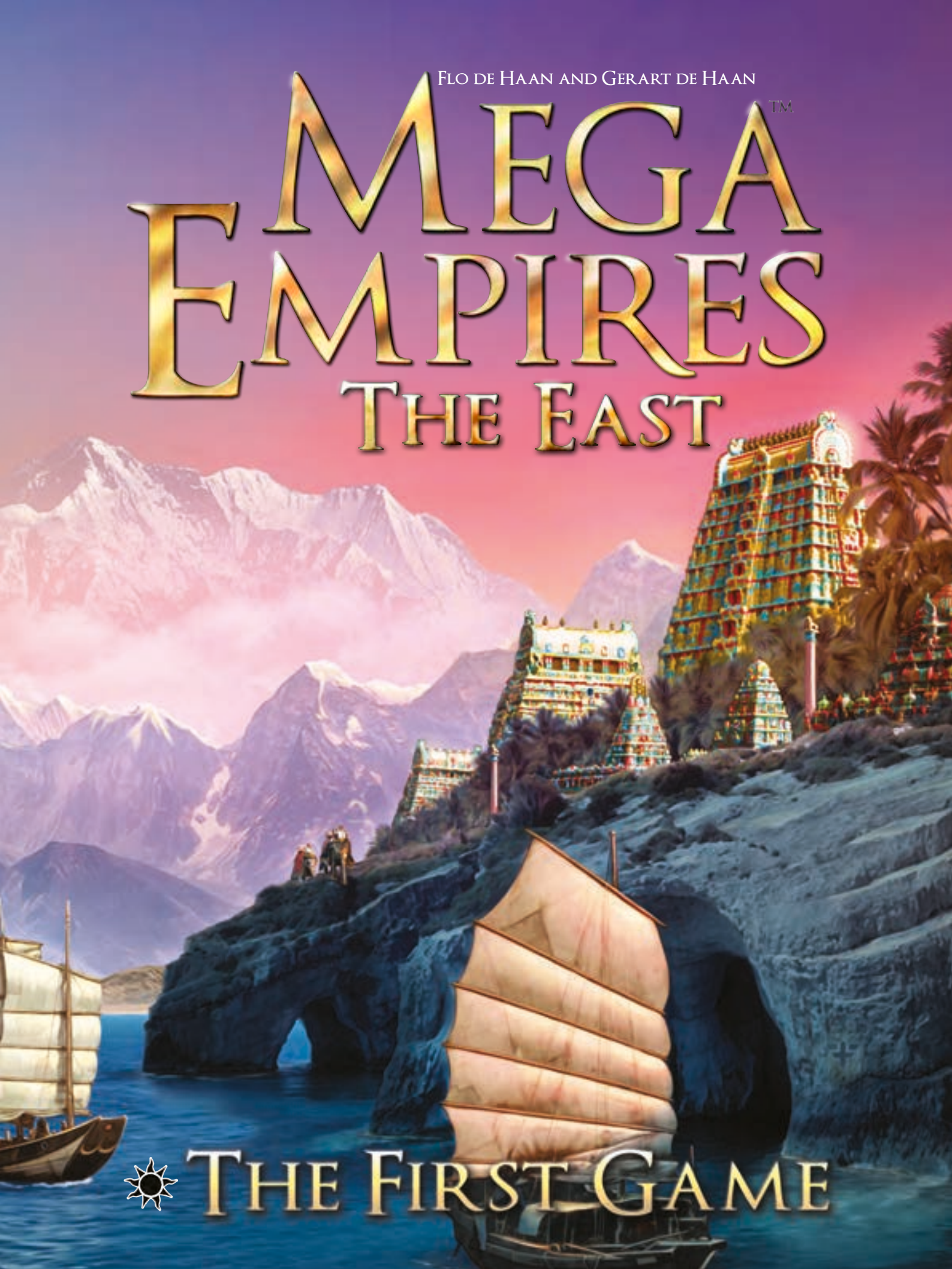
Flo de Haan and Gerart de Haan

Mega Empires™

The East



The First Game

The First Game

This booklet is meant for people who have never played the game before. The objective of this scenario is to learn the rules organically as the game progresses, instead of having to read the full rulebook before starting. It will develop as a **simplified** version of the game, adding new rules every step of the way. This scenario takes about **90-120** minutes to complete.

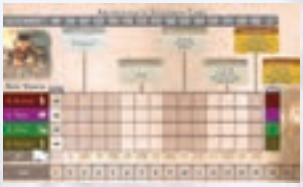
This scenario is specifically designed for a **3**-player setup. If you want to start learning the game with a **different** number of players, it is recommended to either form teams or have a player play with more than one civilization. It is also possible to go through the scenario on your own. In this scenario, we follow the friends Charles, Sam and Linda as they play the game.

If you are already familiar with the game rules and only want to learn the rules for **3-4** players, we suggest to use the rulebook **Additional Scenarios for 3-18 Players** instead.

A. Set Up the Game

- Take the western board of the two map board panels and fold it in half along the short side so that only the top half of the map is visible. Take **6 Out of Play** markers and place **1** each on the following areas in the southwestern part of the map: *Western Media*, *Urmia*, *Elam*, *Mesopotamia*, *Babylonia*, and *Susa*. These areas are **out of play** during this scenario. Areas that show no name and/or population limit number are also out of play as opposed to areas that are partly visible (for example *Persepolis*) which are **in play** as both the name and a population limit number are shown.

- Take the Census Track board and the Archeological Succession Table (A.S.T.) for **3-4** Players (Basic Version).



- Take the Market board (the back side of the eastern map board panel) and fold the board along the long side, so that the market for **3** players is visible.

