly representing their historical borders. They have a plethora of different cultures as their subjects and may fall apart if not careful.

Development in the region is above your average starting levels. Baghdad, for example, starts out with one of the highest levels of development in the game — bested only by a few other locations such as Constantinople! Baghdad also has one of the single most impressive special buildings available, the House of Wisdom.

House of Wisdom *(House of Wisdom)*
Special Building

This County:
Holding Taxes: +20%
Development Growth: +20%/month
Development Growth: +0.2/month

Your Realm:
Learning Per Level of Fame: +2
Monthly Lifestyle Experience: +15%
Different Culture Opinion: +10
Cultural Fascination Progress: +15%
Faith Creation and Reformation Cost: -20%

The House of Wisdom contains a vast collection of books, and
the scribes therein work tirelessly both day and night to
translate even more great works of literature. The sources
vary from Greek, Persian, Indian and many more — truly, it
contains the entire world's knowledge! A shining beacon of
human knowledge! And comfortably far from the illiterate
horsemen of the steppe...

UNDER DEVELOPMENT

UNDER DEVELOPMENT

UNDER DEVELOPMENT

UNDER DEVELOPMENT

Africa

Africa has seen some of the greatest additions to the map. No longer cut in half, the Sub-Saharan kingdoms have plenty of space to expand in as we have included the entire Nigerian coast.

We have a total of five different pagan faiths to play as, giving you plenty of different options. A solid first pick would be Benin, within the Niger delta. They start off with a decent development level and access to a special building: The massive construction that is the Walls of Benin.

Construct New Special Building

✕

Walls of Benin

Preview

💰 1000   ⏳ 5 years

Construct

The Walls of Benin are a massive series of earthworks (Iya in the Edo language), that encircle the entirety of Benin. The walls are built of a ditch and dike structure, with an inner moat and an exterior rampart.

Level I: Walls of Benin

This Holding:
Fort Level: +2
Garrison Size: +50%

This County:
Defender Advantage: +5
Hostile Raid Time: +50%
Levy Size: +50%
Holding Taxes: +20%
Development Growth: +75%/month
Development Growth: +0.2/month

Some cultures will start with the ability to sail major rivers, allowing them to use the Niger to quickly ferry troops back and forth. The coast on the other hand, will be open for everyone to use. You won't be able to sail around the African coast to reach Europe however, or vice versa. That route is blocked by impassable sea, since it was often difficult, if not impossible, to sail along the western coast due to storms and rough seas. No viking raids in Africa, I'm afraid!

UNDER DEVELOPMENT

UNDER DEVELOPMENT

Let's not forget the Horn of Africa. Expanded to include Mogadishu, the area offers more space to play in, with christian, muslim, jewish, and pagan rulers all wanting a piece of each other.

UNDER DEVELOPMENT

Finally, let's mention Egypt. A rich area that has a lot of floodplains, good development levels, and even a couple of special buildings. All encompassed by the Nile, a major river with green and lush vegetation.

UNDER DEVELOPMENT

The Pyramids *(The Pyramids)*
Special Building

This County:
Development Growth: +0.1/month

Your Realm:
Monthly Renown: ⚶ +5%
Short Reign Duration: -20%

The pyramids, most prominently the one of Cheops, stand as wonders of the ancient world. Vast and impressive, they enhance the image of any ruler who controls them.

UNDER DEVELOPMENT

The Far East

Looking east, the map has been expanded to include the entirety of Tibet, along with a small extension of Mongolia, accompanied by a whole set of new cultures and faiths!

Starting with Tibet, the area has a whole bunch of independent realms since the Tibetan Empire is long gone by the time of our two start dates. There's a wide range of rulers of different faiths and cultures spread out across the plateau. The two most prominent faiths being Bön and Nangchos, a Buddhist faith syncretized with different Tibetan beliefs and practices.

UNDER DEVELOPMENT

UNDER DEVELOPMENT

UNDER DEVELOPMENT

Turning to Mongolia, there is a powerhouse present in both bookmarks. In 867, you have the Kirghiz Khanate, and Great Liao in 1066. Counties and provinces include Karakorum and the entire area surrounding lake Baikal.

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UNDER DEVELOPMENT

Expanding Tibet and Mongolia left us with a small empty space in the south, and we really couldn't have that, now could we? So, we went ahead and filled out Myanmar (or Burma) down to the Gulf of Martaban with brand new baronies and counties. Which gives you two rather interesting starting options. In 1066, you'll be able to play as king Anawrahta of the Pagan Kingdom. Starting shortly after his conquest of the Mon kingdoms to the south, most of the area will already be under his control, giving you a great opportunity to push into India! Alternatively, you can start as Pagan in 867, yet a small and upstarting kingdom, allowing you to play with the unique faith of Ari Buddhism.

UNDER DEVELOPMENT

Shwedagon Pagoda *(Shwedagon Pagoda)*

Special Building

This Holding:
Tax: 🐚 +2.0/month

This County:
Holding Taxes: +20%
Development Growth: +20%/month
Development Growth: +0.2/month

Your Realm:
Piety: 🧍 +0.5/month
Monthly Renown: ⚜ +5%
Tyranny Gain: -10%
Clergy Opinion: +5

The Shwedagon Pagoda is a sacred Buddhist stupa built by the Mon people around the year 500. It houses many famous relics, such as the staff of Kakusandha, the water filter of Koṇāgamana, a piece of the robe of Kassapa, and eight strands of hair from the head of Gautama.

UNDER DEVELOPMENT

Dev Diary 27: Cultures & Cultural Innovations

Cultures & Culture Groups

Wokeg
Juniorest Content Designer
ˇ

The basic structure of the cultural system will be fairly recognisable to many of you. Every county and character on the map has a culture, representing (usually) the majority demographic for that county or the preferred customs of that character. Most cultures are based around a language, but some focus more on dialect or specific bodies of tradition, and a few are even primarily just regional.

Every culture, in turn, belongs to a culture group. These are gatherings of several cultures that, whilst distinct from one another, are nevertheless closely related. Most often this is down to a shared root culture, but in a few cases cultures have entered the same group merely by cohabiting for a long period of time.

Characters who come from completely different cultures like each other less, with characters who come from different cultures within the same group taking a reduced penalty. Like CK2, this only matters within your realm, so you won't get grumpy at your neighbour for being different unless you're occasionally required to talk to the lad.

Cultural preferences carry over to the peasantry: if the lord who directly holds a particular county doesn't share that county's culture, then that county will take a hit to popular opinion (with the hit being smaller if they're at least part of the same culture group).

Of course, as this is only the direct holder of a county, having a good friend who understands the local customs in charge of all these strange foreign peasants can be an excellent way to stave off peasant revolts...

But what about...

... Melting pots and culture splits? Still got 'em! We've even got some fancy new scripted effects to make it easier than ever to add your own.

Culture conversion is also more easily accessible: per the council task dev diary, this is now a council task, performed by your steward. You can attempt to culture convert any county in your sub-realm, though without an excellent steward or certain types of faith, it'll likely take a while. People seldom change their culture quickly or willingly.

Show us the good stuff!

Ahhhhhh, you want to see some maps? See how granular we're getting with our cultural setup this time around? Well, maps I've got! How many new cultures can you pick out?

GAELIC

PICTISH

CUMBRIAN

IRISH

NORSE

ANGLO-SAXON

WELSH

CORNISH

UNDER DEVELOPMENT

GALICIAN

ASTURLEONESE

CASTILIAN

BASQUE

ARAGONESE

CATALAN

ANDALUSIAN

UNDER DEVELOPMENT

DUTCH

SAXON

FRANCONIAN

POLABIAN

POMERANIAN

PO

CZECH

S

SWABIAN

BAVARIAN

PULAAR

WOLOF

SONINKE

QAWRO

SORKO

MARKA

MOSSI

BOZO

SAGHAWA

GUR

HAUSA

MALINKE

BOBO

NUPE

MEL

GUAN

YORUBA

KRU

AKAN

EWE

IGBO

EDO

Cultural & Technology

In CK3, cultures mean a lot more than just a few points of opinion here and there. Cultures are now an integral part of our reworked system for technology, with eras, explicit innovations, and mechanics for tussling over the cultural heart of your people.

Innovations

Innovations are the very heart of CK3's technological system. Each one represents a thorough proliferation of an idea, a legal practice, or a specific technology, taken to heart by any given culture, or still weird and foreign no matter its advantages. As the game progresses, cultures will slowly become more and more accustomed to the various innovations, until each innovation is thoroughly embraced and ubiquitous amongst the people of that culture. At that point, an innovation is considered "unlocked", and its unique benefits are accessible to characters and counties of the unlocking culture.

Benefits for each innovation vary tremendously between them. Some unlock new and better forms of succession law, some give bonuses to growth or income, some allow access to specific Men-at-Arms, or even grant entirely new CBs. We have innovations for everything from battlements to bombards, from coinage to cranes, and wootz steel to wierdijks!

Innovations broadly fall into one of three categories: military, civic, and special (a.k.a, "Cultural and Regional"), each grouped together in the interface.

Military and civic innovations typically cover what you might expect (martial and non-martial matters, respectively). All cultures can, eventually, acquire all military and civic innovations.

Special innovations behave a bit differently. A few are unlocked via special decisions and can only be acquired by taking those decisions, whilst some are cultural, requiring you to belong to a specific culture or culture group, but most are regional innovations.

Caballeros

Reconquista

Stammesherzogtum

Ghilman

Regional innovations require you to either have at least a certain number of counties within a specific area to unlock, or else to have a certain percentage of your culture's total counties within that area. They represent concepts and technologies that were specific to certain areas historically, rather than spreading across large areas of the globe, but which could very easily have been developed by any culture moving into that area.

Needless to say, innovations, the bonuses they provide, and the mechanics they unlock are all fully scriptable and can be modded with ease.

But how do I *unlock* an innovation?

All innovations have a small chance to progress towards being unlocked per month, affected by a few factors, with the most telling one being average development of the sum counties a culture holds. A culture that spreads recklessly will have naturally slower growth than one that exists in concentrated pockets of high development.

The major ways generation progress towards unlocking innovations are setting fascinations and exposure. Each of these affect only a single innovation at a time, though both happen simultaneously.

Exposure is a natural process, occurring when your culture has counties that border another culture with a specific innovation. The more you have in common (culture group, religion, and so on) with that other culture, and the more of its counties your culture borders, the faster you'll unlock that innovation.

Onager

Military Innovation
Era: Tribal

Current Cultural Fascination

The Cultural Head is fascinated by this Innovation, boosting its progress. The Cultural Head can at any time choose to be fascinated by another innovation.

Effects

• Can recruit Onagers as Men-at-Arms

Expected to be discovered in about **40 years**

0%

Progress: 0/100

There is a **57%** chance to gain **0.36** progress each month:

    Base Progress: 0.3
    Average Development of Finnish Counties: +0.06

    Base Chance: 5%
    Fascination: +52%

While slow to load and fire, torsion-powered catapults like these allow us to assail enemy fortifications while staying out of their archers' range.

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Fascination, by contrast, is an entirely character-driven process, reflecting the drive of powerful leaders to introduce new concepts and technologies (be they original or imported) to their people. Where exposure is selected randomly from suitable innovations, fascination is deliberately selected by a specific character.

Who gets to pick? Why, the cultural head.

Cultural Head: Maharaja Durlabharaja II of Rajputana

Fascination: Royal Prerogative
1

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Any culture with at least one landed ruler somewhere has a cultural head, who then has complete control over which fascination is selected from available innovations. The cultural head always shares the culture they are the head of and is the character with the most counties of that culture within their sub-realm in the world.

As you can imagine, the size of the culture makes a difference in how easy it is to become (and stay) cultural head: there are many more Andalusian counties than there are, say, Cornish ones.

An important factor in unlocking innovations via fascination is the learning skill of the cultural head. An unlearned cultural head doesn't do much to bring new ideas and technologies to their people, but an erudite scholar knows who to invite to court, how to phrase ideas in a way the peasants will accept, and how to get the nobility to see the benefit of embracing a foreign concept!

Eras

You might be thinking that this sounds a little bit disorganised. What stops me, say, unlocking bombards in the 900s and blowing my enemies away with oversized canons for the next five hundred years?

The answer to that is eras.

In CK3, all innovations are organised into one of four eras, before being categorised into military, civic, or special. In order to begin unlocking innovations from an era, you need to have actually reached that era.

If an innovation belongs to the Tribal Era, no problem. All cultures start with the tribal era reached, and many primarily-feudal cultures will start with most (if not all) of its innovations unlocked, especially in 1066.

For the eras beyond that (the Early Medieval, High Medieval, and Late Medieval), you need to meet two criteria. The date must be at least an appropriate minimum year (e.g., the high medieval period cannot start before 1050 AD), and you must have at least 50% of the preceding era's innovations unlocked. Further, if your cultural head is tribal, you will be unable to progress to the next era until you obtain a non-tribal cultural head. Cultures that have just left the Tribal Era will unlock innovations faster for a time, allowing them to catch up a little as medieval social and legal structures begin sweeping their lands.

Eras therefore let us gate technologies and features in stages, so that cultures which thrived in later centuries can still use their special bonuses, units, and features, but don't get them too anachronistically.

Dev Diary 28: Art Focus

Art Focus

Hey! Let's talk about the art of Crusader Kings III!

My name is Pontus, Art Director on CK3. I've written this dev diary together with the art team, and if you promise to tell everyone this is the best dev diary so far, there will be some sweet wallpapers at the end of it. Cool?

Certainly, you've seen a lot of the art already, in various states of completion, with all our diaries and previews. Let's start by talking about the way we've approached creating the graphics for the game!

The starting point for the art direction is, as it should be, the game design. If you recall Dev Diary #0, Henrik Fåhreus' vision of the game has a big focus on characters and storytelling, as well as approachability and player freedom. Reinforcing that through the art has been the main goal.

To keep ourselves on-track, three key pillars guide the art department on CK3:

A ROLE-PLAYING EXPERIENCE - This pillar is represented by our goal to give life to the characters and their unfolding stories. An example of this would be the characters' portraits, we did not want them small and static, they are now front and center, and show off their standing or lack thereof through clothing, as well as show how they feel about what is happening to them through body language.

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A MEDIEVAL GAME - We made a great effort to keep a good level of historical accuracy in our designs. Our illustrations and icons are made to reflect the time period, just like the 3D art that populate the map. Of course, sometimes we had to try and find good compromises in the designs that would work for the entire timespan of the game.

Where possible, we based clothes on reconstructed sewing patterns from extant medieval clothing. For example, we recreated the "coronation tunic" of Roger II of Sicily, a well preserved garment from the 1130s (though it was actually made some time after the coronation).

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Another example would be a loading screen with some really well-painted sunflowers, but these did not exist in Europe until the 16th century, which was spotted in time thanks to our Beta testers: so, we sent it back to get the flowers repainted...

A ROUGH WORLD - Crusader Kings is not a game for all-ages, you live dangerously, and people do terrible, terrible things to each other. This is reflected in the more somber palette and overall mood of the game.

Now, let's talk about the different types of art you'll have fun with in CK3:

CHARACTERS

I'm very excited about our new character portraits, and what we can do with them visually. They are varied and have lots of, well, character. Every day there's a screenshot shared in the dev chat featuring someone they've encountered in-game, and we usually agree, yes, that person wears that hat better than most, or indeed, he looks just like the poster boy for the Deviant trait.

For me, the real test for the characters is if they make you feel, and It IS satisfying to throw especially smug-looking Rivals into your Dungeon, and you might feel a bit sorry for some harmless looking characters before you plot to have someone deliver poisonous snakes upon them.

I really want to stress the fantastic work our Lead Character Artist Nils Wadensten and the character team have done in bringing this new generation of portraits to our games, alongside our Engine team.

In fact, he'll go into the character portraits a bit more in a future diary, hopefully he won't show the first iterations of the wounds and diseases, some were a bit too much for a lot of people..

For now, I'll leave you with a sneak peek of Concept art and the final piece of Clothing as how it appears in the game.

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ANIMATION

Making the characters move was quite a challenge since the movements need to be very discreet, and not call too much attention to themselves as that could become a distraction from the gameplay.

The posing and idle animations are there to help the immersion and storytelling. Keeping the Rough World pillar in mind, they should not be silly and slapstick - while CK has some wonderful dark humor, we play it straight. I do think the look on a character's face when he realises they are locked up together with a Cannibal is appropriately shocked though.

Generally the characters have a pose that reflects their personality or the situation they're in.

Videos
DD28 Council   DD28 Event

EVENTS

Here is where the role-playing really kicks in. When an event pops up, we showcase the characters involved and how they feel about the current proceedings, set against a backdrop that really helps sell the setting. This means if you encounter the same event in another play-through, the visuals might be quite different due to the characters involved.

The backdrops have a detailed but hand-painted style that complements our stylized characters' well. In fact, we have some for you as wallpapers without text, icons and characters obscuring them, enjoy.

When we create a new event background, we also do a hand-crafted lighting setup, which relights the portraits to fit the current scene:

Catholic Pilgrimage

It is time for me to set out on my journey to one of the holy places. But which one?

The site at Jerusalem.

The churches in Vaticano.

To Cologne!

Perhaps somewhere else...

UNDER DEVELOPMENT

Isma'ili Pilgrimage

It is time for me to set out on my journey to one of the holy places. But which one?

