

EMPIRES

© 2001 Emmanuel Delva



NEEDED MATERIALS:

- ❖ Some counters sets, each set with one different colour per player, and in two different sizes. The biggest ones will be used to show the locations of cities, while the smallest ones will represent the people of each player. To ease things up, they will be called “cities” for the big ones and “counters” for the others. About 30-50 counters and 10-15 cities per player is plenty.
- ❖ Any map where provinces will have been drawn. Say about 20 provinces per player. Each province should be wide enough so as to allow one city and a 10-12 counters to be put within. There can only be one city per province.
- ❖ A single 54 cards deck. 52 cards with two jokers that each can replace any single other card.

WINNING THE GAME:

In order to win the game a player must own half the province of the map plus one.

GAME START:

Each player receives **one city** of his colour that he is allowed to put anywhere as long as it is at least five provinces away from the nearby provinces controlled by another player.

The player is then given **ten counters** of his colour to deploy in his city or the nearby provinces. In both cases, the youngest player is given the first pick of where to deploy his city and then his counters.

THE PLAYER NATION SPECIAL ATTRIBUTE:

Each player can choose one special attribute for his side. This will allow the player to need one card less in the chosen suit. For example someone needing two different Clubs♣ cards to get an « Exodus » action will be able to use this action with only one Club♣ and one Heart♥ if he has the « Sophistication » edge.

There are four different advantages, one per suit :

Hearts♥ « **Fertility** » : (incredible health and ability to withstand hardship, clans, big families...)

Diamonds♦ « **Diplomacy** » : (merchants, navigation, explorer, money...)

Spades♠ « **Warfare** » : (martial arts, sieges engineering, tactics, military prowess...)

Clubs♣ « **Sophistication** » : (morals, religion, philosophy, enlightenment, spiritual power...)

BACK INTO GAME:

In case of elimination, a player can be allowed to enter the game again as a « foreign invader ». He will start again with one city, anywhere in the outer ring of provinces, provided that he is at least three spaces away from other players' territories. The player will receive **one city**, and **six counters**.

CONCEPTION NOTES:

The game is designed to be quick, easy to learn and fast to play. A game will usually range from half an hour to two hours, maybe three if several players are involved. Luck is foremost, but tactical insight and strategic thinking will play their part.

PHASE BY PHASE DESCRIPTION OF THE GAME

1: Cards drawing Phase

Each player draws 3 cards. One more is drawn for each city the player currently owns.

2: Diplomacy Phase

The players are afforded 5 minutes for exchanging, selling or buying cards, making promises, settling everlasting oaths, or betraying them ...

3: Order of play determination Phase

The players will act in the reverse order of the amount of provinces they currently own. The player with the most will play first and so will be disadvantage. In case of a draw, the player with the most cities will act first, then the player with the most counters.

4: Cards Phase

In the aforementioned order, each player will be allowed to make up to two actions. The player will need to have the needed cards. They are "spent" and discarded in the drawing deck.

The player can choose not to play at all, and in this case he draws one more card.

5: Counters Phase

In the aforementioned order, each player will be allowed to move each and every of his counters by ONE province.

If counters are in the same province as someone else's counters, then a fight MAY follow. The attacker chooses how many enemy counters he wants to destroy (up to his own number of counters). Then the attacker himself loses a number of counters :

- *Equal* if the province has a city of the enemy counters' colour,
- *Inferior by one* if this is not the case and so the enemy counters have nowhere to run to.

6: Default Phase

The players can have a maximum hand equal to the number of cities that they do own. Any excess must be discarded.

CARDS COMBINATIONS

<u>COMBINATION</u>	<u>COMBO NAME</u>	<u>INGAME EFFECTS</u>
1 Heart ♥ card	<u>MIGRATION</u> :	Win a counter in any empty adjacent province.
1 Diamond ♦ card	<u>MERCHANT</u> :	Move one own counters anywhere.
1 Spade ♠ card	<u>COMBAT</u> :	Destroy one adjacent enemy counter.
1 Club ♣ card	<u>APOSTLE</u> :	Move one adjacent enemy counter by one province.
2 Heart ♥ cards	<u>ABUNDANCE</u> :	Win three counters in an already owned province.
2 Diamond ♦ cards	<u>EXPLORATION</u> :	Move three own counters anywhere.
2 Spade ♠ cards	<u>WAR</u> :	Destroy three adjacent enemy counter.
2 Club ♣ cards	<u>EXODUS</u> :	Move three adjacent enemy counters by one province.
3 Reds and 1 Black	<u>COLONISATION</u> :	Switch into your colour 1 city OR 5 counters that are in the same province as one of your own counters.
3 Blacks and 1 Red	<u>CRUSADE</u> :	Completely destroy an adjacent province. Everything there is removed : cities and ALL counters.
1 of each 4 suits	<u>FOUNDATION</u> :	Put one of your city in a province that already has one of your counters in and no cities yet.

GAME OPTIONS

WAR TREASURY:

It can be interesting to introduce the role of money into the game : the nerves of war!

To do so, the easiest way is to replace the automatic drawing of cards by an income system where money is earned and spent. In order to play this option, it may be necessary to get a rather large amount of pawns or counters, or it can be agreed just to keep the amount written on paper.

At game start, each player is given 10 coins, and only 6 if the player enters game again after a previous elimination.

Then, on the card drawing phase, each player will only get three cards without modifiers.

After that, still in the same phase, players will collect their incomes. Its amount is:

One coin per **city** the player owns,

One coin per **province** where there are only his counters in,

And of course, a city owned in a province with no counters except his owns bring **two** coins to a player.

Then at the beginning of the cards action phase, in the determined orders, the players will be given the opportunity to buy cards. The price is two coins each. Tables turns can succeeds as long as someone has money to spend.

Once the cards play has started, it is no more possible to buy cards. But in the case that a player owns more cards than he is allowed too and wants to keep them, he can at a cost of one extra coin paid to keep each single card.

SUPPLIES RESERVES:

This option necessitates the use of dices. With it the players will be able to store supplies. They will be able to use them both to have more than two actions in the cards phase, and to make extra moves in a new breakthrough phase that will follow the counters phase.

To build a supply warehouse, you need a dice, resources and time. Note that it is possible to build as many warehouses as wanted but only on cities. And if the city is destroyed or conquered, the aggressor while receive no benefits except the satisfaction of depriving an enemy from resources.

First, a player must call his desire to build a warehouse aloud. He will need to discard **one card and one coin**. Once done, the dice is displayed on the city with its 1 face up.

Then each following year, the player will be allowed to sacrifice one or two cards (each counting as an action).

And in the counters phase the player is allowed to sacrifice one coin. For each of these sacrifice, one unit will be added to the dice and the according face displayed. When it will reach 6, the warehouse is complete and active.

There is already a possibility that does not need the warehouse to be active to be used. It is the money reserve value of a warehouse : at any moment, it is possible to decrease the dice by any value and to receive the according money in exchange.

But for the two following possibilities, the player needs the warehouse to be active (the dice must display the 6 face up)..

First, one player can decide to do more than two actions in the cards phase. So the player with a warehouse is almost certain to be able to play his whole hands while players are usually limited to two cards action. But there is a price for that : **one coin** must be paid for each extra card action after the normal two.

Second, this option introduce a new cards actions phase that will happen after the counters phase. This new phase is called « Breakthrough Phase ». The players will still act within in the determined order in this new phase, but they can decide not too if they want. Anyway all actions on this phase will have a very high cost of **two coins** per action.