- Take the set of trade cards and only use the following sets of commodities, all of which show **3-9, 12-18** on the top center of the cards: **9** Flax, **9** Hides, **8** Furs, **8** Stone, **9** Salt, **8** Timber, **7** Cotton, **8** Sugar, **6** Lacquer, **7** Livestock, **6** Bronze, **5** Silver, **5** Jade, **6** Spice, **5** Tea, **4** Dye, **5** Pearls, **4** Silk, and the **8** Major Tradeable Calamities.The Non Tradeable and Minor Calamities are **not** used in this scenario.
- Sort the trade cards into **9** stacks, according to their face value. Each stack contains **2** different types of commodities and **1** calamity (except for stack **1**). For each stack first set aside the calamities, and only take the commodity cards. Shuffle each stack of commodity cards separately, face down. For each stack, set aside the top **4** cards, then take the corresponding calamity and shuffle it with the remaining commodities, and put the **4** commodities on top of that stack.

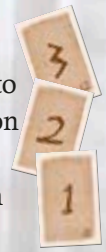
For each stack

The top **4** cards are commodity cards.

The rest of the stack is a shuffled mix of the remaining commodity cards and **1** calamity card.

- Place each stack **face down** in the card holders accordingly from face value **1** to **9**. Take the set of Water commodities (**0**) and place them **face up** next to the stacks of trade cards.

- The civilizations used are: **Kushan**, **Parthia**, and **Indus**. Use the **Priority tokens** (**1**, **2**, **3**) to determine the order for choosing a civilization to play with. The Priority tokens are used later, so put them aside. After choosing, each player takes the corresponding player mat and the token set for that civilization (**55** population tokens, **9** cities, and **4** ships and **4** A.S.T.-markers). Place the population tokens in the stock section of the player mat, place the **9** cities on the numbers **1-9**, and the **4** ships on their **4** slots on the right of the player mat, all colored side up. Each set includes **1** 'spare' token which is not used. The A.S.T.-markers are the smaller tokens. For each civilization, put **1** A.S.T.-marker and the spare token back in the box.



- Each player places **1** A.S.T.-marker on the census track above the **1-8** box, **1** A.S.T.-marker on the A.S.T. covering the left arrow (next to the name of their civilization), and **1** A.S.T.-marker on the City Count part of the Market board, next to '**0**'. All markers are placed with their colored side up. Also place a Turn-marker on turn **1** on the A.S.T., and **1** on the trading turns part of the Market board (left of **1**), and a Market-marker on the City Count board next to **0**.
- Each player takes **1** population token and places it on the map board on their starting area containing the name of their civilization.

Exception for a 3-player scenario: The starting area of Parthia is *Hyrcania* instead of *Nisa*, as shown on the image with the map board setup *(page 2)*.

The starting location is only used for setup, and can be ignored for the rest of the game. At this point all players should have a player mat with **54** tokens, **9** cities and **4** ships.

B. Identify the Game Parts

Player Mats
At the start of the game, all playing pieces are located in the **Stock** section of the player mat. The **Treasury** section is used later in the game. In between these **2** sections is a list of turn phases. During this scenario we will skip many of these phases, adding them one by one as the game progresses.

Census Track board
The census track indicates each player's population token count on the board.

Market Board
This board is only used in games with **3-4** players. Later in the game, players may make trade actions on the market board to gain trade value. The leftmost section is the **City Count**, which is used for indicating each player's number of cities in play for the purpose of acquisition of trade cards and trading.

Archeological Succession Table (A.S.T.)
The A.S.T. indicates a civilization's progression through time. At certain points a check is made for progression. If so, a player will advance on the A.S.T. (to the right). The different colored areas on this track indicate specific eras (such as the **Stone Age**, the **Bronze Age** and the **Iron Age**). To advance to a next era, the players have to fulfill specific requirements.

Map Board
On the map board we see **land areas**, sea areas, and **coastal areas** (which consist of both sea and land). Areas that have only sea are called **open sea areas** and are not accessible in this scenario (though in the full game they are). Most areas have a name and a **population limit**. At certain points a check is made and any population exceeding this limit is removed and returned to stock. Between these checks players can move and exceed this limit in order to engage in conflict or build cities. In some areas there are black or white markings shaped like an archway. These markings indicate **city sites**, which are ideal locations to build cities. Some areas have a population limit of **0**. In these areas a city can never be built and population cannot survive. There are **flood plains**, represented as darker green patches stretching over one or more areas, and there are **volcanoes**. Neither are used in this scenario; they are only used in the full game.

population limit

city site

volcano

C. Start the Game

The game is played in turns, each of which consists of several phases. In this scenario each phase will be indicated by a **bold header**. If no particular order is mentioned in a phase, all players take their actions simultaneously during each phase, before moving to the new phase.

Turn 1

Population Expansion
Each player takes a **population token** from stock and places it on top of the token already on the map board. All players now have **2** tokens on the board.

Movement
During this phase, all players may move their **2** tokens **1** area each.

In order to gain the best learning experience do not deviate from the examples as described in the green boxes. Charles, Sam and Linda will play the three civilizations.

The practice for movement is that players should plan ahead and imagine where they would want to have tokens in later turns.

- **Charles** plays **Kushan**. He could move both tokens south to *Gandhara* which has access to the most areas, but a better option is to move **1** token there and **1** token west to *Balkh*. Why? Because Parthia may invade the areas up north later, if Kushan leaves it empty.
- **Sam** plays **Indus**. Indus can move either token in **4** directions. *Sindh* is a strong strategic area because of their access to the most areas, but it can only support **1** token (the number in the area). Indus moves **1** token to *Sindh* and **1** token to *Upper Indus* to prevent Kushan from invading the areas there later.
- **Linda** plays **Parthia**. The best option for Linda is to move **1** token to *Karakum*, and **1** token south to *Hecatompylos* in order to be able to occupy the southwestern areas in later turns, before Indus reaches these areas.