The site at Damascus.

The mosques in Al-Madina.

To Jerusalem!

Perhaps somewhere else...

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The Hajj - Loss of Companions

For every week that passes, my fellowship grows ever smaller. Some have gone as far as they can before the need to return home overtakes them, others have met with less fortunate ends.

Most worrying is the fact that my group of personal guards is thinning out at an alarming rate. That fact alone shows what a treacherous journey this can be.

Some of the locals seem like they would make fierce guards.

All I need is the protection of Allah.

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ILLUSTRATIONS

Besides the events, there's plenty of illustrations in CK3!

For the loading screens, we wanted someone who can do images full of mood and storytelling, in a rough, painterly style. We went straight for the top and asked Craig Mullins. Fortunately, he was up for it, and has provided some really exciting imagery.

They all are of course showcasing aspects of the Crusader Kings experience- from Templars in battle to babies in peril!

Besides the loading screens and event backgrounds, we have cool paintings for Decision categories, terrain types, holdings, army movements, legacies... heck, our Personality trait icons and Tenets are small illustrations - there is a lot to discover and keep you entertained and immersed!

The Holding Illustrations make for great wallpapers as well, so we included that in our art drop!

UNITS

Our units are really cool! We were very enthusiastic about these, and really added quite a bit of detail. Let us know if you spot the nails that stick the shield handle into the shield at the back.

The units' appearance is based on culture - We have Western European, Byzantine, Middle-east / North Africa, Pagans, Indian and Turko-Mongol.

A unit has three visual tiers, becoming more armor-clad and sophisticated as it progresses. So, it was important for us to make sure a Tier 2 Byzantine looks equally as tough as a Tier 2 Turko-Mongol for instance.

They have a lot of spark to them as we added a lot of different animations, they cheer when they win, bang their shields during sieges and we make use of red liquid particles when they land some nice hits.

Culture, Tiers and Coat-of-arms colors and emblems make the Units look appropriate and unique. Here's some examples:

UNDER DEVELOPMENT

Videos
DD28 Combat Vid 1   DD28 Combat Vid 2

HOLDINGS

The Holdings were quite a challenge, they needed to be a certain size based on maximum zoom level and minimum Barony size. Since they are small they need to have strong, readable shapes without looking like toys.

Their appearances are influenced by the region they are found in, in this case Western European, Mediterranean, India and Middle-east.

Similar to Units, they have visual tiers, tied to the Holding's Upgrade level. Temples and Cities have two tiers, whereas Castles and Walls have four tiers.

Of course, we have primitive huts as well, and a big bunch of unique buildings, some easier to recreate (Pyramids) than others (Charlemagne's Palace).

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UNDER DEVELOPMENT

UNDER DEVELOPMENT

UNDER DEVELOPMENT

MAP

There's a rumor going around that some of you CK2 players rarely look at the terrain map. We didn't want that for CK3, so we made our map to not only be moody and pretty to look at, but also more useful, so you'd have more reasons to go there.

CK is information heavy, so we try to make sure that everything in the terrain map serves a function, and is easy to see. Thus, a cleaner look, to make sure the icons, borders, text and 3D models that sit on top of the land read well. At a glance, you should be able to see what terrain type a Barony has without consulting another map mode.
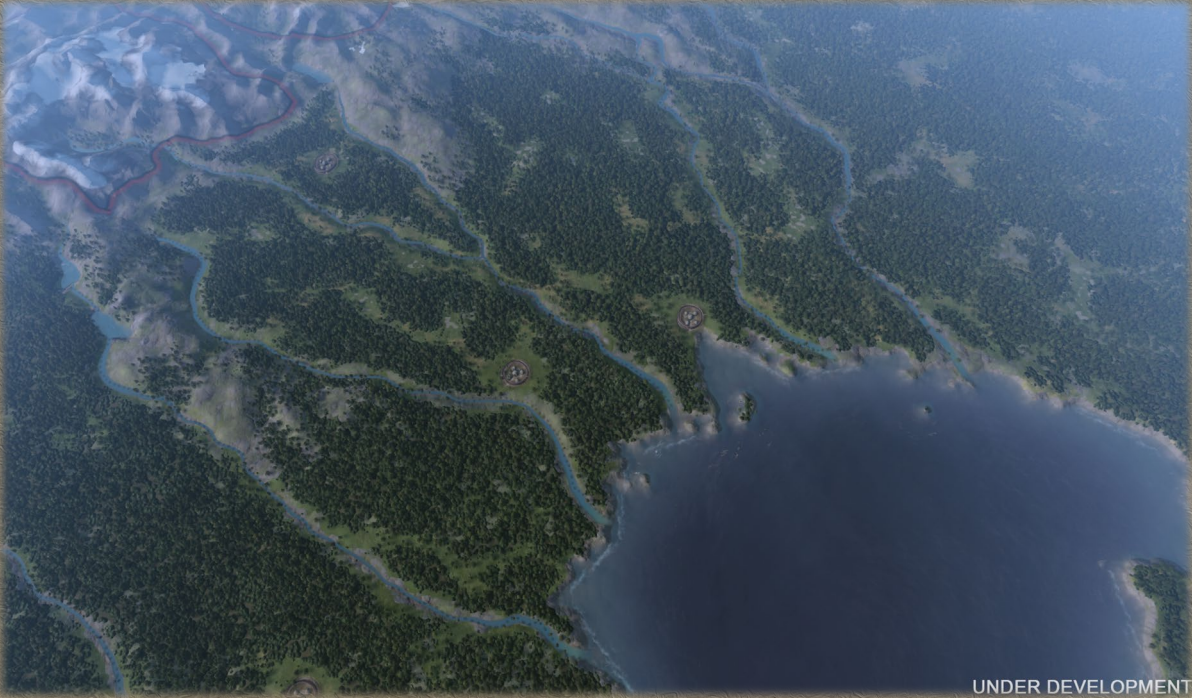
UNDER DEVELOPMENT

UNDER DEVELOPMENT

If you are into Political Map modes though, don't worry, we've got you covered. You'll notice it feels familiar.

It seems our Paper map has been received well, we're glad you like lobsters too! Getting the right amount of sea-monsters without making it look cluttered wasn't easy, but I think we managed in the end.

A PDS game has a lot of UI. It is something made in close collaboration with UX and Game Design departments. It is constantly iterated upon and is one of the most challenging aspects of our games. Visually we took inspiration from game design's character focus pillar and pulled in visual influences from Roleplaying games. To make it approachable we tried to keep it clean, and give everything some breathing room.

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Horse Archers

Unraised

5/100   Size 1/5

⌃⌃ Increase Size to 2   +100   ✕

Reinforcing
Full strength in **10 months**
Paying Full maintenance

Full Maintenance: 0.9/month
Unraised Maintenance: 0.3/month

⚔ 45   🛡 20   ≫ 40   🛡 30

Type: Skirmishers

Horse Archers Counters these Types:
Skirmishers, Heavy Infantry

Terrain Effects:

Horse archers are used by nomadic tribes to unleash
hails of arrows while being almost impossible to catch.

Military

Raise All Armies | Raise All as Raiders | Disband All

Your Armies | Mercenaries | Holy Orders

Total Soldiers 🪖 3207 ◆

Levies
🪖 3180/3490   0.0

Baghaturs
🪖 7/8   Click to Manage...

Men-at-Arms: 4/5

➕   Create Men-at-Arms Regiment

Size 1/5	Size 1/5	Size 1/5
🪖 5/100 0.4	🪖 5/100 0.6	🪖 5/100 0.9

Size 1/5
🪖 5/10   0.2

Rally Points: ➕

☑ Monthly Reinforcement

Monthly Maintenance: -2.2
Max: -10.4 (7 months) -2.2

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Top bar: 45 +4.5   1940 -0.6   200 -0.1   913 +2.4   3207 ◆

Greetings High Chieftain Tolun of Chuvashia,

I, Anava, gladly accept your hand in marriage!

May Lempo bless our union, my modest husband!

Signed,
High Chieftess Anava of Chuvashia

-16

Excellent!

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We use a lot of illustrations in our UI's to help immersion and flavor, and we have a cool system where some of the image types are context sensitive, so for instance your Sultan will not stand in front of a western European throne room if he is hanging out in the Middle-east, and if you are dealing with Catholicism in Religion View, well you'll see churches and similar imagery.

Coats of Arms

Heraldry is essential to the medieval immersion of Crusader Kings, and so heralds will be excited to hear that we have totally overhauled the Coat of Arms system.

We started from scratch, poring over history books and contemporary armorials to ensure every detail is authentic. We designed accurate CoA for over a thousand titles and dynasties to complement a new scriptable random system that weights hundreds of unique elements based on culture, religion, and everything in between. We modeled minute differences across regions, so frequencies of designs and tinctures are different in Germany, France, and Spain. The amount of possible combinations? Millions.

We achieved our primary goal of making our feudal European heraldry as accurate as possible, but we didn't stop there—we wanted to go into extra depth for all regions. For example, the eastern hordes decorate the Great Steppe with their special tamgha emblems, while the Islamic world is fleshed out with immersive Saracenic heraldry (no more endless stars and crescents). Emergent cadet houses differentiate their new arms by quartering, and yes, England's coat of arms will change if William wins the Norman Invasion.

Here's some examples of the heraldry system in action - firstly how England's arms can react to gameplay, and secondly a selection of randomly-generated COA from around the world.

In summary:

The art team has worked very hard and it is a delight every day to see whatever new stuff is coming in. Making games is a group effort though, so we get invaluable help and feedback from the rest of the team: code, design, QA, sound, production all contribute as well.

Of course, seeing pictures in a dev diary is one thing, we can't wait for you to get your hands on the full experience! As always, your feedback will help guide us as we continue to make content and improvements for CK3!

And for being good sports and reaching the end of the dev diary, here's links to some sweet wallpapers!

CK3 Wallpapers Download

[CK3 Wallapers](#)   [CK3 Map Wallpapers](#)

Dev Diary 29: Even the Smallest Decision...

Come one, come all, and hear the tale of Kalevi of Karelia. We'll follow him on the perilous road from High Chieftain of a few counties to King and defender of Ukko as a Holy Warrior! We will pay close attention to what choices he makes to further his agenda, for what is life but the decisions you make along the way?

Surprise surprise, in this dev diary we will take a closer look at Decisions: what they are and how they work. The easy way to describe a Decision is that they are an action a ruler can take, but they end up being so much more than that over the course of a game!

We've focused on adding a wide spread of Decisions in the game so that you will have unique experiences playing different characters all over the map.

[Two examples of what the decision view might look like for different characters]

There are two types of Decisions: Major Decisions and… well, Decisions. Major Decisions are displayed in a prominent position at the top of the interface and can be viewed as something to work towards, if you want; we have designed them to give the player a rewarding goal – a kind of mission. Major Decisions are often life-changing, and their effects will be felt throughout the world; you can make decisions that affect your whole dynasty, or a whole religion. Examples of Major Decisions are "Found a New Kingdom", "Consecrate Bloodline" and, of course, "Mend the Great Schism".

Regular Decisions, on the other hand, can function as a means to reach those lofty goals and are often more accessible and more immediately relevant to your everyday life as a ruler. Decisions cover a wide range of actions you can take, everything from "Host Feast" to "Flagellate". This gives you a lot of control over what actions your character takes and how you shape your realm.

So, back to Kalevi of Karelia. Our story begins just as the young High Chieftain Kalevi, only 16 years of age, has stepped into the role of a ruler after his father's passing. Orthodoxy is spreading upward from the south, Catholicism is a growing concern in the west, and Kalevi wants nothing more than to protect the old ways and the Suomenusko faith he was brought up with. It might seem like a big task for any lone man, but he has a plan! He intends to raise a Hall of Heroes and lay the foundations for Holy Warriors to defend the faith.

The road ahead might seem long and taxing, but such is the way of life when your goal is as lofty as this.

He does currently stand alone at the rudder, however, and he wishes for a companion – a spouse. As luck would have it he stumbles across a skillful and beautiful peasant woman when he is out hunting!

Call Hunt

The untamed wilds are calling, and all manner of beasts are awaiting my spear and arrow!

Effects

- You go on a **Hunt** in one of the baronies of your realm
- You lose 🗲 33 Stress
- You may get opportunities to increase your Prestige

⚠ *Call Hunt will be unavailable for 5 years*

Cost: 🪙 33

Sound the horn!

Notify when this Decision becomes available ☐

Major Decisions

Found Holy Order	✕
Defenders of Ukko	✕
Adopt Feudal Ways	✕
Consecrate Bloodline	✕
Found a New Kingdom	✕

Decisions

- Invite Champions
- Invite Claimants
- Go on a Pilgrimage
- Host Feast
- Call Hunt
- Search For Physician

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Hunt: Far From People

Away from the others I came across a cottage housing one of the most beautiful people I have ever laid my eyes on. She invited me to stay and rest, and I was surprised by how much I had in common with a simple peasant.

"Do you have to return to the hunt already, my lord? I have never met one such as you before..."

Why, if I remain here any longer I would have to stay the night...

I am here to hunt, nothing more.

Please, Tuija, let me set you up at court.

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Together they start a new family, and the first Decision among many has been made.

One of the requirements to fortify a Holy Site, by taking the Major Decision "Defenders of Ukko", is to have a Holy Site to fortify. After a quick glance at the Suomenusko Holy Sites, Kalevi's gaze settles on Raivola in Kakisalmi, currently under the control of his neighbor Chieftain Susi. Susi believes in the right Gods, but Kalevi doubts he would allow other people access to the Holy Site... War it is, then.
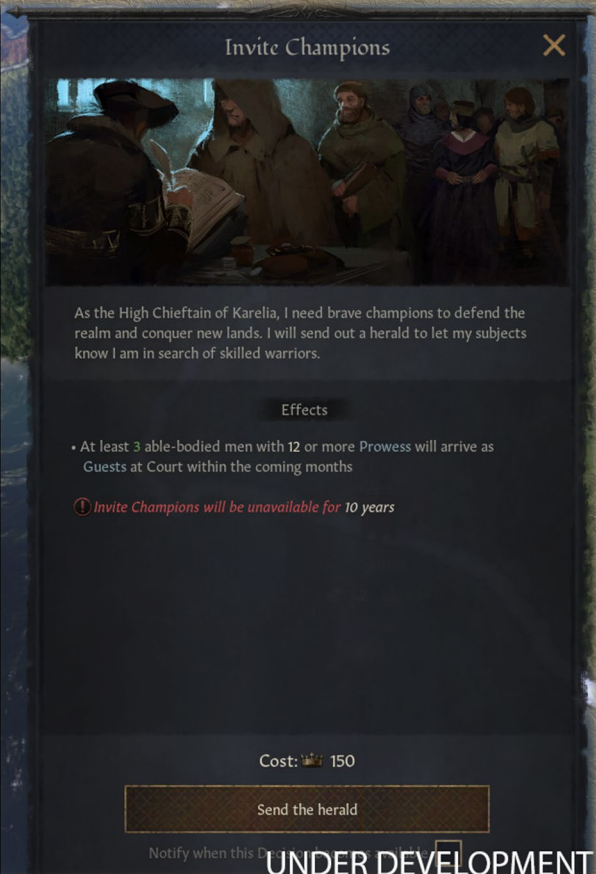
To tip the scales in his favor, Kalevi decides to send out heralds to let it be known that he is searching for Champions to join him. Soon he has bolstered his forces enough to take on his neighbor.

After the war Kalevi is perplexed… He has a Holy Site under his control, and he has the will; why won't the people help him build the Hall of Heroes? Why won't they help him defend the true faith? Then it hits him: he doesn't have enough strong people backing him, and he is not known to be pious enough to inspire the respect needed. This realization sets Kalevi down a path of many years of character-building, in the form of pious endeavors, and realm-building, in the form of conquest and vassalization, until he has founded his own Kingdom.

As his realm stabilizes he realizes what must follow; he needs to go on a pilgrimage to truly understand the Suomenusko faith.

However, during his pilgrimage Kalevi is grievously wounded! Word is sent out that the court is looking for a physician, and soon enough his wounds have been tended, but the scars will forever mar him.

Gaining traits, like Wounded, might spur you to make a Decision you otherwise wouldn't, and Decisions can also become available through traits, events, and a myriad of other changing conditions in the game. If you find a Decision particularly interesting you can mark it as important and you will then get an alert when the conditions are met and you can take the Decision!

For Kalevi a lot of time has passed. Finally, at the tender age of 60 and a life full of decisions small and great behind him, King Kalevi of Karelia finds the support needed to fortify a Holy Site and bolster the defense of Suomenusko.

Who knows what will follow for Kalevi; maybe he'll Found a New Empire to stabilize the region further, or perhaps he'll Adopt Feudal Ways in a bid to – at long last – attempt to develop the region in a new direction. But one thing is for certain: the threat of Christianity has done nothing but grow during all these years…

Dev Diary 30: Event Scripting

Anatomy of an Event

The core of a standard character event is almost certainly quite familiar to you already: we have a title, a description, typically a portrait, and one or more options along the bottom.