Tips for movement:
- *Spread out as much as possible and occupy a large number of areas early in the game.*
- *Avoid leaving population tokens exceeding the*

population limit in any area at the end of the Movement phase - especially early in the game.
- *Often the areas that border most other areas are the better areas to occupy because they provide access to more options next turn.*
- *Eventually players will want to build cities in areas with city sites.*
- *Flip each token that has moved (or intentionally does not move) to the white side to indicate which tokens have moved and which players have completed their moves. As more tokens appear on the board, this becomes important. When all players have finished moving, flip all tokens back to the colored side.*

In the first few turns, besides Population Expansion and Movement, most other phases are skipped.

End of Turn 1 - A.S.T.-Alteration

In this phase, for each player a check is made whether they meet the requirements to advance on the A.S.T. For the **Stone Age** there are no requirements, so at this point all players move their markers **1** space to the right. After this, the Turn-marker is moved **1** space to the right, and the second turn begins.

Turn 2

Population Expansion

From now on, when new rules or definitions are introduced, these will be put in orange boxes.

For each player:
- In any area containing **1** of your tokens, **1** token is added. In any area containing **2** or more of your tokens, **2** tokens are added.
- Population limits may be exceeded during this phase.

***Note** that the rule is **not** 'to double the tokens', but rather players gain either an additional **1** or **2** tokens in each area on the board where they have population tokens.*

By now all players have **4** tokens on the board.

Movement

In this phase all players will again move their tokens. But first take a closer look at the following situations:

It may occur that two players want to occupy the same area. Each area has a population limit indicated by the number in the area. As long as the population limit of an area is **not** exceeded, the tokens of **2** or more players can **coexist**. However, whenever a population limit is exceeded this will result in **conflict**, which is resolved in a next phase. Note that conflict early in the game will slow down the growth of population of the involved civilizations. Conflict will definitely occur later in the game, but engaging in conflict early in the game is not recommended as it will always turn out to the benefit of the player who is not involved.

If the population exceeds the population limit **during** the movement phase, this does not necessarily result in a conflict as tokens (from either player) that have not yet moved can move out of the area during the movement phase, thereby voiding the conflict situation. Tokens that have moved are flipped to the white side to indicate which tokens have moved and which have not. During their movement phase, players may undo the movement of their tokens and move them to a different area.

To decide the movement order, consult the Census Track board. The player with the highest number of tokens always moves first, followed by the player with the second highest number of tokens, and so on. In the case of a tie in census the order is determined by A.S.T.-Ranking, from top to bottom (also indicated by numbers on the census markers used (Kushan **10**, Indus **16**, Parthia **18**). In the case of an equal census, it is recommended to place the tokens in A.S.T.-Ranking order.

- Charles (Kushan) has the highest A.S.T.-Ranking and moves first. He moves **1** token to *Suleiman* and **1** token to *Harappa* (because it has a **city site**) and flips both tokens to the white side. But then he realizes that Indus could respond to this by moving **2** tokens to *Suleiman* too when it's his turn to move, resulting in a **conflict situation**. To prevent this from happening, Kushan reverts this move by flipping the token in *Suleiman* back to the colored side and places it back in *Gandhara* and moves the token to *Aria* instead of *Suleiman* (again to the white side). Since his tokens in *Balkh* have not moved, which is indicated by the colored side, he is allowed to do so. Then he moves the **2** tokens in *Balkh* to *Upper Oxus* and *Margiana* and flips them. Now all of his tokens are flipped, which indicates he has finished his movement
- Sam (Indus) spreads his tokens by moving them to *Kalibangan*, *Suleiman*, *Arachosia* and *Poura*. He declares his movement has finished.
- Linda (Parthia) could move tokens to *Upper Oxus* or *Margiana*, which would create a conflict

situation with Kushan, however, since the population limits are both '**1**', this would be a bad choice as it would result in loss of population for both Linda and Charles, giving the benefit to Sam. Therefore Linda moves her tokens to *Merv* and *Chorasmia* instead. She moves **1** token to *Western Parthia* and **1** token to *Paraetacene*. Her movement has finished as well.

Once all players have taken their movement actions, flip all tokens back to their colored side.

End of Turn 2 - A.S.T.-Alteration

Each player now checks to see if they meet the requirements needed to advance on the A.S.T. and advances accordingly. After this, the Turn-marker is moved **1** space to the right.

Turn 3

Population Expansion

Each player expands their population as described in turn **1**. After expansion, each player counts their number of tokens on the board and adjusts the census track accordingly. All players now have **8** population tokens on the board so movement order is once again determined by A.S.T.-Ranking.

Movement

All players may again move each of their tokens.

- Charles (Kushan) moves first and occupies *Toprak-Kala* with **2** tokens before Linda can do so, and also defends both *Upper Oxus* and *Margiana* with a single token as in the previous turn. Moving his tokens out of *Harappa* and leaving it empty for Sam is not desirable because *Harappa* has a city site. Charles therefore decides to keep his **2** tokens there and indicates this by flipping them. For the **2** tokens in *Aria* he considers the following options:
  - If he moves **1** token to *Eastern Parthia*, Linda could easily move **2** tokens there, resulting in conflict. Charles would lose his token and Linda would not lose any because Linda would have the majority where the areas can only support **2** tokens (the population limit number).
  - If he moves **1** token to *Lut* and Sam would move **2** tokens there afterward, this would not be the case, because the population limit is '**3**' there, and all **3** tokens would coexist. On the other hand, leaving a single token in *Aria* would make it vulnerable for an attack from Sam.
- Since both options do not seem attractive, Charles decides to also keep the **2** tokens in *Aria* and flips all his remaining tokens to indicate that his movement has finished.
- Sam (Indus) moves **3** tokens to *Harappa* to try and kick out Charles and decides to keep **1** token in *Kalibangan* by flipping it. The conflict itself is resolved in a later phase. He claims *Lut* with the **2** tokens from *Poura*. He moves **2** tokens from *Arachosia* to *Gandhara*.
- Linda (Parthia) moves **1** token from *Chorasmia* to *Caspian Coast* and leaves the other token in *Chorasmia*, which she indicates by flipping it. She moves **1** token from *Merv* to *Karakum* and keeps the other one in *Merv*. She moves **2** tokens to *Eastern Parthia*, **1** to *Susiana* and **1** back to *Hecatompylos*.

Best practice is to move your tokens into a position so that in the next turn your optimal expansion will result in a total of **16** tokens. During population expansion, each area will never gain more than **2** tokens, hence **3** tokens would expand to **5** tokens. Therefore it is generally preferable to have no more than **2** tokens in an area at the end of movement for optimal expansion. For the same reason it is wise to avoid conflict like Linda and Charles did. Charles however could not prevent Sam from engaging in conflict with him since he had to move first.

Once all players have taken their movement actions flip all tokens back to their colored side.

Conflict

A conflict is resolved in the area *Harappa*.

- A conflict occurs when **2** or more players have tokens in the same area **and** the population limit is exceeded. If the population limit is not exceeded, there is no conflict in that area and the civilizations coexist in peace.
- Conflicts are resolved, per area, by rounds of token removal. In each round, players take turns in removing a token from the area until either of the following situations occurs, in which case the conflict ends immediately:
  - the population limit is no longer exceeded;
  - the area is occupied by only **1** player (may still exceed the population limit).
- The player with the minority in tokens in the area must remove a token first. Then the player with the next lowest number removes a token. This process is repeated until the conflict ends.

- If players have an equal number of tokens in the area to start with, all of them must remove a token simultaneously. This could result in an empty area.
- All removed tokens are returned to stock.

- Charles has the minority in tokens, so has to remove a token first. The limit is still exceeded by **1**, so now Sam has to remove a token. Now the area has **3** tokens, so the conflict ends. The **3** remaining tokens coexist.

End of Turn 3 - A.S.T.-Alteration
Each player now checks to see if they meet the requirements needed to advance on the A.S.T. and advances accordingly. After this, the Turn-marker is moved **1** space to the right.

Turn 4

Population Expansion
Each player expands their population and adjusts the census track. The census is: Kushan **14**, Indus **14**, Parthia **16**. The lower census of Kushan and Indus is caused by their conflict in the previous turn.

- Due to population expansion now in *Harappa* there is a conflict situation again with **4** tokens from Indus and **2** tokens from Kushan, while it can only support **3**. However, the conflict itself is only resolved after the Movement phase. During movement either player can move tokens into or out of the area, thereby influencing the conflict situation.

Movement
In this phase all players will again move their tokens.

- Now Linda (Parthia) has the most tokens on the board, so she moves first. She plays it safe and will neither exceed population limits nor seek conflict in order to expand to **32** population next turn. Linda moves **1** token from *Merv* to *Nisa*, **1** token from *Eastern Parthia* to *Drangiana*, and **1** to *Western Parthia*. **1** token from *Caspian Coast* is moved to *Kara-Bogaz Gol*. She could move north to *Ustyurt*, but that area can support no population (population limit '**0**'), so she does not move the remaining northern tokens. She moves **2** tokens from *Susiana* to *Sagartia*, and keeps the **2** tokens in *Hecatompylos*. Once Linda is done moving, she flips all of her tokens to the white side.
- Charles (Kushan) moves second. He and Sam (Indus) negotiate about *Aria* and *Arachosia*. If Charles would move **2** tokens to *Arachosia*, Sam could move **2**, **3** or **4** tokens to either *Aria* or *Arachosia* in response when it's his turn, as was seen in the previous turn. Charles has learned from this and agrees to keep **2** tokens in *Aria* and not move eastward but move **2** tokens westward to *Merv* instead, seeking conflict with Linda. Linda cannot respond to this, since she already has declared that her movement is finished. From *Margiana* Charles moves **1** token to *Kuhwat* and **1** token eastward to *Bactria*. Next he moves **1** token from *Toprak-Kala* to *Western Sogdiana*, and another to *Eastern Sogdiana* and one to *Bukhara*. He moves **1** token from *Upper Oxus* to *Margiana*, leaving the single tokens in *Toprak-Kala* and *Upper Oxus*. Losing more tokens in a conflict for *Harappa* seems unattractive, so Charles voids the conflict situation and moves **2** tokens north to *Abhisara*. He declares he has finished and flips all his remaining tokens to the white side.
- Sam (Indus) moves from *Harappa* **1** token to *Sagala* and **1** to *Kalibangan*, moving the **2** other tokens from *Kalibangan* to *Kuru*. He further moves **2** tokens to *Arachosia*, **1** token to *Sistan*, and **2** to *Gedrosia*, leaving the remaining tokens where they are.

Conflict
Check all areas for any conflict situations. There is a conflict in *Merv*.

- Linda has the minority and loses **1** token from the area first. Now Charles has **2** tokens in the area but is the only civilization occupying the area, so the conflict ends. While Charles has **2** tokens and the area can only support **1**, this is not regarded as conflict but **surplus population**, which will be removed in the next phase.

Remove Surplus Population
The **1** token from *Merv* (Kushan) in excess of the population limit is returned to stock.

- For each area a check for surplus population is made. Population tokens exceeding the population limit must be removed and returned to stock. It is recommended to check for tokens from other players as well.

End of Turn 4 - A.S.T.-Alteration
Each player now checks to see if they meet the requirements needed to advance on the A.S.T. and advances accordingly. After this, the Turn-marker is moved **1** space to the right.

Turn 5

Population Expansion
Each player expands their population and adjusts the census track. The census is: Kushan **26**, Indus **28**, Parthia **30**.

- Linda (Parthia) had lost **1** token in the previous turn due to the conflict in *Merv* and is now at **30** population, **2** short from optimal expansion to **32**.
- Sam (Indus) had not lost any tokens in the previous turn and now has **28** tokens.
- Charles (Kushan) had lost a token in the previous turn due to surplus and is now at **26** population.