In script, however, we've changed a few things around, looking to improve functionality, readability, and general script hygiene over time. Here's a comparison of the start of an event in CK2 vs. CK3:

Wokeg
Juniorest Content Designer

CK2

```
# Narrative Event for new Crusader State
narrative_event = {
    id = HFP.42001
    title = EVTTITLE_HFP_42001
    desc = EVTDESC_HFP_42001
    picture = GFX_evt_mounted_knights_hf
    portrait = event_target:current_crusade_beneficiary
    border = GFX_event_narrative_frame_religion
    is_triggered_only = yes
```

CK3

```
#A Pile of Corpses
stewardship_domain_special.1424 = {
    type = character_event
    title = stewardship_domain_special.1401.t
    desc = {
        desc = stewardship_domain_special.1424.desc
        first_valid = {
            triggered_desc = {
                trigger = { exists = scope:collector_investigates }
                desc = stewardship_domain_special.1424.collector_end
            }
            desc = stewardship_domain_special.1424.self_end
        }
    }
    theme = stewardship_domain_focus
    override_background = {
        event_background = courtyard
    }
    left_portrait = root
```

The first change you'll notice is that we've swapped the event type and the event ID: an event is now created by a namespace (still defined at the top of each file) and unique ID, and the type defined inside the event, rather than the inverse. This means that you can now still read event IDs after folding the events themselves!

```
##########################################################
# NOTIFICATION EVENTS - YOUR DUNGEON DEATH
# 3000-3999
##########################################################

#Dead heir - Your dungeon
death_management.3007 = { ••• }

#Notification about dead spouse - Your dungeon
death_management.3000 = { ••• }

#Notification for parent of dead child - Your dungeon
death_management.3001 = { ••• }

#Dead parent - Your dungeon
death_management.3002 = { ••• }

#Dead Rival - Your Dungeon
death_management.3006 = { ••• }

#Dead betrothed - Your dungeon
death_management.3008 = { ••• }


##########################################################
# NOTIFICATION EVENTS - HOUSE ARREST DEATH
# 4000-4999
##########################################################

#Notification about dead spouse - House arrest
death_management.4000 = { ••• }

#Dead heir - House arrest
death_management.4007 = { ••• }

#Notification for parent of dead child - House arrest
death_management.4001 = { ••• }

#Dead parent - House arrest
death_management.4002 = { ••• }

#Dead betrothed - House arrest
death_management.4008 = { ••• }
```

Next, is that we've changed how triggered text works. In CK2, this was a really useful tool for ensuring that flavour was localised appropriately to the player's situation, and let us make events very broadly applicable whilst still feeling unique. It could, however, get a bit cumbersome, since we had no method for triggered text to be easily mutually exclusive, occasionally leading to situations like this:

```
# On-action event: Pregnancy starts showing
character_event = {
    id = 400
    desc = {
        text = EVTDESC400
        trigger = { #The father is alive and a spouse
            is_married = yes
            father_of_unborn = {
                is_alive = yes
                any_spouse = { character = ROOT }
            }
        }
    }
    desc = {
        text = EVTDESC400_widow
        trigger = { #The father is dead and a spouse
            is_married = no
            father_of_unborn = {
                is_alive = no
                ROOT = {
                    any_spouse_even_if_dead = {
                        character = PREVPREV
                    }
                }
            }
        }
    }
    desc = {
        text = EVTDESC400_CONSORT
        trigger = { #Not married, but is consort
            is_married = no
            NOT = { num_of_consorts = 2 }
            NOT = {
                father_of_unborn = {
                    is_alive = no
                    ROOT = {
                        any_spouse_even_if_dead = {
                            character = PREVPREV
                        }
                    }
                }
            }
        }
    }
    desc = {
        text = EVTDESC400_CONSORTS
        trigger = { #Not married, and multiple consorts
            is_married = no
            num_of_consorts = 2
            NOT = {
                father_of_unborn = {
                    is_alive = no
                    ROOT = {
                        any_spouse_even_if_dead = {
                            character = PREVPREV
                        }
                    }
                }
            }
        }
    }
}
```

Not the worst in the world, but pretty chonky for what we actually want it to do.

In CK3, we can cut this down by using a first_valid block inside triggered text blocks (as in the first image shown), picking the first entry from a list which meets a set of criteria. This means that, instead of having to make sure triggered text blocks are always mutually exclusive according to a trigger (and one which tends to increase in complexity along with the number of triggered texts), we can just order our preferred text logically according to fairly simple triggers.

For instance, if I have a triggered text block where the copy is different for a French character, an Ashari character, and a character who's over eighty years old, with a fallback for anyone who doesn't fit into those categories, I'd script something like the following:

```
                        CK3

desc = {
    first_valid = {
        triggered_desc = {
            trigger = {
                has_culture = culture:french
            }
            desc = secret_bear_people.desc.french
        }
        triggered_desc = {
            trigger = {
                faith = faith:ashari
            }
            desc = secret_bear_people.desc.ashari
        }
        triggered_desc = {
            trigger = {
                age >= 80
            }
            desc = secret_bear_people.desc.elderly
        }
        desc = secret_bear_people.desc.fallback
    }
}
```

This will then automatically proceed down the list. A French character would see one thing, a non-French Ashari would see another thing, a non-French non-Ashari who's over eighty would see a third thing, and everyone else would see a fourth. This makes it incredibly easy to add new context-sensitive copy to both event descriptions and titles.

A further minor point, but as triggered text is now also kept within the body of a superior block, it's far easier to sort on the fly: no matter how much triggered text you have, it's just one click to collapse the body in your file editor of choice, not a dozen or more. When minimising clicks, every little bit helps!

Event Themes & Backgrounds

A couple of notable absences in the CK3 format are the picture & border blocks.

Well, that's with good reason! These have mostly been subsumed into the new event theming system, which you can see in the very first CK3 script example above.

Themes are what decide on the event icon displayed in the top-left, helping to group together broadly-thematic sets of events, and to let the player know what they can expect an event to relate to. They also give us a default appropriate image background (which, itself, sets the lighting used on the character portraits), which will change according to your situation, and different sets of ambient SFX.

Backgrounds and theme icons can be overridden as necessary via a manual line of script if we feel like we've got a more appropriate one to show, too, so although the system is set-up to reduce the amount of work that goes in to adding extra flavour to each event, we still have total control over what flavour we actually include should we want it.

Needless to say, event themes are fully scriptable: you can mod in whatever icon, default background, character model lighting, & ambient SFX you like, as well as create and adjust themes with ease.

Portraits & Animations

The good stuff! Portraits in the new system are, very surprisingly, somewhat more dynamic than in CK2, and any given event can have between 0 and 5 total portraits present. Of these, two are fully animated (positioned to the left and the right, respectively), and three are headshots lined up evenly along the bottom of the event. These can be used in any combination you like to get just the right look for an event.

```
CK3
theme = martial_authority_focus
left_portrait = {
    character = root
    animation = stress
}
right_portrait = {
    character = scope:party_vassal
    animation = beg
}
lower_left_portrait = scope:baron_1
lower_center_portrait = scope:baron_2
lower_right_portrait = scope:baron_3
```

The left and right portraits can use any of a fairly wide array of animations created for release. Headshots are not animated, instead allowing you to visualise ancillary characters mentioned in the event's description.

On Actions for All!

All events come from somewhere, and, in CK2 (especially earlier in the title's life cycle), this was often done through the Mean Time To Happen system, which let us define roughly how long an event would take to fire in (typically) months. Unfortunately, when balancing extremely large numbers of events against each other, the flexibility of this system becomes more of a disadvantage than anything else, making it difficult to govern how frequently an event should spawn without particularly stringent triggers. It also caused a lot of weird statistical anomalies due to working off of pure probabilities, and absolutely tanked performance.

Over CK2's long life, we started to move more towards triggering events via on_actions, small hooks in code attached to features or regular pulses that activate events

(and, if necessary, effects) whenever that hook is called. These take a bit more work to balance, but give us much more control over how and when events are called, as well as making tweaking such significantly easier, and are super fast performance-wise.

For CK3, we use entirely on_actions to fire events. There's quite an array hooked up from code, allowing us to trigger events either when a specific action occurs in the world (e.g., when a character is born) or on a regular pulse (e.g., every five years). These can be set to go off every time that on_action fires, or placed in a weighted list of potential events that might fire (in which case, weight multipliers still apply and support the usual factors and such).

One major improvement over CK2's on_actions (other than a more thorough, rationalised system of use, which I think is very exciting but I also appreciate that other people lead much more interesting lives than me and may have stricter standards) is the addition of scripted on_actions! These allow us (and, of course, you!) to create and hook up on_actions entirely in script that behave as regular on_actions, instead of always having to rely on the hard-coded on_actions. Scripted on_actions then behave exactly as coded on_actions, acting as a complex of weighted & unweighted events/effects, just called from somewhere in the accessible-script rather than the inaccessible-code.

For instance, say I've made a new set of events about reconciliation after a civil war, neighbours learning to live side by side with each other after fighting for opposite lieges, that type of thing, and I want to hook it up to happen whenever a civil war ends. All I have to do to set up that flow is add something like this to the relevant war end effects:

```
                      CK3

trigger_event = {
    on_action = civil_war_aftermath_events
    months = { 6 12 }
}
```

And then create a file including this in the appropriate directory:

```
                              CK3

civil_war_aftermath_events = {
    events = {  #Events in this block will always fire, if they meet their triggers.
        civil_war_aftermath.0001
        civil_war_aftermath.0101
    }
    random_events = {   #One of these events will fire, discarding any that do not meet
    their triggers. The percentage chance per event before weight multipliers is the
    numerical value preceeding each event.
        100 = civil_war_aftermath.0201
        50 = civil_war_aftermath.0301
        25 = civil_war_aftermath.0401
    }
}
```

Anywhere that you can script an effect, you can script a reference to a new (or existing scripted) on_action.

The Immediate Block & You

A major new addition to CK scripting, which we use with extreme regularity in the immediate block, is the scripted list!

These allow us to sort through various groups, pick out relevant characters matching a set of criteria, and then sort within the list of relevant characters only with ease.

For instance, let's say I want to grab every ornery old man from amongst my vassals and courtiers, I'd write something vaguely thus:

```
CK3

scripted_trigger is_angry_elderly_male_trigger = {
    age >= 66
    is_male = yes
    OR = {
        has_trait = wrathful
        has_trait = arbitrary
        has_trait = fickle
        has_trait = stubborn
    }
}

every_vassal = {
    limit = { is_angry_elderly_male_trigger = yes }
    add_to_list = shouty_old_people
}
every_courtier = {
    limit = { is_angry_elderly_male_trigger = yes }
    add_to_list = shouty_old_people
}
```

And then, I want to pick out the two angriest and orneriest from amongst them so that I can have them get into an argument in an event or what have you:

```
CK3

random_in_list = {
    list = shouty_old_people
    limit = {
        calc_true_if = {
            amount >= 3

            has_trait = wrathful
            has_trait = arbitrary
            has_trait = fickle
            has_trait = stubborn
        }
    }
    alternative_limit = {
        calc_true_if = {
            amount >= 2

            has_trait = wrathful
            has_trait = arbitrary
            has_trait = fickle
            has_trait = stubborn
        }
    }
    alternative_limit = { always = yes }

    save_scope_as = shouty_vassal_1
}

random_in_list = {
    list = shouty_old_people
    limit = {
        calc_true_if = {
            amount >= 3

            has_trait = wrathful
            has_trait = arbitrary
            has_trait = fickle
            has_trait = stubborn
        }
        NOT = { this = scope:shouty_vassal_1 }
    }
    alternative_limit = {
        calc_true_if = {
            amount >= 2

            has_trait = wrathful
            has_trait = arbitrary
            has_trait = fickle
            has_trait = stubborn
        }
        NOT = { this = scope:shouty_vassal_1 }
    }
    alternative_limit = {
        NOT = { this = scope:shouty_vassal_1 }
    }

    save_scope_as = shouty_vassal_2
}
```

Sorted! I can then refer to these two characters in my localisation, apply effects to them, make them portrait characters, etc., as needed. You may note our cool new alternative_limit functionality: these are limits which are checked if the limit immediately above them fails.

That said, we're all about minimising unnecessary maintenance and nipping potential bugs before they exist, and this script should still be setting off alarm bells, what with calling two separate lists that use the same conditions, which are, themselves, part of a separate scripted trigger.

There are a few ways we could solve this, but let's go for showing off some new functionality, with the ordered_in_list effect:

```
ordered_in_list = {
    #Which list do we refer to?
    list = shouty_old_people
    #How many places in the list do we want to look at? By default, only the first place list item gets effects.
    max = 2
    #How do we sort the list?
    order_by = {
        value = {
            #Initial value.
            add = 1
            #Add one point for every ornery personality trait the character has, so that the angriest are highest up the list.
            if = {
                limit = { has_trait = wrathful }
                add = 1
            }
            if = {
                limit = { has_trait = arbitrary }
                add = 1
            }
            if = {
                limit = { has_trait = fickle }
                add = 1
            }
            if = {
                limit = { has_trait = stubborn }
                add = 1
            }
        }
    }
    #If there's no shouty_vassal_1, save this character as shouty_vassal_1.
    if = {
        limit = {
            NOT = { exists = scope:shouty_vassal_1 }
        }
        save_scope_as = shouty_vassal_1
    }
    #If we're not looking at shouty_vassal_1, save this character as shouty_vassal_2.
    if = {
        limit = {
            NOT = { this = scope:shouty_vassal_1 }
        }
        save_scope_as = shouty_vassal_2
    }
}
```

Ordered_in_list takes a list, and, using a system called script_maths (which we'll hopefully have time to talk about another time), assigns numerical values to items in that list. It then applies any effects in its block as normal to, by default, the highest valued item in the list (though, as here, we can tell it to apply its effects to any number of items in the list). Here, we were sorting a relatively small amount of list items by a fairly limited set of factors, but this sorting functionality can be as complex and as extensive as you require.

In other immediate block-related news, we've also made it easier to save scopes (formerly event targets, which you can see a bit of in the above example), and variables, and customarily use this block to define musical stings for maximum drama. Standard immediate block functionality (being executed before the event is displayed) is unchanged, and visible effects executed in the Immediate will be shown under a "Has Happened" header in all event option tooltips.

Options: Giving the AI Personality & Stressing Out Players

Finally, options. Options behave similarly to CK2, with a minimum of one per visible event and each option requiring a text label, but otherwise allowing you to enter any and various effects you fancy.

```
CK3

#Perhaps you would like to join me as a retainer instead?
option = {
    name = yearly_saharan.0021.c
    trigger = { short_term_gold >= minor_gold_value }

    #Pay the laddo.
    pay_short_term_gold = {
        target = scope:nomad_leader
        gold = minor_gold_value
    }

    #Move the guy to your court & setup a favourable relationship.
    add_courtier = scope:nomad_leader
    add_hook = {
        type = favor_hook
        target = scope:nomad_leader
    }
    reverse_add_opinion = {
        target = scope:nomad_leader
        modifier = grateful_opinion
        opinion = 30
    }
    hidden_effect = { set_relation_potential_friend = scope:nomad_leader }

    stress_impact = {
        gregarious = minor_stress_impact_loss
        vengeful = minor_stress_impact_gain
        shy = medium_stress_impact_gain
    }
    ai_chance = {
        base = 100
        ai_value_modifier = {
            ai_rationality = 0.5
            ai_sociability = -0.25
        }
        modifier = {    #Weight up for stress.
            add = 10
            has_trait = gregarious
        }
        modifier = {    #Weight down for stress.
            add = -10
            has_trait = vengeful
        }
        modifier = {    #Weight down for stress.
            add = -20
            has_trait = shy
        }
    }
}
```

The two main additions to this area that you'll notice are a drastically expanded use of ai_chance, and, fairly commonly, stress_impact.

AI chance, as in CK2, governs the approximate chance that an NPC character will pick that option. In CK3, we're making much more extensive use of this block, and of our exposed ai_value_modifiers (building a personality for each character based off how much/little of each value they have, in turn derived mostly from their traits) to ensure that characters act in accordance with their personality as much as possible by weighing almost all event options up or down based on appropriate ai_value_modifiers. The block still takes other triggers as well, so we can have the AI prefer an option more or less based on traits, if they're at war, if the option relates to a rival, etc.

Stress_impact, meanwhilst, is how we organise the new stress mechanic, which you may remember from some diaries ago! Don't stress (*ahem*) if you don't: stress is, in a nutshell, a measure of negative effects that your character gains when performing actions that run contrary to their personality (e.g., a compassionate character does not enjoy torturing people).

We check for that here, by filling out the stress_impact block with any personality traits relevant to picking a particular option, and using the scripted stress_impact values. Due to sorcerous automagic, we can combine any number of stresses gained and lost in the stress_impact block, and it'll be calculated on an event option into one number.

You can also add stress as an ordinary effect, outside of the stress_impact block, in which case it will not combine. If desired, you can even add multiple stress impact blocks, which will only combine the individual stress modifiers, or you can omit the block entirely. Whatever floats your scripting-boat.

And, with that, we come to the end of another dev diary. I'll be around for a couple of hours to answer any questions you might have, and we look forward to seeing you ne-

A-aren't you going to cover Triggers?

Ha, you fell for my cunning plot-twist. Hands up anyone who noticed the stealthy trigger spoiler in an earlier screenshot, you win exactly one internet point!