Movement
When looking at the A.S.T. you can see that each civilization is now at the brink of the **Early Bronze Age**. In order to move their A.S.T.-marker into the new era at the end of turn **5**, each player requires at least **2** cities on the board. Cities are built in the 'City Construction' phase, which takes place after Conflict, however, preparations for this are made during the movement phase.

The objective in this turn for each player is to build at least **2** cities.

- Cities can be built by having at least **6** tokens in a single area containing a city site **after** the Conflict phase. Population limits can temporarily be exceeded since a check for excess population is only made after city construction. When building a city all population in that area is removed and once an area contains a city it can no longer support population tokens.

Based on the census, movement order is: **1)** Parthia, **2)** Indus, **3)** Kushan. In games with more players, movement is mostly done simultaneously, but players may insist on following Census order if this would impact their decisions.

- Linda (Parthia) plans to build a city in *Hyrcania*. She moves **2** tokens from *Nisa* and **2** tokens from *Karakum* to *Hyrcania*. A city requires at least **6** tokens to build, and she wants to use tokens from the northern areas. To move those tokens from there, a ship is required.
- Building a ship requires the **removal** of **2** tokens (return to stock), at least **1** of which must come from the area where the ship is built.
- A player can build a ship at any time during movement, as long as he does not declare his movement is finished.
- Linda moves **2** tokens from *Chorasmia* to *Caspian Coast*, flips these tokens to indicate they have moved. She removes these **2** flipped tokens to build a ship in the area. She places the ship token in *Caspian Coast* and returns the **2** removed tokens to stock.
- A ship can hold up to **5 tokens** at a time.
- A ship may move up to **4 areas** per turn.
- Ships can only move through coastal waters (light blue sea areas).
- Tokens may only embark onto a ship if they have not yet moved this turn.
- Disembarked tokens cannot make any further moves this turn.
- After movement, tokens cannot stay on the ship and are disembarked in the area.
- Linda embarks **2** tokens onto the ship from *Caspian Coast*, sails to *Kara-Bogaz Gol* and embarks an additional **2**, sails through *Dahae* to *Hyrcania*, disembarks **2** tokens there, and finishes the ship movement in *Hecatompylos* and disembarks **2** there, she then flips the ship and all disembarked tokens to indicate they have moved. She now has **6** tokens in both *Hyrcania* and *Hecatompylos*, so she can build the cities there after the Conflict-phase. There is no threat of any conflict in these areas. She moves **2** tokens from *Eastern Parthia* to *Nisa*, **2** from *Sagartia* to *Susiana*, **1** token from *Western Parthia* to *Zagros* and **1** from *Drangiana* to *Kavir*. She leaves the other tokens where they are. Linda declares she finished her movement and flips all her remaining tokens to the white side.
- Sam (Indus) plans to build a city in *Kalibangan*, and uses **2** tokens from *Kuru* and **2** from *Harappa*. A second city could be built in *Harappa*, so Sam moves in **2** tokens from *Sagala* and **2** from *Gandhara*. He even attempts to build a third city in *Poura* and moves in **2** tokens from *Sistan*, **2** from *Gedrosia* and **2** from *Lut*. He leaves **2** tokens in *Gedrosia*. He moves **2** tokens to *Mohenjo-Daro* and then declares he is done.
- Charles (Kushan) wants to build a city in *Merv*,

using **2** tokens from *Aria* and **2** tokens from *Margiana*. He moves **1** token from *Kuhwat* to *Margiana*, and from *Abhisara* **1** to *Sagala* and **1** to *Taxila*. His second city will be built in *Toprak-Kala*, and he uses **1** token from *Western Sogdiana* and **2** from *Eastern Sogdiana* and **1** from *Upper Oxus*. He moves **1** token from *Bukhara* to *Samarkand*, leaving all remaining tokens where they are.

Once all players have ended their movement, flip all tokens back to their colored side.

Because all players focused on building cities, no player has risked any tokens for conflict this turn. In later turns that might be different.

City Construction

In each area where a city is built, all tokens are returned to stock and replaced by a city. If players take the cities from the left side of their player mats, everybody can easily see how many cities they have on the board.

- Once an area contains a city it can no longer support population tokens, however, players can still move tokens into an area containing a city.
- An area can contain no more than **1** city.

Check for Surplus Population and City Support

- After city construction, all players must:
  - check for surplus population (and remove any surplus).
  - check for city support. This means that all players require to have **at least 2 of their population tokens** anywhere on the map board **for each of their cities** in play.

Example: *A player has **4** cities and **6** tokens on the board. The required support is **8** tokens, meaning that the player is **2** tokens short. The player has to remove one of their cities, replace it with population tokens up to the population limit, and then make another check for city support. If the removed city was replaced with **2** tokens, there would be **8** tokens to support **3** cities, which fulfills the requirement.*

For now, city support is amply met by all players.

Trade Cards Acquisition

For each player, count the number of cities they have on the board and move their A.S.T.-markers on the City Count accordingly (in this case Kushan **2**, Indus **3**, and Parthia **2**). Also place the Market-marker to the right of the player marker with the highest city count (in this case Indus).

Since there are **2** A.S.T.-markers at row **2**, these markers are placed in A.S.T.-Ranking order (Kushan first and Parthia second).

In City Count order, all players receive trade cards. The player with the fewest cities collects their cards first. A player with **2** cities receives a card from stack **1** and a card from stack **2**. A player with **3** cities receives a card from stack **1**, **2**, and **3**, and so on.

- In this order: Kushan receives **1** trade card from stack **1** and **1** from stack **2**, then Parthia receives the same. Finally Indus receives a card from stack **1**, **2** and **3**.