For everyone else, let's have that screenshot again:

```
CK3

scripted_trigger is_angry_elderly_male_trigger = {
    age >= 66
    is_male = yes
    OR = {
        has_trait = wrathful
        has_trait = arbitrary
        has_trait = fickle
        has_trait = stubborn
    }
}

every_vassal = {
    limit = { is_angry_elderly_male_trigger = yes }
    add_to_list = shouty_old_people
}
every_courtier = {
    limit = { is_angry_elderly_male_trigger = yes }
    add_to_list = shouty_old_people
}
```

Now, a quick recap: scripted triggers in CK2 were a way of grouping a long list of requirements together under a single reference, and then referring to that reference when needing to check things.

For instance, say I have two places in an event where I need to check 20+ conditions: the event will be perfectly functional if I script all those conditions out twice, but what if someone in the future updates one set of triggers but not the other? Instant source of bugs. Now, what if I have to check those triggers more than twice, or across multiple events, or, for maximum-sadism, across multiple events in different files?

As you can imagine, that rapidly devolves into chaos. However, we don't want to use less complex triggers, partially because that makes the title worse and less fun for everyone (is it really CK without ludicrous amounts of specificity?), and partially because that's only reducing the scale of the problem, not fixing it.

Instead, we'd create a scripted trigger, which is the list of triggers written out once in a file that can be referenced by other files. Then, in any spot needing to check those triggers, we call the scripted trigger, which checks its contents. Any time the triggers need updating or fixing, simply fix the scripted trigger once, and, typically, all subsequent places that check the scripted trigger have been fixed by proxy also. Instant maintenance savings, immediate huge reductions in bug potential!

However, in CK2, these scripted triggers had to be stored inside a specific folder in /common, separate from the events (and other script) that they referenced. This may not sound like a huge deal, but it adds a bit of extra leg-work to creating and maintaining scripted triggers, and only really gives you a huge list of scripted triggers, some of which may be used only a few times in a couple of places.

In CK3, we're improving on this by adding inline scripted triggers, meaning scripted triggers that can be written directly into the file that uses them, provided they are only used in that file. For more utilitarian scripted triggers that need to be used across multiple files, the old folder system still works. This lets us split up major and minor scripted triggers, and use scripted triggers (and, for that matter, scripted effects) significantly more thoroughly throughout the title, making it markedly easier for us (and you!) to create script that doesn't compromise on complexity or detail whilst still being easy to maintain.

Dev Diary 31: A Stressful Situation

Stress

Stress is a representation of a character's mental well-being. As characters accumulate Stress, they will increase up their Stress Level, with each level causing increasing penalties to their health and fertility values. The penalties at Stress Level 1 are fairly minor, but the penalties at Stress Level 3 can lead your character to an early grave!

[A screenshot showing the player character with nearly-maxed out Stress]

The primary way that characters gain Stress is when the demands of the realm force them to take actions which go against their nature. For example, a Compassionate character will gain Stress for executing prisoners in the dungeon, even if those prisoners were traitorous rebels or, ahem… inconveniently positioned in the line of succession.

[A screenshot showing a Compassionate character gaining 42 Stress for executing a prisoner]

There are other sources of Stress too, though. Being locked up in the dungeon of another character will gradually increase Stress over time, as the isolation and neglect take their toll on your psyche. Other causes include overwork or the death of a loved one. Regardless of the source, once a character accumulates enough Stress to pass a certain threshold and gain a Stress Level, they will suffer from a Mental Break.

Mental Breaks

Mental Breaks are a special kind of event which occurs when Stress overwhelms a character and compels them to do something — anything — to gain relief. Exactly what type of Mental Break a character has depends heavily on their personality traits, and each one gives the character several options for dealing with the situation they have found themselves in.

[A screenshot showing the player character suffering from overwhelming guilt and shame as part of a Mental Break]

Not all Mental Breaks are equal, and the severity of the Mental Break will depend on your Stress Level when the event occurs. A Level 1 Mental Break may cause a Wrathful character to yell at one of their vassals in front of the whole court, insulting them and wounding their pride... but a Tier 3 Mental Break may instead drive that same character to murder their chosen heir in a fit of rage! In addition to differing by Stress Level, some Mental Breaks are influenced by the situation you find yourself in. As an example, characters who are locked up in a dungeon cell will suffering from completely different Mental Breaks (often of greater severity), some of which can radically change their personality.

Mental Break: A Grasp on Power

Locked up here, I am supposed to be weak and pacified. Hah!

Here in the darkness I gather my strength and tear my enemies limb from limb with my mind! Over and over again, every day they are reborn and every day I destroy them like the vermin they are! Especially my wretched jailer, Emperor Heinrich... he will suffer the most!

When I get out... oh they will *pay*!

Why wait? In my mind, they are at my mercy...

No... this is wrong. I am better than this.

- You lose the Trait Diligent
- You gain the Trait Vengeful
- Emperor Heinrich IV becomes your rival
- You lose 🪨 39 Stress
- If you are still Stressed in 5 years you may suffer another Mental Break

Emperor Heinrich IV

UNDER DEVELOPMENT

[A screenshot showing the player character swearing vengeance on their enemies from prison]

Regardless of what kind of Mental Break they suffer from, all Mental Breaks give the afflicted character the opportunity to lose a large amount of Stress. Many of these options will also grant the afflicted character a Coping Mechanism trait, which will help them relieve stress in the future and thus reduce the likelihood of having additional Mental Breaks.

Coping Mechanisms

Coping Mechanisms are traits that represent the long-term methods characters have developed to deal with the Stress of their life. Most of them impose some form of minor penalty on a character's skills, but in exchange they will enhance the potency of all forms of stress loss.

Rakish	Trait
Diplomacy: -1	
Intrigue: +1	
Stress Loss: +20%	
Attraction Opinion: -5	
Opinion of Rakish Characters: +5	

Matilda spends so much time in the brothel that it has become her second home.

Drunkard	Trait
Stewardship: -2	
Prowess: -2	
Health: Tiny Penalty	
Stress Loss: +20%	
Opinion of Drunkard Characters: +10	

Matilda has taken to the bottle, and is continuously looking for its bottom.

Flagellant	Trait
Prowess: -2	
Health: Moderate Penalty	
Stress Loss: +20%	

The catharsis of self-flagellation is the only thing which makes Matilda feel better.

Comfort Eater	Trait
Stewardship: -1	
Stress Loss: +20%	

Matilda often tries to fill the emptiness that she feel by indulging in comforting foods.

UNDER DEVELOPMENT

[A screenshot showing a selection of 4 Coping Mechanism traits: Rakish, Drunkard, Flagellant, and Comfort Eater]

In addition to the passive effects of each trait, each one also enables a unique Decision characters can take to indulge in their vice and relieve a portion of their accumulated stress.

Visit a Brothel

A man on my lap, and everything – and everyone – the brothel has to offer at my beck and call... Nothing relieves the mind like some carnal relief.

Effects

- You will lose some Stress
- Such wanton behavior has inherent risks...
- You lose 💰20

⚠ Visit a Brothel will be unavailable for 3 years

Here I come, boys!

UNDER DEVELOPMENT

[A screenshot showing the Decision to visit a brothel and lose stress]

Regardless of the form it takes, all Coping Mechanisms are useful in one form or another. Having the ability to make Stressful decisions at-will is often more useful than a few extra points of Diplomacy or Stewardship, and each Coping Mechanism a character acquires makes it progressively easier for them to manage their Stress. It is expected that most rulers will acquire 1 or 2 Coping Mechanisms during their lifetime, though in some rare circumstances a character may end up with more.

Strategic Considerations

As developers, our goal with the Stress system is not to prohibit or punish players for taking certain actions, but rather to make them think twice about otherwise no-brainer decisions. Is it really worth it to execute that foreign claimant when doing so will give you 42 Stress? Maybe, but maybe not! That is a decision you will need to make when the time comes.

In this way, Stress also gives us another tool we can use to balance the various personality traits against each other. Some traits like Ambitious and Compassionate may have higher numerical bonuses, but they cause you to acquire Stress more frequently or in larger amounts. Others like Sadistic may make your vassals loathe you, but your character won't be bothered by pesky concerns like morality when they have to do what needs to be done. Who knows... they might even enjoy it!

Lazy	Personality Trait		Diligent	Personality Trait
Diplomacy: 📜 -1			Diplomacy: 📜 +1	
Martial: ✕ -1			Martial: ✕ +1	
Stewardship: 🏛 -1			Stewardship: 🏛 +1	
Intrigue: 🗡 -1			Intrigue: 🗡 +1	
Learning: 📖 -1			Learning: 📖 +1	
Stress Loss: 🗿 +15%			Stress Gain: 🗿 +20%	
			Opinion of Diligent Characters: +10	
			Opinion of Lazy Characters: -10	
The easiest road in life is the road most taken by Matilda.			*Matilda does not shy away from hard work.*	

UNDER DEVELOPMENT

[A screenshot showing showing the Skill and Stress differences between the Lazy and Diligent Personality Traits]

Regardless of what personality traits your character has, the optimal strategy with Stress is often not to avoid acquiring Stress at all costs, but rather to strategically acquire certain Coping Mechanisms and leverage them intelligently to keep your character's Stress at ideal levels. Managing your character's Stress well will ensure you are always able to take advantage of any opportunities that come your way, while behaving recklessly may leave you Stressed to the point of insanity during a crucial moment of your reign...

Mental Break: Domain of Debauchery

UNDER DEVELOPMENT

"My liege", begs the servant,"won't you please do something? Roma burns! You must send aid!".

I stretch, both my hands coming into contact with beautiful young flesh effortlessly. A chorus of moans behind me seem unbothered by the visitor.

"I believe I gave strict instructions not to be disturbed", I reply. Only this room, this reality, really makes sense to my fraying mind any more.

③ *Highest Stress Level Reached*

- Bring me a companion, and I'll send relief.
- Ready a barrel of the best, I'll emerge soon.
- Let them all *burn*.

[A screenshot showing a stressed ruler having their very own Nero moment]

Anyway, that is all I have for you this week. I hope this has given you some insight into how the Stress system works in Crusader Kings III, and that this has inspired everyone to think of new and creative ways to leverage the system to its full potential! Feel free to ask any questions you have in the comments, as I will be sticking around for a few hours to explain and elaborate on the Stress system.

Dev Diary 32: Going Medieval on Audio

Intro

Hey! My name is Björn Iversen and I worked as Audio Director on Crusader Kings 3. Finally, I get this opportunity to write a Dev Diary about what the audio team has been working on for a long time!

We will split up this Dev Diary into different parts: first off, I want to tell a little bit about the Audio Vision and what my ambitions were for game audio. Then we will talk about Sound Design, what is new and improved from previous games, and of course, last but not least, the Soundtrack.

Audio Vision

To start with a short backstory, it is quite a daunting task to work with the audio for Crusader Kings 3, since CK2 had so many years of development that included some of our most iconic soundtracks which are loved by the community. Later down the line we also started to add more Sound Design to the game which some of the community has appreciated a lot.

So initially the big question was: What is needed to be improved for the sequel? What do we want to keep from the previous game? What brand new audio features do we want to introduce?

The first and biggest step up we wanted to do in Crusader Kings III was to have Audio looped in as early in development as possible. CK2 was developed before my time as Audio Director and during those days the studio did not have any dedicated Sound Designers that helped out with the game audio.

First, Andreas Waldetoft (Our in-house Composer and close co-worker) and I could in the early stages of design work on what we wanted to do with the Soundtrack. Then I could also establish an Audio Vision for the Sound Design already at this stage. This would be helpful when my first Sound Designer, Gustav aka ParadoxGustav, would onboard the project to help out with Sound Design. This meant that we could work more on certain aspects that I felt were a bit lackluster in the Crusader Kings II, and the three main pillars for me were:

Storytelling

Since the game is about the characters, their actions, and the tales that are created, it was my ambition to bring all events and character actions more into life with the help of audio. As an example, we have added sound effects to the event backgrounds to enhance the immersion of the event, for instance, if it takes place in a Courtyard it should sound like it.

My goal is that it's not only the Sound Design that should enhance the immersion of the storytelling, but also have the Music to help with that. A bit more about Music later in the diary.

The Map should feel alive

I always felt that it was a bit under-developed in the previous title, and since we have created such a beautiful map, it was important for me and the audio team that the map would sound great also. If you zoom in to an area of the map with a lot of rivers and forests, it should sound like it is alive. The same goes with holdings, they should sound populated based on the type and culture.

A more calm soundscape

Now, this might sound a bit too abstract, but hear me out! One of the main issues with the previous title was also how, unfortunately, every single audio and music asset wanted to play loud and all at the same time. Another one of our main goals was to have a much better soundscape in which no sound effects are competing with each other too much for a place in the mix, and that the music isn't too intrusive for the player experience. Basically, we wanted the game to sound more "calm" which is more pleasing to the ears after long gaming sessions.

But enough writing about our goals, let's show off some of the cool stuff we have been working on with some video footage!

Sound Design
Event Windows

So, the Event Windows have two elements of sound effects. The first one is an "Event Theme" as we call them, and there are different ones depending on the event. Also then, Art made these beautiful backgrounds for the Events, so we wanted to enhance them by adding ambience sound. Here is an example of Marriage Event with those two elements:

Video
[Marriage Event with Sound](#)

If you listen carefully in the video you will hear a subtle feature, once the Event Window is on-screen, the map ambience is lowered in volume to add focus to the event so it's more invoking to read and get immersed in the story.

And to add some extra flavor for the Events, sometimes the Music will also change when it appears. Here is a video with just the Music and the same Event for an example:

Video
[Marriage Even with Music](#)

Once all the pieces are put together you will get this result:

Video
[Marriage Event with Sounds & Music](#)

I think this is the right approach to enhance the storytelling element of our games that happens through Event Windows.

Since this worked really well with Event Windows we wanted to combine both SFX & Music for other instances in the game such as declaring war;

Video
[Declaring War](#)

Ambience

As I mentioned before it was important that the map would sound more alive, and that it would sound different based on nature & holdings, which the team has succeeded in creating! Instead of writing so much about it, I would love to give some examples instead:

Ambience over England here you can hear the different Holdings and Nature ambience:

Video
Dev Diary - Ambience SFX England

A personal favorite place on the map for listening to the ambience! I like the details of the river and holdings in this part.

Video
Dev Diary - Ambience SFX Nile River

As a third example we hover over India and listen to Dharmic Holdings:

Video
Dev Diary - Ambience SFX India

Music

Hi, my name is Andreas Waldetoft aka Jazzhole on this forum, and I'm the Senior Composer here at Paradox. I have worked on most of our internal games throughout the years and have had the pleasure to work on Crusader Kings III as well.

As I composed CK2 back in the days we did not have to completely start from scratch with some of the more recognizable themes. We however wanted a soundtrack that would have much more depth in the sort of sounds one can expect to hear. For example, we have recorded many different medieval instruments, examples are Bagpipes, Hurdy-gurdy, Keyed fiddles, stringed instruments, and many different percussion instruments… to name a few. We also used a full orchestra, solo vocalists, and church choirs.

Björn has already talked about the use of cue tracks for events and storytelling, which is something we talked about right from the design phase a few years ago. Therefore we have cue-tracks and mood music as a kind of a cornerstone of the soundtrack.

The cue-tracks are often shorter pieces of music that reacts to events happening in the game.

Mood tracks are music that as the name implies, is meant to give a more calm moody experience that is pleasing to listen to for long hours.

Here is an example of a cue I did for an event called "The Crusade Starts", it is from the Orchestral Session we had in Budapest.

Video
[CK3 - The Crusades Start - Orchestral Session](#)

I also did a few orchestral suites for the game to be used as main themes, this excerpt is from a piece called "Knights of Jerusalem" and is once again at the Budapest Scoring Orchestra recording session.

Video
[CK3 - Knights of Jerusalem - Orchestral Session](#)

Crusader Kings III has more music than any vanilla strategy game we have developed, so my good friend Philip Wareborn stepped in to help me compose music tracks for different situations in this game. You might have heard his music in the Stellaris: 4th Anniversary trailer which he helped compose.

That is it about the music, I'm really looking forward to hearing your thoughts once it is released.

Video
[CK3 - Knights of Jerusalem - Orchestral Session](#)

Modding

There will be more updates regarding this in the future, but I will touch briefly on this topic now since I know that the community will ask about it… and yes, there is some modding support! There will be possibilities to change out the assets for Mood Tracks and Cue Tracks. It will also be possible to add more tracks as well.

This will be short and sweet for now, since I'll probably need to create a forum post on how to mod the music but that will happen after release.

But here below is a video showcasing how I switch out "Declare War" Cue Track to another song from Stellaris.

Video
[Music Mod Support](#)

Dev Diary 33: An Offer You Can't Refuse

Today I am going to talk to you about the overhaul we've done to Feudal Contracts since [Dev Diary 17](#).

A quick refresher on what Contracts are: every vassal above baron tier has an individual contract between them and their liege which affects how much the vassal gives to the liege in terms of tax and levies in exchange for the liege's protection. In the case of Feudal vassals, this contract can be renegotiated.

We were not fully content with the initial implementation of this setup as it did not help facilitate the drama and storytelling of the deals made between a vassal and their liege and the disagreements that could arise from that. This was a view shared among the community as well which reinforced our desire to give this feature another look, so a couple of our designers and I gave it an overhaul.

The Contract

You may have seen screenshots or videos of this system in some of the media released from our press events but I'm gonna take you through the new system step by step, so without further ado here is the new interface you'll see when you interact with a vassal's feudal contract.