After all players have received their trade cards, place a

number of trade cards **face down** on the **top row** of the market equal to the player with the most cities on the board. The Market-marker serves as a reminder for this. Place the '**1**' on '**1**', a '**2**' on '**2**' etc. Afterward, also place a Water commodity card **face up** on '**0**'.

For the explanation of the symbols on a trade card, check the Basic Rulebook *(page 9)*.

- Since each stack holds **2** different types of commodities, it can be either of those commodities that players now hold.
- **1** Flax is worth **1** trade point. **1** Hides is also worth **1** trade point. These values are represented by both the face value, as well as box **1** at the bottom of the card, which stands for '**1** copy'.
- **2** Flax is worth **4** trade points. Box **2** at the bottom of the card, which represents '**2** copies'. The same goes for **2** Hides. However, **1** Flax plus **1** Hides is worth **2** trade points; not **4**, because they are **not** the same commodity.
- A full set of **9** Flax is worth **81** trade points (box **9** at the bottom of the card).
- The number of cards in a full set is equal to the number of boxes shown on the trade card. If a card for example shows **6** boxes, there are only **6** copies of this commodity in the game.

Trade

Note that the trading mechanism here is different from a **5-9** player game. The objective however is the same - to gain as many trade points as possible.

Trading is done in a maximum of **6** turns in which each player, when it's their turn, may trade with the market or pass. The **player order** is determined by the City Count, A.S.T.-Ranking breaking ties. Use the numbered Priority tokens to visualize this, by giving each player their corresponding sequence token. The trading turns track on the market board shows the numbers **1** to **6**. Place the Turn-marker on **#1**. After all players either have done a trade action, or passed, the Turn-marker is moved **1** space down. A player who passes in a round can still trade in a later round, provided that all the other players have not all subsequently passed. After **6** turns, or when all players subsequently pass, trading ends.

To make a trade action, a player must place exactly **2** trade cards on the market board, face up, on the corresponding values, and then take exactly **2** cards from the market board with a total value **equal to or less than** the sum of the value of the **2** cards placed.

Whenever cards are placed or taken, count the total value of the **2** cards. If both cards show the same commodity, the set value must be counted. Only face up cards can form a set this way. Face down cards only count as their face value.

Whenever a player places a card on the top row, the card is shown to all players to verify its face value, and is then flipped

- Charles (Kushan) is the first to make a trade. He places **1** Hides (or Flax) and **1** Furs (or Stone) on the market, on the '**1**' and '**2**' in the middle row for a sum of **3**. Now he can take a sum of **3** (or less) from the market. He takes the '**3**' and the '**0**' (Water). The taken '**3**' is not shown to the other players (as this card was face down). This can either be a Salt or Timber.
- Next up is Linda (Parthia). She decides to pass.
- Third up is Sam (Indus). He places a '**1**' and a '**3**'. He may take cards with a sum value of **4**. He takes the face down '**2**' from the top row, and the '**2**' from the middle row. The three cards he now holds could make a set value of **18**, if they are all the same commodity.
- The Turn-marker on the **Trading Turns**-track is moved **1** step down, since all players have taken an action or pass.
- Charles, Linda, and Sam all pass subsequently.
- Since all **3** players have passed subsequently, trading ends.

After trading ends, all face down cards on the market are turned face up and sorted into piles by number. These piles are shuffled seperately and placed underneath the corresponding stacks of trade cards in the card holders. Be careful not to mix these cards into the undrawn cards already in the card holders.

*When taking a face down card from the top row in combination with a face up card in the same column, the total value is equal to the sum of the face values of the cards. In this example the total value is **6** trade points.*

*When placing two of the same commodities on the market, or taking two of the same face up commodities from the market, the total value is equal to the set value. In this example the total value is **12** trade points.*

*When taking a face down card from the top row it always counts as face value. Regardless of knowing the identity of the card, it never counts as being part of a set with another card in the same column. In this example the total value is **6** trade points; the third card in the same row does not impact the value.*

At this point, after trading is done and the trade card stacks are restocked, proceed to the end of turn. In future turns calamities might show up at this point, which are resolved after trading ends.

End of Turn 5 - A.S.T.-Alteration

Each player now checks to see if they meet the requirements needed to advance on the A.S.T. and advances accordingly. For the **Early Bronze Age**, players require at least **2** cities on the board. All players have succeeded and advance. After this, the Turn-marker is moved **1** space to the right.

Turn 6

Tax Collection

This is a newly added phase at the beginning of each turn, once players have cities on the board.

- Each player collects tax by moving **2** tokens from stock to treasury for each city they have on the board.

The treasury is indicated by the leftmost part of their playing mat. To clearly distinguish tokens on either side on the player mat, flip tokens to the white side when they are in treasury. On the back side you see the amphorae indicating wealth.

Treasury can be used to either buy or maintain ships, or purchase trade cards, which is explained later. Note that the more treasury a player gains, the fewer tokens they have left for population expansion.

Population Expansion

Each player expands their population. It may be easier to put all newly placed tokens white side up, to see where you have already expanded this turn. Make sure to flip all tokens to the colored side when you are done and adjust the census track. The census is now: Indus **20**, Kushan **28**, Parthia **32**.