[Feudal contract negotiation screen]

As you can see there are a lot more options now to tailor the contract.

Going from top to bottom you can see that we have split the base tax and levy obligations into two separate tracks each now with five options. These are the core base of how much taxes and levies are given to the liege, the lower they are the more your vassal will like you, of course, and the higher they are the less content they will be.

When negotiating a new deal you can only move to adjacent levels of the tax and levy obligations.

Below that we have what we call the "Fine Print" options. These fine options are unlocked via various innovations and provide various modifications to the contract.

The first row being the Special Contract options of Scutage, March, and Palatinate which are available for vassals that are Dukes or Kings.

Scutage Contract

UNDER DEVELOPMENT

Tax: **2.0%** (+0.7%)
Levies: **1.2%** (-3.8%)

Vassal:
Men-at-Arms Maintenance: -20.00%

While subject to a Scutage Contract, the **Vassal** will pay **50%** more **Tax** than what their Feudal Taxes **Obligation** dictates, while at the same time providing **75%** fewer **Levies** than what their Feudal Levies **Obligation** dictates.

[Effects of scutage]

March Contract

UNDER DEVELOPMENT

Tax: **0.6%** (-0.7%)

Vassal:
Army Maintenance: -20%
Controlled Territory Defender Advantage: +5
Levy Size: +20%
Garrison Size: +20%
Levy Reinforcement Rate: +20%

While subject to a March Contract, the **Vassal** will receive bonuses to their Levies and defensive capabilities, but provide **50%** less **Tax** than what their Feudal Taxes **Obligation** dictates.

[Effects of march]

Palatinate Contract **UNDER DEVELOPMENT**
Tax: **1.1%** (-0.2%)
Levies: **4.0%** (-1.0%)

Liege:
Monthly Prestige: 👑 +5%

Vassal:
Monthly Prestige: 👑 +20%
Fellow Vassal Opinion: +15
Hostile Scheme Success Chance: +10
Personal Scheme Success Chance: +10

While subject to a Palatinate Contract, the **Vassal** enjoys many privileges within the realm, which increases their standing and gives them more political clout. Palatinate **Vassals** increase their **Liege's Prestige** but provide **20%** less **Tax** and **Levies** than what their Feudal Taxes and Feudal Levies **Obligations** dictate.

[Effects of palatinate]

At the bottom we have the rest of the Fine Print options available, these are things like guaranteeing your vassal a spot on the council or granting them coinage rights. Some options are only shown if the vassal meets specific conditions, for example if the vassal is of a different faith to the liege. In such a case the "Religious Protection" gives them special rights to practice their faith without risk of the liege demanding their conversion or converting the faith of their provinces.

The Negotiation

When negotiating the contract a max of three changes may be made. We experimented with different values and this felt like it wasn't too limiting whilst also letting you too wildly change your contract in one go.

With the new obligations that can be changed and enacted this allows you to negotiate a more interesting deal. For example, you as the liege may want to increase the amount of taxes your vassal gives you, but just doing that alone will be viewed as unfair by the vassal and increase your tyranny.

[a contract proposal giving tyranny]

So if you don't want to take that tyranny hit then you need to look at what changes you can propose that the vassal will want, so in exchange for these increased taxes you could guarantee your vassal a spot on the council meaning you can now enact this deal without being viewed as a tyrant.

[a contract proposal with a fair trade]

Alternatively, if you have a hook on your vassal then you can use that hook to count as one free change in favour of the vassal, so you can use your hook and get those higher taxes without having to give any other concessions and not be viewed as a tyrant. Blackmailing people is surprisingly effective.

Feudal Contract

Feudal Taxes 💰

Exempt	Low	Normal	High	Extortionate

Feudal Levies 👥

None	Low	Normal	High	Massive

Special Contract

○ None   ● Scutage   ● March   ● Palatinate

Coinage Rights
☐ Granted

Succession Rights
☐ Forced Partition

War Declaration
☐ Sanctioned

Council Rights
☐ Guaranteed

Title Revocation
☐ Protected

The Liege,
Emperor Heinrich
of House Salian

The Vassal,
Duke Otto
of House Nordheim

Reset

Modifying the Contract of
Duke Otto von Nordheim
Ruler of Bavaria

Effects:

• You use your Weak Hook (Favor) on Duke Otto II
• Duke Otto II's Contract gains Normal Taxes *(Feudal Taxes Obligation)*

Feudal Tax Level	Feudal Levies Level
💰 +0.6	👥 51

Duke Otto II's Opinion: +5

☑ Use a Hook

You can only change the Feudal Contract once for each Character

Modify

[a contract proposal using a hook to avoid tyranny]

It is worth mentioning that even if you propose a "fair" trade that does not give you tyranny this does not mean that the vassal will be perfectly content. There is an opinion change tied to each obligation and what status it is in, vassals will tend to dislike paying more and like paying less, and this opinion modifier will be present in the vassal's view of their liege.

The vassal themselves can of course also negotiate the contract, they have the added restriction that they must offer their liege an even trade. So they cannot ask to pay lower taxes without using either a hook or agreeing to give the liege something they would want, be that giving more levies, agreeing to stay with only partition succession, or giving up a benefit they have previously been given such as that guaranteed council spot.

Some vassals start with contracts different to the default, in the Holy Roman Empire all vassals start with low taxes and levies to represent the internal state and the lower amount of control the Emperor was exerting over their vassals at the time.

We really wanted the interface to make this feel like an actual paper contract being signed between the liege and the vassal, thankfully we had this beautiful parchment background and wax seal shader lying around that helped spice it up.

Modding Contracts

All of these different obligations, their effects, how the AI uses them, and how they are shown in the UI is controlled in the script files so you can mod in or change existing obligations to your heart's content.

Code:

```
religious_rights = {
    display_mode = checkbox
    is_shown = {
        NOT = {
            scope:vassal.faith = scope:liege.faith
        }
    }
    obligation_levels = {
        religious_rights_none = {
            default = yes

            ai_liege_desire = @ai_standard_liege_desire
            ai_vassal_desire = 0
        }
        religious_rights_protected = {
            is_valid = {
                NOT = {
                    scope:vassal.faith = scope:liege.faith
                }
            }
            parent = religious_rights_none

            vassal_opinion = 5

            vassal_modifier = {
                county_opinion_add = 5
            }

            flag = religiously_protected

            ai_liege_desire = 0
            ai_vassal_desire = 10


        }

    }
}
```

Here we have the script database entry for the religious protection obligation type, it demonstrates the various options and should be fairly self explanatory in its naming of the options.
I hope you've all enjoyed this dev diary and are excited for the new Feudal Contracts and the more options and interactions they can provide between vassals and lieges!

There's going to be a lot of text in this Dev Diary, but really, when it comes down to it, it's mostly there as an excuse to show off the art!

Characters are generated dynamically in the game using a DNA system that defines their looks - everything from mouth shape to body height is stored in this DNA. A DNA is made up of a number of genes. Each gene defines a certain feature. Crusader Kings II already does something similar, but in CKIII we have more than 10 times the amount of genes for every character and a lot of added complexity. The system itself is very flexible and it was up to me how to set it up to get as much visual variation out of it as possible.

Our predecessor, CK2, by necessity builds up characters from a limited number of facial features. There are x amount of noses combined with x amount of mouths and x amount of eyes and so on to make up a face. While this works well and gives a good amount of variation it still has some inherent limitations. What we've done in CKIII is to have a much more granular approach where we use many parameters to control each feature. So, for example, instead of just picking a nose (you shouldn't pick your nose kids) out of a selection of pre-defined noses we store values for nose protrusion, nose height, nose length, nose nostril height, nose nostril width, nose ridge profile, nose ridge angle, nose ridge width, nose size, nose tip angle, nose tip protrusion, nose tip width, nose ridge definition and nose tip definition. In other words; if you're into noses, or any other facial feature, this is the game for you.

Some of the many faces (and noses!) of Crusader Kings III

As you can imagine, this gives us quite detailed control over the facial features of characters. And they can vary greatly depending on many factors, which I will try to cover here. Let's start with ethnicity.

Like we've shown in other Dev Diaries already, the CKIII map covers a vast area of the world from Ireland in the west to modern day Mongolia in the east and from Arctic Norway in the north to Sub-Saharan Africa in the south. This big area is populated by groups of different ethnicities which we represent in the game. Due to the way that the character generating system is set up, we can use the same base assets for all different ethnicities and just script in different average values for the facial feature parameters. As an example, west african characters have, on average, darker skin, fuller lips and differently shaped noses than their european or asian counterparts, but they still use the exact same base model. This is good news for inheritance, which is the next subject I will discuss.

A selection of characters of different ethnicities

Due to the fact that all characters use the same base model, we can easily create blends between multiple DNAs. Each character stores two sets of genes that we call dominant and recessive, respectively. (Disclaimer: Please note that the dominant and recessive genes in our system do not work exactly like in real life. We're still dealing with an approximation of genetics. We haven't fully replicated real world genetics. Yet.) When a baby is born it will inherit two versions of each gene - both of which will come randomly from either parent. As mentioned one of these genes will end up being dominant and the other one recessive based on a chance value (dominant genes from the parents have a higher chance of being inherited as dominant genes for the baby). The appearance of the newborn character is decided entirely by its

dominant gene set. But the recessive genes are still there as a representation of genes carried down the generations. So when this new character gets to make its own babies they will have a chance of inheriting a gene from their grandparents, even though that gene might not have been visible on their parent.

Inheritance in action. Top row parents and bottom row their children. If you look closely you should be able to spot the inherited features.

I hope you guys are still awake for the continuation of this Dev Diary. What does all this genetics mumbo-jumbo mean for you as a player? It means that inheritance has a much bigger impact on the appearance of a character in CKIII than than it does in CK2. Characters of different ethnicities that get down for the hanky panky will make babies that look like a blend between both parents, with some genes from further back in the family tree thrown into the mix. Of course, there's still a fair amount of randomness in the system so we won't get identical siblings unless they are, you know, identical twins.

Now, while we're on the subject, let's talk briefly about children and aging. This is the other huge factor in defining the appearance of a character: his or her age. The 3D system that we use gives us the possibility to have seamless aging and there's a ton of things that are set up to take advantage of this. A newborn child will obviously be very tiny compared to when it's all grown up. It's adult facial features will be there already from birth but they are very toned down during early childhood to get gradually more pronounced as the character ages. When a character approaches their 30's and 40's their skin will get more rugged, age lines and wrinkles will start appearing in the face, and their hair turns grey. Once they enter old age their body will start sagging, posture will deteriorate, their ears and nose will get bigger and the jaw protrudes as they lose their teeth.

Chieftain Somatu of Kevrola, from age 0 to 99

In addition to genetics and age, lifestyle choices and changes also impact a character's appearance. Body types vary greatly from alarmingly thin victims of starvation to truly impressive bulks of some high nobility gluttons. Different levels of muscularity and fitness are also represented and tied to the "prowess" value in the game.

Examples of different body types

GIF
Gaining Weight

Like, every Christmas Holiday, ever

GIF
Working Out

I got ripped in five seconds!

There are a number of traits and conditions, genetic or otherwise, that have visual impact on the character portrait. Some examples of non-genetic ones are pregnancy, wounds, scars, lost arms, blindness and disfigurement. And some notable examples of genetic conditions are dwarfism, gigantism, albinism and hunchback.

Genetic traits

Dragoman

You know how some people have names that just feel "right" for them?

GIF
Wounded Animation

"You should see the other guy"

We have already discussed clothes in previous Dev Diaries so I won't go into great detail about them. But I would like to show something I don't think we've shown before. That is the barbershop feature which allows you to change clothes, head wear and hairstyle for your character:

Barbershop

Even though the vast majority of characters have randomly generated appearances, there are some notable exceptions. The detailed setup of the DNA system allows us to design quite specific appearances where we want to. There are some historical starting characters in the game whose looks were based on how they are described in historical sources. For example William the Conqueror and Harold Godwineson of England. Of course, medieval sources are not always... perfectly reliable and the portraiture from the time not the most accurate (to put it mildly!) so we did have to do some guesswork and use a lot of artistic license. There are also a whole bunch of developer characters with appearances that match their real life counterparts. They're lurking around various courts in the game. If you want to find some, a pro tip is to browse through the characters in modern day Sweden...

It is perfectly possible to mod DNAs as well as adding new ones, so if you feel like adding your own likeness or a medieval Abraham Lincoln to the game it is fairly easy to do so.

Historical characters from the "Fate of England" in the 1066 start date. Guess who is who!

And finally, to end this on a more gruesome note, the last thing I'd like to show you is some diseases. As you all know, the middle ages were a time of ravaging epidemics and quick unexpected death from disease. And the game reflects that in quite a graphical way.

And if you don't enjoy being disgusted - don't worry - we have an option to turn off the worst looking diseases and replace them with something less nightmare-inducing.

WARNING: The following spoiler tags contain images that some viewers might find disturbing. Viewer discretion is advised.

Don't say I didn't warn you

Dev Diary 35: User Testing Before Release
Ah, user testing, I get it - you're QA/Quality Assurance!

Oh, how many times I hear that! But no, I am not. Very, very simplified it's kind of like this: When QA evaluate a feature they report on it in a yes/no kind of way - Does it work? Yes/No, so here's a bug report.

When User Research are asked to evaluate a feature, we look at the game from a user perspective by trying to test and gather feedback on things like how well players understand the game, if any menus are confusing, if players are having fun, etc. This can be done in a variety of ways, but for Crusader Kings III we mostly used playtests where we let 2-15 players that match a specific profile (in this case - PDS strategy players) into our lab to play an unfinished version of the game while watching and recording them and then we brought video clips and player feedback to the dev team.

Woah, that seems pretty abstract! How can you make sure that you're getting these things completely right and accurate?

You're right, it is tough - We do this by using a lot of methods used in social science to be able to verify our findings. Most of the time we'll use a combination of observation (meaning we watch the player playing and take notes on what they say/do), one or several surveys and then an interview. If we can see several people struggle with a tutorial step, chances are they won't be alone in having that issue, and having them describe how it felt both verbally and in text let's us pinpoint what's wrong.

But of course, humans are complicated, and it's important to remember that while we use scientific methods our job is not to produce scientific results. Instead, our job is giving our colleagues a heads up on how to tweak things by providing a basis for discussion and re-design.

And this is relevant to Crusader Kings III because...?

Well, I think having User Research done is good for any kind of interactive medium when it comes to evaluating the ideas and designs put into the game. Crusader Kings III is also an interesting challenge from a user design perspective - How do we keep the complexity hardcore players want while still making sure new players can discover the awesome feeling of inheriting a title because your nephew had an "accident"? If we don't listen to what actual players say and think, we risk making mistakes and finding out about it when it's too late to change anything.

Enough about Using Research or whatever, what did you do for Crusader Kings III?

As you've likely seen we're doing a lot of new things in this game compared to both other PDS titles and Crusader Kings II, so this means that having player feedback early is a good idea to avoid going ahead with something that turns out to be a mistake.

For example, one of the first things we did for Crusader Kings III was actually done internally - the dev team were making early designs for characters and User Research helped them out by sending out a survey to all of our colleagues to gather feedback. At the time, characters looked like this:

And good thing we got some feedback, because the style turned out to be way too cartoony for most people! It might have brought our colleagues a lot of work, but I'm glad we discovered this way before release day…

Throughout the development of the game, we've also run bi-monthly 1 hour playtests with 2-4 players. These tests are often done in close collaboration with the UX designers and are very focused on us seeing how well players are able to finish basic gameplay actions like getting married, starting and finishing a war, setting up a scheme and things like that. Thanks to these tests, several changes have been made to menus that have proven difficult for players to navigate like the Council, Marriage and Building menus and the Siege/War overviews.

But my favourite part of my work is to actually see people play and experience the game during longer playtests. For Crusader Kings III the most important playtest was when it was time to evaluate the tutorial and systems for in-game help. For this test we had 12 participants, 6 of them with 200-800h of CK2 playtime and 6 of them "newbies", try out the tutorial and then play the game for 2 hours using what they'd learned.

And you know what? Most of them managed just fine, which isn't really something I'm used to seeing when it comes to Paradox onboarding. New players loved that the tutorial used visual cues to guide them through menus and the suggestions helped them with an issue that many PDS titles have - What the heck do I do next? "Old" players found the UI took some time to get used to, but they also found the suggestion systems useful as checklists on what to do next.

But of course, nothing is perfect - and thanks to the player feedback we could also pinpoint areas where more work was needed for both new and old players, especially regarding the UI. But throughout the playtests we've done I've been happy to see the game go from incomprehensible to approachable, both for new and returning Crusader Kings-fans.

So if you run these tests why aren't the games perfect and amazing then?

Oh, I ask myself the same thing every day... But the truth is, game development is complicated and sometimes there's just no time, manpower or money to address the issues we've discovered. We also share our results with community management and marketing to give them a heads up on the questions and concerns they can expect on release.

Has anything changed due to Corona?

Oh absolutely! The biggest change for my team of researchers is that we don't have access to our beautiful lab at the Stockholm office. The lab is geared up with computer stations where you can prep game installation and recording setup beforehand. This makes setting up studies a lot easier for us and it's also a good way of preventing leaks.