Movement

- Linda (Parthia) moves first and decides to attack Kushan's city in *Merv*.
- To successfully attack a city, a player requires at least **7 tokens** in the city area **after** token conflict. A city can be defended by tokens.
- Linda moves **8** tokens in total into *Merv*, **4** from *Karakum* and **4** from *Eastern Parthia*. Then she moves **2** tokens from *Western Parthia* into *Nisa* in addition to the **4** tokens already present. The remaining tokens are used to occupy more areas, rather than engaging in more conflict. So for example: *Eastern Parthia*, *Western Parthia*, *Paraetacene*, *Persepolis*, and, in the north, *Karakum* or *Caspian Coast*. She expects there will be a battle for *Lut* so she avoids moving tokens there.
- Any ship left from the previous turn requires a maintenance of **1** token to be removed from anywhere on the board, or paying **1** treasury token (by returning it to stock), before it can be used. If not paid, the ship cannot be used and is destroyed (returned to stock) after movement.
- Linda has no use for the one ship in *Hecatompylos* and decides not to pay maintenance so the ship is destroyed (returned to stock) as soon as she declares her movement has finished. If she had used it, she would have had to pay **1** treasury or remove a token first.
- Charles (Kushan) wants to defend his city in *Merv*, and moves **2** tokens from *Aria* into *Merv* which results in a conflict situation there. The token conflict itself is only resolved after movement. He wants to build **2** additional cities, in *Bukhara* and *Taxila*, so he moves **2** tokens from *Abhisara*,**1** from *Kuhwat* and **1** from *Sagala* to *Taxila*. Next he moves the tokens from *Samarkand* and *Upper Oxus* to *Bukhara*. He moves **2** tokens from *Aria* to *Lut*, **2** from *Bactria* to *Aria* and **1** token from *Margiana* to *Upper Oxus*. Finally, he moves **1** token from *Western Sogdiana* to *Eastern Sogdiana* and declares his movement to be finished.
- Since Sam (Indus) has built **3** cities in the previous turn, he now has way less tokens on the board resulting in both a strategic benefit but as a downside also less options to occupy more areas or to build new cities. He decides to battle for *Abhisara* in the north by moving **3** tokens there from *Kuru*. He moves **2** tokens from *Gandhara* to *Suleiman*, from *Arachosia* **1** token to *Sistan* and **1** to *Sindh*, **2** from *Mohenjo-Daro* to *Chanhu-Daro* and **2** tokens from *Gedrosia* to *Harmozia*. Then he finishes his movement.

After movement has finished all tokens are flipped back to the colored side.

Conflict

- There is a conflict in *Abhisara*, resulting in **2** tokens from Indus remaining in this area.
- In *Merv* Charles has the minority of tokens, so he has to remove a token first, followed by Linda. Then Charles removes another token and the token conflict ends, leaving Linda with **7** tokens there. Still sufficient to successfully attack the city. The **city defense** has failed. If Charles had moved **1** token more into *Merv* he would have successfully defended. The remaining tokens stay in the area for the resolution of the city attack.

- If a city attack is successful (at least **7** attacking tokens in the city area **after** token conflict), the city is destroyed and replaced by **6** tokens from stock of the defender, after which (another) token conflict is resolved.

- The city is removed and replaced by **6** tokens from Charles's stock, and then the token conflict is resolved, by alternating in removal of a token, resulting in Linda having **2** tokens left there when the conflict ends.

- As a bonus of a successful city attack, the attacker may choose to gain **3** treasury tokens from stock. The treasury of the defender is unaffected. Also the attacking player may choose to draw a trade card at random from the defending player's hand.

- Linda draws a random trade card from the very annoyed Charles, which happens to be the commodity with value **3**. Charles is left with a single Water commodity. In addition Linda chooses to gain **3** treasury. Charles' treasury is unaffected.

City Construction

Players now build their cities, remove surplus population and check for city support.

- Both Kushan and Parthia build **1** or more cities, by removing the **6** tokens from those areas and replacing them with a city.
- Linda removes the **1** token from *Merv* that exceeds the population limit.

- Each player should have at least **2** tokens on the board for each of their cities. If not, they must reduce **1** or more cities of their choice until this requirement is met. **Reducing a city** means replacing the city with tokens equal to the population limit.

- All players will easily meet the city support requirements.

Aim to avoid city reduction due to insufficient city support.

All players adjust the City Count markers accordingly. After all players have done so, also move the Market-marker equal to the highest city count, at the right of any other tokens there. Deal the Priority tokens to indicate trade order.

- Now all players have **3** cities. The trade order is: **1**) Kushan, **2**) Indus, **3**) Parthia.

Trade Cards Acquisition

All players receive trade cards for their cities as described in turn **5**. Note that it is possible that a player draws a calamity. Whenever this happens, the player should not show or mention this. After all players have received their cards, place cards in the market corresponding to the Market-marker, plus a Water card on the top row. Move the trading Turn-marker to turn **1** on the trading turn track.

- After all players have received their trade cards players may purchase additional trade cards. By **default** a player can only purchase cards from stack **9** for **15** treasury tokens each.
- In a **3-4** player scenario, players may also purchase any number of Water cards for **2** treasury tokens each.

- Charles purchases **2** Water cards for **4** treasury tokens. Sam does the same. Linda purchases **1** Water card for **2** treasury tokens.

Trade

By now it is very likely that calamities are either in some player's hands or on the market.

Calamities are either **Tradeable** or **Non Tradeable**. If a calamity is **Non Tradeable** this is specified on the card. Non Tradeable calamities are not used in this scenario, whereas in a full game they are.

- A player who holds a **Tradeable** calamity can decide to place it on the market during a trade action. This cannot be done on the regular spots but only **face down** on the red spaces with **negative numbers** on the left side of the market. Players can also bluff and place a commodity card there, though cards placed on these red

spaces are counted as minus **2** or minus **3** accordingly so this comes at a cost.