Crusader Kings III has been lucky in that we had concluded most of the lab activities we'd planned before the release, but for other projects we've done studies remotely meaning that we let players play the game on their own computers and do all interviews via video chats. While we're still trying to work things out, we're also discovering a lot of benefits from this method of working - the biggest one being that we could potentially run playtests with people from all over the world!

What will you do after the release?

For Crusader Kings III, I will start working on gathering and reporting on feedback following the release - which means that anything you write on Steam or other pages, I'll go over and try to summarize topics so we know what to improve on next. Then, it's time to plan new playtests for patches and DLCs!

I hope you've enjoyed reading about a lesser known field in game development and that you'll look forward to the upcoming release of a game that I've absolutely loved working with. I will be on vacation when this is posted, but I'll be happy to answer any questions about User Research when I'm back again on August 1st. Oh, and please be nice to my vanity character if you encounter her - she's very, very weak.

Dev Diary 36: Gotta Go Fast

Performance

Let's start off by talking about performance.

Over the course of CK2's lifecycle we made numerous improvements to performance, and when Holy Fury released it was the best it has ever been. The release version today feels like molasses compared to how the game performs after its long and venerated life.

CK2 has been a standout amongst PDS' games when it comes to performance, which means we have a lot we have to live up to. As such performance has been a priority throughout the development of CK3, and especially as it has neared release. Our approach to a number of tech systems differ from CK2 for the sake of performance, and this has given us some great results.

The two systems that differ the most from CK2 for the sake of performance are threading and rendering. The two are heavily intertwined, so much so that you can't really talk about one without talking about the other.

In CK2 our approach was pretty simple. The game as a whole was structured around the main thread. The main task of the main thread was to update the gamestate so the game progresses. In order to render frames so the users can see what's going on, it would periodically stop updating the gamestate in order to make a frame instead. The rendering would then take over entirely until done with the frame.

During gamestate updates it would thread a large number of different operations. The way we structured this in CK2 was largely based around the characters themselves. The daily update for characters were split into a handful of segments with different rules for parallelization. For instance, during one part it would be illegal for one character to check any information that belongs to another character. During another, it would be illegal for it to change any information it owns that is visible to other characters. These restrictions meant that these updates could be done in parallel; each thread doing the same section for a different character. In practice it worked reasonably well; CK2 is a heavily parallel game and has had significant speed gains from increased parallelization. Similar setups were applied to other objects too, like titles, plots, etc.

However, there were also some significant drawbacks. The biggest one being the various rules on what the programmer can and cannot do in each update. Violating one of these rules would generally result in an OOS, breaking the multiplayer experience. Occasionally it could even crash the game. There was also a significant overhead in having to process every character in the game with most checks just resulting in "we have no need to do this part of the update".

So, in CK3 we replaced this system entirely. We moved from object-level parallelism to system-level parallelism. Now instead of processing several characters at the same time we instead process several different systems. For instance, we might update the scheme system at the same time as the opinion system. This allowed us to simplify the rules of what you can and cannot do massively: now during parallelism the only limitation is that we can't change any visible information; we must instead store the changes we want to do and then apply them a bit later in series. Simplifying the rules means that fewer bugs are introduced, in particular OOSes. And it tends to be easier to identify what could be parallelized than it was in CK2, resulting in more work being done in parallel than before.
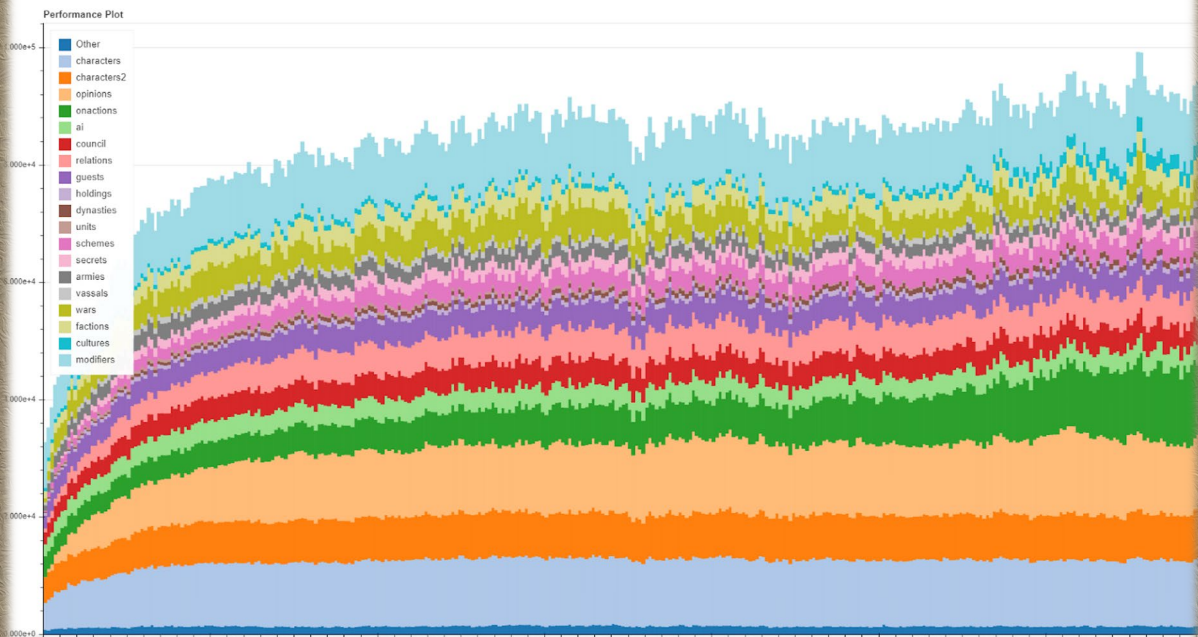
[A chart of time spent on most of the parallel updates]

Furthermore, this works great with CK3's new approach to rendering. In CK3 rendering is a separate thread rather than done on the main thread. It still needs to synchronize a lot with the main thread, as we can't be checking an object that's being changed. So, we have a system of locks; when the render thread needs to access the gamestate, the gamestate isn't allowed to change itself, and when the gamestate is changing itself, the render thread must wait until it can access the gamestate. Similarly, to CK2, the gamestate will while updating itself periodically check if the render thread needs access, in which case it'll hand off control for a short while. But the big difference is that a significant part of the work done on the render thread does not require any access to the gamestate, and can thus be done in parallel with the gamestate update.

And do you remember the rule I mentioned earlier? The parallel updates to the gamestate aren't allowed to change visible state, so during these updates it is safe to update the render thread. So overall the section where the render thread might have to wait is pretty small, and it ends up doing most of its work at the same time as the gamestate.

Now, we do still have some object-level parallelism left, most notably the AI. But the AI in CK3 is set up to never change the gamestate directly, so rendering can continue while the AI figures out what to do.

Overall, these changes have meant that CK3 has better thread utilization than CK2, a more stable framerate, and that it is harder for programmers to make threading mistakes that lead to bugs, OOSes, and crashes.

For a point of comparison, I did a quick test on my machine comparing CK2 and CK3. I simply let the game run at full speed for a minute, and compared the frame rate and how far the game progressed. Both games got equally far in; starting in September 1066 they both got to April 1069. However, CK3's frame rate was much higher and more stable than CK2's. Considering CK3's far better graphics, these results are exactly what I was hoping for.

Let's take a look at the difference threading makes. I set up a simple test; I ran the game for 1 minute on my machine at max speed, first with threading fully enabled, then with threading disabled. You can see it for yourself below. Left is with threading, right is without:

Video
Crusader Kings III Performance - Full Threading vs. No Threading

The red line you see in the video is the time between each frame. For 60 FPS it should be at or below the green horizontal line.

As you see, the difference is staggering. Without threading the framerate is dreadful, and the game progresses far more slowly. With threading the game progressed 958 days, while without it only progressed 546 days. That is, it ran 75% faster with threading, and with a far far better framerate. The machine I'm running this on is my home PC, which at the time of recording had an i7 4770K, a GTX 1080, and 16 GB of 2400 MHz RAM, running at the highest graphical settings. The CPU and RAM are both quite old and by this point far outperformed by newer models, though the GPU is still solid. Max speed on this is high enough that I almost never use it in normal play, instead mostly using speed 3 and 4.

So, beyond what has been mentioned, how do we work with performance on CK3? We periodically dedicate time to ensuring that any new performance issues are dealt with, and investigating opportunities for further improvement. This often means increased threading, or reworking systems to be more performant. One of my favorite ways to make the game faster, however, is by slightly modifying the design to avoid expensive calculations that the player won't be affected by. To take one example we update the progress of the player's council tasks every single day. But for the AI we only do so once a month. The player is unlikely to ever notice the difference, but this way we reduce the cost of these updates to 1/30 of what they otherwise would be. Optimizations like this are all over the place in CK3 (and to some extent in CK2); there are a lot of small shortcuts that can be done that have a huge impact on performance but little or no impact on the player experience.

AI
Now it is time to talk a bit about the AI as well.

The person who has been in charge of AI for most of CK3's development is Niklas "Captain Gars" Strid, but he's currently on parental leave. For the last year or so I've been helping out with the AI, and now in his absence the full responsibility of it has fallen on me.

Since I didn't design the AI, this is going to be briefer than it might've been if Niklas was here to write it, but I'll cover some of the basic ideas behind how we've handled the AI in CK3.

Our main goal with the AI has been that it should make the game more fun for the player. This has several aspects to it:

- It should provide some level of challenge, because steamrolling from the get go isn't fun
- It should avoid doing things that are frustrating, even if it would make it "smarter"
- It should feel as if it's a plausible actor within a Medieval world

These goals all have both overlap, and parts where they're in opposition to one another. For instance, avoiding frustration does result in a slightly less challenging AI, but that's often a sacrifice that makes sense.

One of the biggest structural changes in CK3's AI is how it deals with its military. In CK2, if there were multiple AIs on the same side in a war, they would essentially act independently from one another with some systems for coordination. This usually worked fine, but sometimes it'd lead to a lack of coordination between allies and the AI taking odd decisions.

In CK3 we've designed the system from the ground up to handle multiple AIs on the same side. Instead of each AI commanding their own troops, they assign their troops to a war coordinator that handles all decision making; the individual decision making is just what troops to assign (which kicks in if there's more than one war they could participate in).

As such AIs tend to act in a much more coordinated manner.

However, that doesn't address coordination with the player. CK2's approach here in the end was to introduce an AI order system where you'd simply tell the AI what to do. We don't currently have that in CK3, but the AI still has a focus on assisting the player. Generally speaking the AI will try to keep its armies very close to the player, and help out in battles even if those battles will be lost with its help. An AI order system like in CK2 might still improve this further, but the gap is much smaller than in CK2 so we decided it would not be a priority for release. Additionally, the existence of the order system in CK2 significantly complicated the AI code, making further development of it more difficult, so there's a tradeoff to be considered when it comes to the # of bugs it'll introduce, and the slowdown to AI development it would be likely to cause.

So that covered "provide some level of challenge", but what about avoiding frustration? There's a lot of small things here and there designed to do that, but let's talk about a couple of concrete examples. In CK3 the AI has a system I tend to call "stand and fight". If the player (or any other enemy) is near its army, will beat it, and there's no real hope of winning the war as all its troops are already gathered, then instead of running away the AI will find a nearby defensive location and wait there for up to a month for the enemy to wipe it out. This way instead of dragging its demise out it makes a last stand in a good location. The result is that the player doesn't have to chase down armies nearly as much as in CK2, but that it only tends to kick in for wars the player is clearly going to win regardless.

Similarly, often the game design itself is created with the AI at least partially in mind. We've talked about the fort mechanics earlier, but the quick recap is that walking deep into enemy territory without sieging first is going to kill most of your troops. The AI will thus virtually never do it, so when you're behind your own lines you have the time to regroup and figure out what to do. Similarly, there's little temptation to try to chase down the AI deep into its territory. This helps keep the focus more on siege warfare, which is very fitting for the era.

It contributes to every goal I've mentioned: The AI ends up better due to there being fewer options available, so we could make it smarter in picking between those. The player gets less frustrated. And it emphasises a historical aspect of the era, while avoiding silly chases halfway around the world.

Now, that's been a whole lot of talk about military AI. What about the rest of it? The overall approach there's generally pretty similar to CK2, though rebuilt from scratch. The AI will periodically check a variety of possible actions, and take them if they make sense. There's some randomization, and AI personality affects a variety of actions, to ensure that the game feels alive rather than deterministic.

More of the AI can be modded than in CK2, as the interaction system has far less hardcoding. There's still parts that are hardcoded, such as actions that aren't interactions, but overall it should be possible to influence a bit more of the AI than in CK2.

Reduced hardcoding has also meant that balancing the AI is easier for us than in CK2, as a programmer doesn't always have to be involved. Especially once we get feedback from a large player base after release, this and various architectural improvements in the code compared to CK2 should make iterating on the AI easier than before.

Huge parts of what other characters do is also handled by events and so on to a greater extent than in CK2.

Generally speaking, the goal of the non-military AI is to make the world feel alive. This has occasionally meant needing some restrictions to ensure the player doesn't get overwhelmed. For instance, we've had to on numerous occasions restrict seduction against the player so that they don't get absolutely spammed if they happen to play one of the few female rulers around at game start.

Overall the AI should in many ways feel similar to in CK2, but with more of a focus on making the best possible experience for the player. After release it should be easier for us to further improve on the AI than it was in CK2.

PC Upgrade

[My newly upgraded PC]

Funnily enough, between when I first wrote this dev diary and when it was set to go out, I decided that it was finally time to upgrade my PC. I replaced my aging i7 4770K with a nice modern Ryzen 9 3900X, and my 16 GB of 2400 MHz RAM with 32 GB of 3600 MHz RAM.

So, I re-recorded my 1 minute test with full threading, which you can see here:

Video
Crusader Kings III Performance - High Specs

As you can see, this runs the game at a level I can only describe as unplayably fast. In a minute it progressed 1498 days, 56% further than my old CPU. The framerate is also more stable than

before, so I'm quite happy with the results.


```
3D Stats
Frame Time (ms/FPS): 0.99 / 1009.4
Render Time (ms/FPS): 0.48 / 2081.9
Render No Present (ms/FPS): 0.41 / 2429.7
Draw Calls: 245 (162 175)
States: 1 287 (880)
Buffer Data: 305.627 MB ( VB: 272.354 MB, IB: 33.140 MB, CB: 136.613 KB)
Texture Data: 1.413 GB
Render Target Data: 405.918 MB
Other PixelBuffer Data: 0 B
Buffer Update: 21.289 KB/frame (95)
Texture Update: 0 B/frame (0)
Constant Update: 56.934 KB/frame (284)
```
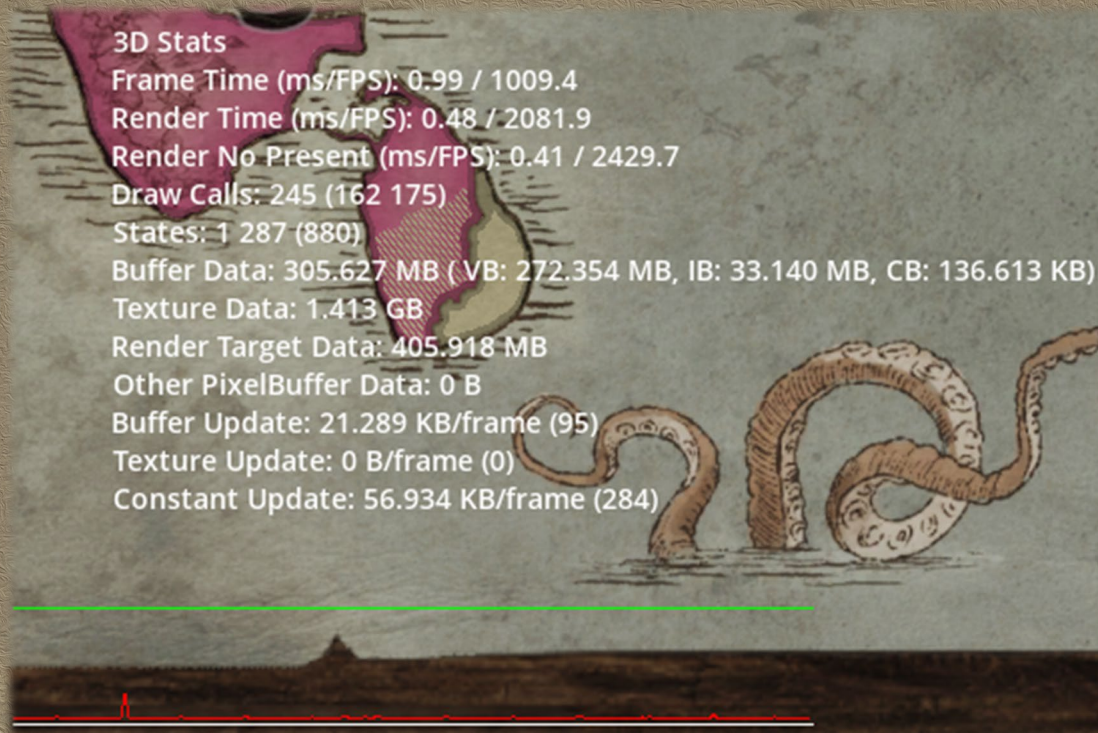
[My new machine running the game at 1000 FPS. Only while paused in one particular corner of the map though]

Dev Diary 37: Making Mods

blackninja9939
Programmer
69 Badges
∨

Mods are something very important to the team and something especially close to my heart. I got started at Paradox as a Content Designer due to my modding work on Crusader Kings II, so being able to make sure the sequel has lots of modding opportunities and trying to give back to the community that aided me in getting into this industry is something I am very passionate about, and I know others on the team had similar starts in modding as well.

We've aimed to make the game a lot more open in terms of what can be achieved in modding: we've got over 80 database object folders (some even with sub-folders), a very versatile event system structure, a GUI system that can be fully changed, history files, localization, sound, music, and more! So huge parts of the game can be changed to suit your needs!

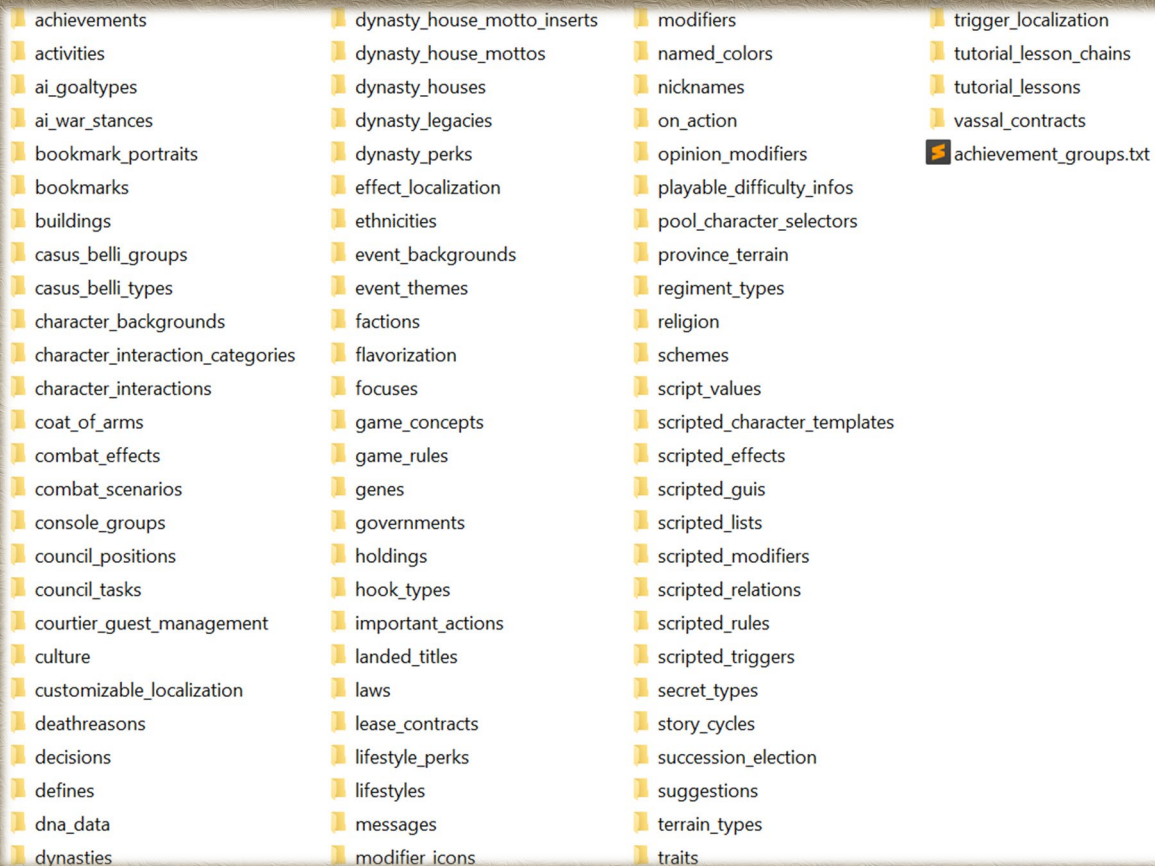|			
achievements	dynasty_house_motto_inserts	modifiers	trigger_localization
activities	dynasty_house_mottos	named_colors	tutorial_lesson_chains
ai_goaltypes	dynasty_houses	nicknames	tutorial_lessons
ai_war_stances	dynasty_legacies	on_action	vassal_contracts
bookmark_portraits	dynasty_perks	opinion_modifiers	achievement_groups.txt
bookmarks	effect_localization	playable_difficulty_infos	
buildings	ethnicities	pool_character_selectors	
casus_belli_groups	event_backgrounds	province_terrain	
casus_belli_types	event_themes	regiment_types	
character_backgrounds	factions	religion	
character_interaction_categories	flavorization	schemes	
character_interactions	focuses	script_values	
coat_of_arms	game_concepts	scripted_character_templates	
combat_effects	game_rules	scripted_effects	
combat_scenarios	genes	scripted_guis	
console_groups	governments	scripted_lists	
council_positions	holdings	scripted_modifiers	
council_tasks	hook_types	scripted_relations	
courtier_guest_management	important_actions	scripted_rules	
culture	landed_titles	scripted_triggers	
customizable_localization	laws	secret_types	
deathreasons	lease_contracts	story_cycles	
decisions	lifestyle_perks	succession_election	
defines	lifestyles	suggestions	
dna_data	messages	terrain_types	
dynasties	modifier_icons	traits	

[screenshot of common database folders]

In the rest of this diary I'll talk less about what you can do overall and more spotlight some things I think modders of CK2 will be excited about, as otherwise this diary would be huge and I need to get back to coding at some point.

At its core, our scripting language in Imperator and Crusader Kings III is based on an in-house grand strategy library called Jomini, which acts as a more GSG focused layer used on top of our Clausewitz engine.

When Imperator released I posted a lot of information about the things that come directly from Jomini and which are shared between both games, so I would recommend checking out my Grand Jomini Modding Information Manuscript thread if you are an interested modder.

If you'd like to know more about event scripting then Dev Diary 30 had a very good coverage of that which you should check out!

Feel free to ask questions about both the linked threads in this one as well!

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Character Interactions

To focus more on game level things, one of the biggest things changed from CK2 is the character interactions.

For a brief history lesson in CK2 modding, most of these core interactions were hardcoded, things like arranging marriages, declaring war, alliances etc. It was only after quite a few patches that the ability to add custom "targeted decisions" was introduced, and it's worth noting that it was only the ability to add or modify those targeted decisions - the older hardcoded core interactions were still not particularly moddable.

For CK3 we wanted to open all of that up to go through one unified character interaction system, so every action goes through our script system now. This gives many benefits: with script being able to change it we can now change weights for the AI's use of these actions with just a few text file changes instead of needing code time, we can change who can do them, and what people are considered good matches etc. And of course that opens it all up for modders as well.

The AI can also be scripted to use all of these custom interactions, tell them who's a good target, as well as how often they should evaluate it (which is important for performance).

There are still some hard coded links with the interactions, specifically when it's an interaction that's needed to be used by the AI in a non-trivial manner. These interactions are all marked clearly, though, and if you attempt to remove them then the game will give you a warning when loading that it really needs this interaction so put it back please. This behaviour in fact applies to almost all hard coded database objects, not just those which are interactions.

For reference here is a full list of all the options interactions can use that impact how they are taken, received, responded to, shown graphically and used by the AI:

NOTE: *Please use the link below to view the Code as the code itself would take up around 3-4 pages I deemed it being too long to include it here.*
[CK3 Dev Diary #37 - Making Mods](#)

Combining Mods

Combining multiple mods together has always been a bit tricky but I wanted to try and make some gains with compatibility so that it doesn't require as many manual patches.

To aid in this a bit I've made it so database entries can be overridden by key even if that new entry is in a different file. This means if you want to override what the lunatic trait does then instead of needing to copy the entire traits file just to change one entry you can just make your own file just containing your new definition of what the lunatic trait does, such as giving it a boost in learning, prowess, and attraction opinion like I have done below!

```
lunatic_1 = { # Highly event driven, Schizophrenia
    index = 99

    group = lunatic
    level = 1

    # Everyone loves a lunatic am I right?
    attraction_opinion = 50
    learning = 20
    prowess = 10

    vassal_opinion = -10
    same_opinion = 10
    hostile_scheme_resistance_mult = 0.1
    health = -0.25
    health_trait = yes

    desc = {
        first_valid = {
            triggered_desc = {
                trigger = {
                    NOT = { exists = this }
                }
                desc = trait_lunatic_1_desc
            }
            desc = trait_lunatic_1_character_desc
        }
    }

    ai_honor = -10
    ai_rationality = -200
    ai_boldness = 50
```

Line 33, Column 2

[screenshot of a file overriding the lunatic trait]
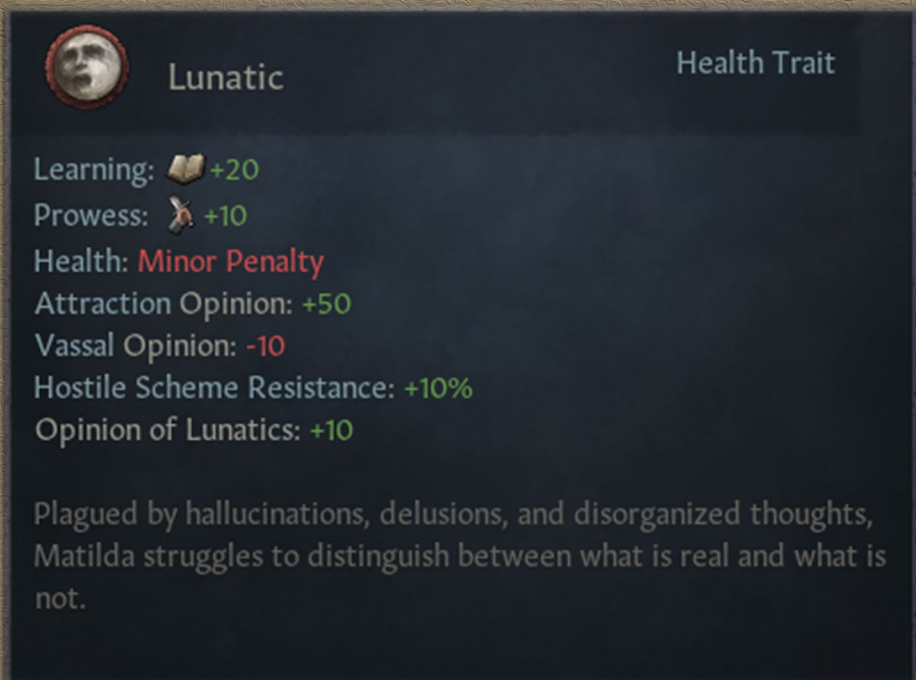
[screenshot of the new lunatic trait]

This also applies to files from other mods, as long as yours is loaded first, so you can overwrite traits and other database elements from other mods

Currently we do not support appending to a definition instead of fully overwriting, as we'd need to rework a good chunk of things and test it extensively though it is something I am keeping in mind for the future.

Alerts, Issues and Notifications

As I mentioned in Dev Diary 16, all of the new interface utilities we have for explaining the game are moddable. Which means you can add, remove, and modify any of these things through script instead of them being hard coded like in CK2.

I'll start with the notifications and toasts as they are the simplest. You simply make a database entry in the common folder for your notification and then wherever you want to run it from you use the send_interface_message or send_interface_toast effect.

Those effects take the type of message as well as optional overrides for the title and text instead of using what was scripted in the database. They can also take any number of effects to run which will then be included as text when displayed, though it is often recommended to use a custom tooltip instead of bloating the message with a lot of mechanical text.

For alerts, advice and current issues they all go through the same "important actions" system, the core difference between them is which type they are specified to use which controls their visual appearance and location.

These important actions have a check_create_action and effect block, both run interface effects (specially marked effects that do not modify the game state across MP but just local UI things) to see if they can be created and what to do when clicked.

The main interface effect to run in check_create_action will be the try_create_important_action which attempts to create a UI element for this action type and this will usually be behind an if check.

In the effect block for when the UI element is clicked there are a couple of things which are a good idea to run, if its a piece of reactive advice then using the start_tutorial_lesson is a great idea, and for alerts or issues then the open_view_data effect is the way to go to open the window that can help address whatever is causing the alert or issue!
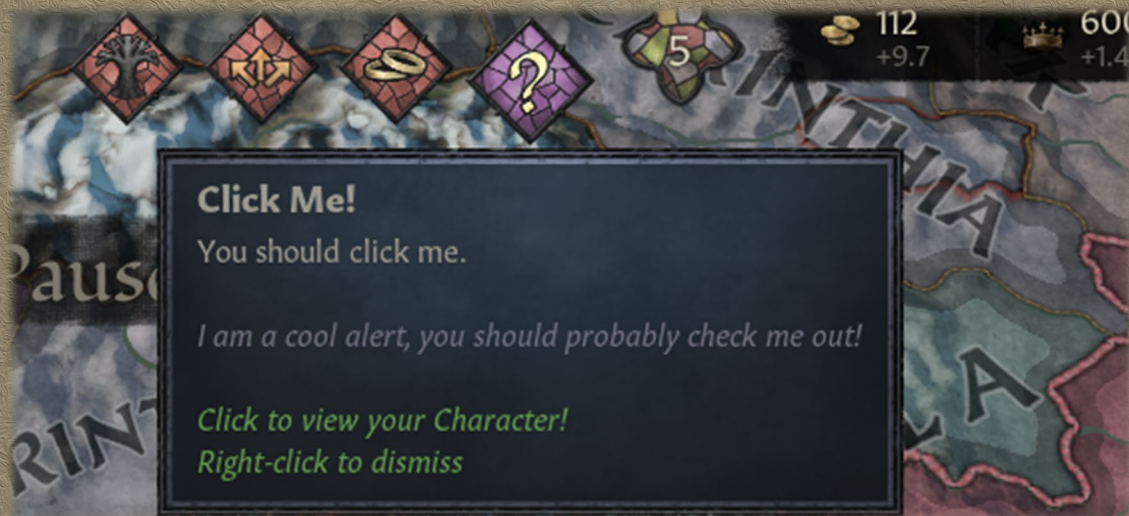
[a custom alert]

Note: Whilst making this dev diary I actually found out that in 1.0 adding a custom icon like you see via a mod is actually not functional, it's already been fixed for 1.1 but I thought I should note that here quickly for people coming back to this dev diary to tell me off when it doesn't work right away.

The suggestions are similar to the important actions, but also have fields for the weight which checks how important the suggestion is to the player and a score which checks which potential target of a suggestion is best.

For example, in the fabricate claim suggestion the weight is based on if there is anything nearby you could fabricate on, how many claims you already have, and if you are already fabricating a claim. The score for which title to suggest you fabricate is based on a much larger list of values such as the development level of the county, how easy it'll probably be to conquer, if you share a faith or culture, etc.

Scripted GUIs

Like with Imperator the interface is incredibly moddable, the GUI scripting language whilst different from the normal database and event script is still very versatile and lets you change both the appearance and positioning and full functionality of almost all the GUI elements in the game. We also have a GUI debug mode in game which allows viewing through the hierarchy and opening to the file and line of where elements are defined which makes working with the interface a lot easier.

Currently we do not support creating your own new windows GUIs (though it is on my never ending to do list), but the easy work around there is just to make them as children of the main HUD window, which is always shown, and then you can have anything.

As is listed briefly in the Jomini Modding info I linked it is possible to make scripted GUIs, which allow a link to exist between the GUI system to the normal script system so you can test for if different triggers evaluate true or false and to run effects in the game state safely across multiplayer.

I am very excited to see what people end up doing with this especially, there should hopefully be a massive reduction in the number of hacks needed to display information now that real interfaces can be made for mods to show things about their unique mechanics.

Here is a very small example of a custom interface I put together to give you a little button you can press for "fun" aka for murder against another adult character of a different faith.

Amīr al-Umarā Tamim ibn al-Muizz of Af ...

Do the Murdering

Are you sure you want to do the Murdering?

Cancel   Ok

[screenshot of a custom interface button and its confirmation pop up]

```
1   press_for_fun = {
2       scope = character
3
4       saved_scopes = {
5           faith
6       }
7
8       confirm_title = press_for_fun_confirm_title
9       confirm_text = press_for_fun_confirm_desc
10
11      is_shown = {
12          is_adult = yes
13      }
14      is_valid = {
15          not = { root.faith = scope:faith }
16      }
17      effect = {
18          death = natural
19      }
20  }
```

```
button_skull = {
    name = "press_for_fun"
    datacontext = "[GetScriptedGui( 'press_for_fun' )]"
    visible = "[ScriptedGui.IsShown( GuiScope.SetRoot( Character.MakeScope ).AddScope( 'faith', GetPlayer.GetFaith.MakeScope ).End )]"
    enabled = "[ScriptedGui.IsValid( GuiScope.SetRoot( Character.MakeScope ).AddScope( 'faith', GetPlayer.GetFaith.MakeScope ).End )]"
    tooltip = "[ScriptedGui.BuildTooltip( GuiScope.SetRoot( Character.MakeScope ).AddScope( 'faith', GetPlayer.GetFaith.MakeScope ).End )]"
    onclick = "[ScriptedGui.Execute( GuiScope.SetRoot( Character.MakeScope ).AddScope( 'faith', GetPlayer.GetFaith.MakeScope ).End )]"
    onclick = "[CharacterInteractionMenuWindow.Close]"
    size = { 25 25 }

    using = tooltip_ne
}
```

[screenshot of the script and gui entry for the button]

Dev Diary 38: Legacy Showcase

As mentioned in the Dynasty Dev Diary, you have to carefully choose between using your powers as Dynast or saving up for Legacies (or strike a careful balance). Unlocking Legacies are a very long-term goal, but can radically alter the way you play the game. Because Legacies are permanent, the bonuses they convery are generally not as powerful as those you get from Lifestyles - on the other hand you can count on them for the rest of the game! And they apply to every member of your dynasty.