- For example, Charles goes first and he places a card **face down** on the '**-2**' and a commodity of value '**3**' **face up** on the market, the total value equals **1** (**3 - 2 =1**). Now he could only do this by picking up a '**1**' and a Water card. If either of these cards are not available he cannot do so. The other players suspect that he placed a calamity on the '**-2**', however, this could as well be a commodity, for instance a Water.
- If a card is taken from a negative space, this adds up to the total value of the **2** cards taken.
- Now it's Sam's turn. Sam can even place **2** Water cards (total value = **0**), and pick up the card from the '**-2**' and the face down '**2**', which also make a total value of **0**. This could be an interesting choice because he already holds four cards of value **2**, and more cards of this value would increase his set value of the same commodity. But he risks to draw a calamity from the '**-2**' space. If this is the case, he does not show this.
- If a Tradeable calamity is taken from the market, either from the face down cards in the top row or from the negative numbers, a player does **not** mention this. This card can be traded away in a later action.
- If possible, Linda places **2** of the **same** commodities of value **2**, which make a total value of **8**, so now she can take both cards of value **3**. Because **1** card is face down, the value is **3 + 3 = 6**, she bets for the cards to be the same commodities. Since she already holds **2** cards of value **3**, this could potentially add up to a maximum of **48** trade points if all cards of value **3** are the same commodity.

After all **3** players have made a trade, move the Turn-marker on the trading turns track **1** step down. Now try to see if you can finish trading by making more value of the cards you hold. When trading ends, all cards on the market are turned face up. One or more calamities can be in players' hands and/or revealed from the market. If players hold any calamities, they put them on the table face down.

Calamity Selection and Resolution

Take the **3-4** player Calamity Resolution quick chart. Calamities are resolved, one by one, from top to bottom. After all calamities have been resolved, these cards are returned to the market and discarded, shuffled in the discard piles accordingly, and placed underneath the face down stacks as described earlier.

Some calamities have a beneficiary. The beneficiary is the player with the most cities in stock. If tied for cities, the tie is broken in favor of the player with the most tokens in their stock. If this is tied as well, use the ranking on the A.S.T. track. The primary victim of a calamity cannot be the beneficiary.

Check for Surplus Population and City Support

After calamity resolution another check for surplus population and city support is made. Due to calamity effects a player's number of population tokens and cities may have changed.

End of Turn 6 - A.S.T.-Alteration

Each player now checks to see if they meet the requirements needed to advance on the A.S.T. and advances accordingly. After this, the Turn-marker is moved **1** space to the right.

End of the Scenario

In a full game this would be the moment to consider purchasing Civilization Advances with the sets of commodities acquired and traded. The more trading points you have available for spending, the more options you have for purchasing powerful advances to further expand, defend, or glorify your civilization.

But, as we have come to the end of this scenario, it is time to determine a winner for The First Game. All players now count their total number of points achieved in the following way:

- The total of trade points in trade cards they hold (count set value if a player holds multiple commodities of the same type);
- **5** points for each step they have advanced on the A.S.T.;
- **5** points for each city they have on the map;
- **2** points per token they have in their treasury.

The player with the highest number of points is the winner of this scenario!

D. Conclusion

The winner of The First Game is the player with the most points achieved. However, this scenario is not about winning but rather about understanding the sequence of play. Most likely Sam (Indus) has won this scenario, even when coping with a Treachery in the last round. Or perhaps Linda managed to collect 3 or 4 of the same commodities of value '3', resulting in at least 27 trading points. Or did Charles manage to score more points than the others in some way?

Differences with a Full Game

Now you have an understanding of the fundamentals of the game, it is not too difficult to imagine what a full game looks like. However, as you can see on the A.S.T. there are many turns left to play and milestones to reach. The full game can bring up to 9 players together (the more players the better!) who share the same objective, and takes about a day of gameplay to complete. The full game also has many more aspects and rules that are not covered in the above scenario. Here is a brief overview of the key differences to the full game:

- The number of areas in play scale with the number of players, up to the full map board when playing with **9** players.
- The full map board provides more geographical variations and provides specific up- and downsides to all civilizations. For example, Indus has a strategic advantage due their position on the fertile Indus river delta but the calamity **Flood** is a continuous threat which could destroy cities and/or population tokens located on the flood plain. Or Kushan, which has a strong position in the north but is logistically somewhat constrained as it has no coastal areas where it can use ships, and might also be struck by a **Volcanic Eruption** of the volcano located in their region.
- In games with more players, movement is mostly done **simultaneously**, but players may insist that Census order is respected if this could impact their decisions.
- Open sea areas will become accessible at some point, which allows for farther movement for ships.
- The setup of the trade cards is slightly different and more calamities are used. When playing with **9** players additional commodities are added to the game.
- In a game with **5** or more players, the Market board is not used. Players trade with each other instead, exchanging **3** or more cards with each trade. Since **1** of these cards is always traded blindly, calamities can be traded directly to other players.
- There are more calamities in the game, with a variety of (sometimes harsh) effects. For example, an **Epidemic** might ravage your lands, killing population and destroying cities. A **Civil War** could divide your empire in two, and **Barbarian Hordes** will sweep across your empire killing everything in their wake. **Piracy** will cause cities to be taken over by pirates, which requires the players to engage in conflict to take back their cities.
- The core of the game is development, which is reflected by **51** different Civilization Advances that can be acquired each turn. Most Civilization Advances reduce the effect of calamities and/or improve the players' flexibility in the game (e.g. movement, city construction, conflict). Some Civilization Advances have powerful **Special Abilities** that can be used once per turn. Civilization Advances really make the difference to the game. Since it is impossible to purchase all of them even in a full game, each new game is different from the previous one as the players experiment with different strategies.
- Victory determination is done in a slightly different way. In addition to each player's progress on the A.S.T. and number of cities, the number and level of Civilization Advances is a big driver in the total number of Victory Points (trade points and treasury do not count).

Note that The First Game has followed the rules for 3-4 players, which are slightly different from the rules for a full game with 5-9 players. To fully understand the game it is recommended to first thoroughly go through the Basic Rulebook for 5-9 players. Before playing a full game with only 3 or 4 players, also read the additional rules for 3-4 players from the **Additional Scenarios for 3-18 Players** rulebook.

Enjoy the game in all its forms… and eventually try the full experience of combining MEGA EMPIRES: THE WEST and MEGA EMPIRES: THE EAST, accommodating up to **18** players!

KALIBANGA

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