Depending on how you play, you'll unlock varying amounts of Legacies each game. If you carefully plan every child's marriage it's possible to complete several tracks - but even so, the first one you choose is usually the one that will truly define your Dynasty, as you struggle your way to the top!

The cost of Legacies is static, and each step in a track gets progressively more expensive. The first step costs 1000 renown, and the last one costs 5000. While most tend to unlock one full track before moving on (as the bonuses get progressively more powerful) it's a legitimate strategy to pick up some of the cheaper ones first.

Let's briefly go through each track.

Warfare

The Warfare legacies mold your Dynasty members into competent knights and powerful commanders. The ideal choice for a true warmonger, or someone who wants to stalwartly defend their rightful lands.

Personally, I find that the Warfare Legacy track does really well when playing in an area where you're likely to get attacked, such as when playing Tribal, or in the crossroads between India and the Middle East.

The first Legacy, House of Warriors, makes every Dynasty member have additional +2 Prowess skill, as well as increasing the effectiveness of Knights by 15% for landed members. A very powerful early-game Legacy, and the only one that objectively increases your military might.

Generational Belligerence reduces the cost of going to war by 20%, primarily making conquest and third-party Claim wars easier to declare (warring for your own Claims is always cheap, but declaring wars for someone else's is expensive). A good Legacy for those that want to grow their realm early.

Squire Traditions makes all members gain 10% more Martial lifestyle experience. You'll see similar bonuses in other trees for other Lifestyles. All of these are generally great to have, and stack with the bonuses you get from education.

Inherited Tactics is a fantastic Legacy for winning wars, as it gives your dynasty members +5 Advantage while leading armies. As you'll eventually experience, Advantage is the main deciding factor in wars. Having an extra +5 is truly huge, but of course - your enemies could always recruit your family members and use them as commanders against you...

Finally, the Private Army Legacy unlocks an additional slot for Men-at-Arms. This is not to be underestimated, as there are no other sources of additional Men-at-Arms slots except for increasing your tier. Additionally, it also gives you access to the 'House Guard' regiment - a special regiment of Heavy Infantry MaA that is free, but takes up one MaA slot and can't have its size increased. This makes even a lowly Count of your Dynasty able to field quite a

formidable force, while you as a mighty Emperor might instead opt to use the extra MaA slot for an additional unit of Armored Horsemen!

Law

The Law legacies focus on stability and consolidation, making members of your Dynasty exceptionally good vassals and reducing the chance of revolts.

I personally enjoy using these Legacies when running a larger realm, especially one containing multiple Cultures. I usually go for it when playing a vassal in the Holy Roman Empire or the Seljuk Empire, as the subjects you have are quite diverse.

The first Legacy, Mostly Fair, increases popular opinion in your domain by 5. This is quite powerful, and even offsets the entire penalty for being the wrong culture in the same culture group. A great Legacy to have if your domain is mostly made up of other cultures or faiths.

Faithful Magistrates increases passive Control Growth by 0.2/month in your entire Domain. Getting control up after conquest or revocation is a challenge, and your Marshal can only be assigned to one County at a time. This also makes your Dynasty members excellent vassal candidates for newly conquered lands.

Power and Prosperity boosts Stewardship lifestyle experience by 10%.

Delegated Authority increases your Powerful Vassal's opinion of you by 5, which isn't insignificant seeing how hard they can be to please. Especially when you're an Emperor, and simply can't have all of your Powerful Vassals on the Council...

Finally, Home Estates increases your Domain Limit by 1, which is a fantastic bonus to have - especially if you're not playing a line of high-stewardship characters. This means that it's easier to preserve your domain throughout the generations.

Guile
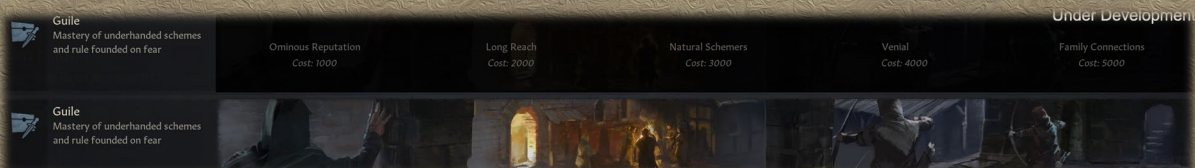
The Guile Legacies are optimal for those that want to rule as dreaded tyrants, and/or murder their way to the top.

If I know that keeping my realm together peacefully isn't an option, then this is what I'd pick. The increase in Dread gain is invaluable when starting off, especially if I need to get my plans going quickly. In Spain, for example, there's just no time to waste in uniting the lands, so ruling through fear while removing my brothers one-by-one is a legitimately good way to play. Generally, I'd avoid picking these Legacies if I was planning to have a lot of Dynastic vassals, as some legacies can be double-edged...

The first Legacy, Ominous Reputation, increases Dread gain by 20%, a fantastic starting Legacy when you want to rule through fear throughout the generations.

Long Reach increases Hostile Scheme Success Chance by 10%, which is excellent as it applies not only to murders, but to Hook Fabrication, Abduction and all other hostile schemes too.

It is a double edged sword though, if your kinsmen want to see you dead…
Natural Schemers boosts Intrigue lifestyle experience by 10%.

Venial makes Tyranny decay 20% faster, which is great in combination with Dread for quickly reorganizing your realm through revocations and retractions.

Finally, the Family Connections legacy gives each Dynasty member a major chance of avoiding one successful murder scheme targeting them. When playing as a Dreadful ruler, being murdered is really the only constant threat hanging above your head. It's calming to know that you have at least some protection, but remember, your devious brother will have the same…

Blood

The Blood legacies were briefly covered in the previous Dev Diary, and remain my personal favorites. They affect the inheritance of traits, and can even make your Dynasty known for showing certain traits!

This legacy track is optimal for those wanting to play the breeding game, trying to get the best possible rulers to succeed them.

Noble Veins has two bonuses; firstly it improves the chance of inheriting good congenital traits by 30%, and then it adds 30% to the (admittedly small) chance for new good genetic traits to randomly appear. Quite a good starting Legacy, allowing you to kickstart the breeding game.

Convergent Blood increases the chance of reinforcing genetic traits by 30%. This means that the offspring of a character with the first level strength genetic trait would have that much more chance of getting the second level genetic strength trait, and so on. Naturally, this chance is still mostly dependent on both parents having the traits.

Resilient Bloodline is much like Noble Veins, but it reduces the chance of bad genetic traits appearing randomly or propagating, also by 30%.

Architected Ancestry allows you to select one of the following traits to more commonly appear among your Dynasty Members: Beauty (Tier 1), Physique (Tier 1), Intelligence (Tier 1), Fecund (50% more fertility), Giant, Dwarf, Scaly or Albino. This one is fantastic for roleplaying, as having a dynasty of, for example, Giants makes for a very interesting story. Historically there were definitely families known for sharing a specific 'trait', flattering or not, this legacy represents that. The chance for each newborn child to get the trait is roughly ~2%, so you'll still have to put in some work if you want the trait to be truly common.

Octogenarians increase Life Expectancy by 5 years. Unlike a flat health boost, this also makes women able to carry children for 5 more years, and makes character portraits visually age slower.

Erudition

The Erudition legacies are more powerful than they might seem at a glance, with a strong focus on piety and the clergy - but the final legacy is possibly the strongest of them all, if you keep a skilled council.

I personally enjoy the Erudition legacies when playing in the middle of a vast Feudal sphere, such as the HRE or anywhere in India, as the guests you get are much more vital to your expansion than in Clan/Tribal areas like the Middle East or Africa.

Vibrant Court increases your Court and Guest opinion by +10, and makes your Court attract better Guests. The opinion is very useful, as it makes your court less likely to scheme against you, but the true power of this legacy lies in the attraction of better guests. When choosing where to travel, Claimants and exceptionally good commanders/knights are significantly more likely to visit you, should you be within their range. If you plan to expand early using foreign Claimants, this is the legacy for you.

Ordained Rulership increases your Piety gain by 10%, providing one of the few sources of unconditional Piety increase in the game. This is obviously a great legacy if you're aiming for creating your own Faith, or just want the Pope to love your Dynasty.

Treasured Knowledge boosts learning lifestyle experience by 10%.

True Believers give your Dynasty a +5 Clergy opinion, which will help you earn the favor of both realm priest and Head of Faith. If you're of a faith with no Clergy, you will instead gain a +3 flat increase in opinion for characters of your faith.

Bureaucrats increase the base progress and impact from Councillor skill on Council Tasks by 10%. Yes, this means that every single Council task is 10% faster. Of course, this effect is more useful the more skilled your council is - but with the better guests attracted by Vibrant Court you'll rarely find yourself without suitable candidates!

Glory

The Glory legacies are all about the name of your dynasty, and how far you can get it to travel across the known world. Prestige and opinion, fame and glory!

Naturally, this is a great track for those in need of prestige - which includes all Tribal rulers. This is not to say that the legacies aren't useful for others, as they make it easier to arrange beneficial marriages and get the aid you need.

Desirable Match increases marriage acceptance by 30. Now, how much is that really? There are many factors that determine the acceptance of a marriage, but having an extra 30 essentially means that you're able to marry one step above your current position (marrying the child of a Duke as a Count, for example). Now, this truly shines when combined with the Gallantry Lifestyle Tree Perk, for a total of 80 extra acceptance... Essentially a must-have for anyone planning to play an extended marriage game.

Renowned Name increases Prestige gain by 10%, providing one of the few sources of unconditional Prestige increase in the game. You can never have too much prestige, as it helps both with increasing your Level of Fame (opinion) and as a resource for declaring war!

Earning Respect boosts diplomacy lifestyle experience by 10%.

Assertive Rulers reduces the Short Reign penalty by 20%, providing a much needed boost to stability on succession.

Righteousness increases general opinion by 10, yes, that's with everyone. A massively helpful legacy for keeping your realm faction-free! Essentially, a Dynasty with a completed Glory legacy track will have no troubles keeping even large realms together.

Kin
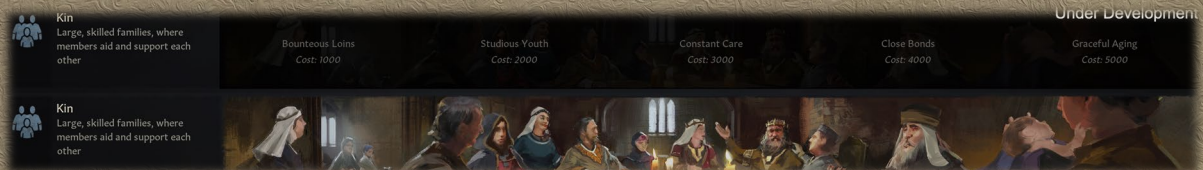
Finally, the Kin legacies are tailored for those that want a truly vast Dynasty, where members help each other and rarely quarrel.

Now, there's no better legacy for those that want a big realm where most vassals are of your own Dynasty. Your kin will tend to be well educated, and keeping the peace is easier when you can use schemes such as Sway or Befriend (or even Seduce…) against your kin with ease. I really enjoy this legacy track when playing a polygamous faith, for example when playing as a Clan ruler in the Middle East, as then you're motivated to keep a large dynasty regardless.

Bounteous Loins increase fertility by 10% for your entire Dynasty, this means that it's much easier to get over the early-game 'hump' where you're establishing your dynasty, as well as make your dynasty larger in the long run.

Studious Youth makes it much more likely for members of your dynasty to get good Education traits, offsetting the need for finding a high-learning guardian.

Constant Care increases spousal opinion by +10, and lowers the chance of complications during pregnancy. Again, in the long run this means that your Dynasty will grow much larger than those without these legacies.

Close Bonds gives a Dynasty opinion bonus of +5, which means that everyone in the entire dynasty likes each other much more than they already do (essentially doubling the bonus). It also provides one of the most fun bonuses of any legacy; 30% increased success chance of Personal Schemes against Dynasty Members. This means every personal scheme, from Sway to Elope. Use with care...

Graceful Aging makes it so that your Dynasty members do NOT lose prowess with age. Normally, older characters lose prowess with time, making a once-great knight easily bestable by a young upstart in personal combat. It also gives Dynasty members a chance to randomly gain skills when growing older, making the elder members of the dynasty truly wise, and very useful as commanders, knights and councillors!

Dev Diary 39: Achievements Showcase

Let's have a look at what achievements you can get, and the ways of getting them. As we're so close to release, we'll be taking a gander at the full list!

… With apologies in advance for the puns. -_- They forced me to implement them.

Wokeg
Juniorest Content Designer
⌄

A House of my Own
create a cadet branch of your dynasty

A Legacy to Last the Ages
complete an entire dynasty legacy path

A Name Known Throughout the World
have your dynasty reach the highest possible level of renown

A Perfect Circle
have only two distinct parents, grandparents, and great grandparents, counting absent ancestors as individual characters

Above God
have a strong hook on your head of faith

Al-Andalus
starting as an Iberian Muslim, control all of Iberia and take the Avenge the Battle of Tours decision

Álmost There
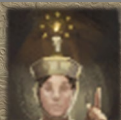*as Álmos Árpád, form Hungary & convert to Christianity*

An Unfortunate Accident
inherit a title from someone via murder

Bad Blood
go to war with one of your siblings over a claim

Beacon of Progress
have your culture unlock all innovations, excluding regional and culture-specific innovations

Blood Eagle
starting as any child of Ragnarr Lothbrok, conquer all of the British Isles

Carolingian Consolidation
starting as a Karling, be the only independent Karling to hold a landed title

Celebrity
reach the highest possible level of fame

Death Did Us Part
murder your spouse

Dreadful Ruler
have the maximum amount of dread

End of an Era
play until 1453

Fine Print
use a hook to modify a feudal contract

Followed by Shadows
know ten secrets simultaneously

For the Faith
take part in a successful Great Holy War, on either side

Frankokratia
as a French Catholic, hold and completely control the Kingdom of Thessalonika without holding or being vassalised to the Byzantine Empire

From Rags to Riches
starting as a count, lead your line to rule an empire

Give a Dog a Bone
starting as Matilda of Tuscany, lead your dynasty to rule the Kingdom of Italy, have at least fifty living dynasty members, and found a Holy Order

Going Places
as Haesteinn of Montaigu in 867, hold any kingdom-tier title

It's not a Cult
create a faith

Keeping it in the Family
have a child with the inbred trait

Kings to the Seventh Generation
starting as Count Eudes of Anjou in 867, lead your dynasty to rule the Kingdom of France

Know Your Place
defeat a faction in war

Land of the Rus
starting as Rurik the Troublemaker in 867, lead your dynasty to rule the Empire of Russia

Last Count, First King
starting as Duke Nuno of Portucale in 1066, form Portugal

Monumental
fully upgrade a duchy building anywhere in your personal domain

Mother of Us All
starting as Magajiva Daura, reform an African pagan faith, and convert all counties in Africa to it

Moving up in the World
increase your rank

Non Nobis Domine
found a holy order

Norman Yoke
starting as William the Bastard in 1066, win the Norman Invasion, become English, and have only English Vassals below you in the Kingdom of England

Not So Feudal System
use the claim throne scheme successfully

Paragon of Virtue
have three or more virtuous traits

Prolific
have one hundred living dynasty members

Reconquista
starting as an Iberian Christian, convert all of Iberia to Christianity

Rise from the Ashes
restore the Roman Empire

Royal Dignity
starting as Vratislav Premyslid in 1066, lead your dynasty to rule the Kingdom of Bohemia & the Holy Roman Empire simultaneously

Saint
reach the highest possible level of devotion

Seductive
as any one character, successfully seduce ten people

Seven Holy Cities
as a Hindu ruler, hold all seven Hindu holy sites at the same time

Sibling Rivalry
starting as any of the Jimena siblings in 1066, become Emperor of Spain

Stressful Situation
suffer a mental break

The Emerald Isle
starting as an Irish ruler, hold the Kingdom of Ireland

The Emperor's New Clothes
while holding any empire title, be naked

The Succession is Safe
have ten living children

The Things Love Does for Us
have a lover save you from a murder attempt

The Things We Do for Love
murder your lover's spouse

Trapped in the Web
have strong hooks on three direct vassals

Turning to Diamonds
reach the highest possible stress level

Until Death Do Us Part
marry another character

Way of Life
obtain every perk in a lifestyle

What Nepotism?
have your dynasty rule ten independent realms of at least kingdom tier simultaneously

Wily as the Fox
starting as Robert the Fox in 1066, rule the Kingdom of Sicily, hold either the Kingdom of Epirus, Hellas, or Thessalonika, and convert all of its original counties to Catholicism

Notable Links

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with [OneProudBavarian](#), [Havoc](#) and [Pixelated Apollo](#)

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[Introducing CK3](#)

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