

FOLLOWING THE COLLAPSE OF THE HAN DYNASTY, WARLORDS BACKED RIVAL CLAIMANTS TO THE CHINESE THRONE, WHILE OTHERS SOUGHT INFLUENCE AMONG THE NOBLES, BUREAUCRATS, MERCHANTS, AND FARMERS.

OVERVIEW

Each round, players play Bid Cards to claim Dynasty Cards and take control of the Emperor, Heir, Palace, Market, and Harvest. However, the heavens, in the guise of a Celestial Dragon, can disrupt the best laid plans. The game ends as the Emperor dies. The player with the most points wins.

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6 Goal Cards



Emperor



Harvest



Celestial Dragon



Market



Palace



Heir

Victory Points at end of game

Criteria for taking this card

How this card effects play





62 Dynasty Cards



9 Bureaucrats



1 Philosopher



15 Farmers



15 Merchants



12 Nobles



10 Warlords

40 Bid Cards (5 sets of 1-7 + Reset)

2 reference cards

18 2-Victory Point tokens

These Rules

SETUP

- Give each player a set of Bid Cards consisting of cards numbered 1 through 7 and 0-Reset. Set the others aside.
- Set out the Goal Cards and reference cards.
- Shuffle the Dynasty Deck. Turn two, three, or four Dynasty Cards face up, respectively, for three, four, or five players.

PLAY

(for two players, see the rules changes at the end)

Play consists of rounds, each consisting of four steps:

1. Play Bid Cards, applying powers.
2. Claim Dynasty Cards, applying powers.
3. Assign the Celestial Dragon.
4. Reveal Dynasty Cards.

PLAY BID CARDS

Each player (except the one with the Palace) secretly chooses a Bid Card from those in their hands and places it face down. Reveal them simultaneously and apply the powers of the Palace, Harvest, and Emperor, if held by players, in this order:

- The Palace player chooses plays his or her Bid Card after the other players have revealed their Bid Cards.



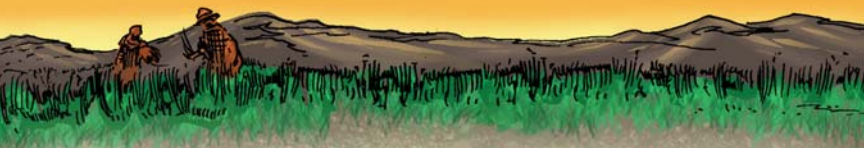
- The Harvest player, upon playing his or her Reset Card and having three or fewer cards in hand, can set his or her Reset Card aside and play one of those cards in hand.
- The Emperor player adds .5 to his or her bid (this is automatic, except in two player games).

Example: Steve controls the Emperor, Michael has the Harvest (and has 3 cards in hand), Paul has the Palace, Holger and Zev don't have any Goal Card. Everyone but Paul chooses and reveals a Bid Card. Zev shows a 7, Steve shows a 6, Michael shows a Reset card and Holger has a 7. Paul chooses and plays a 3. Michael then puts the Reset card aside and chooses a 4 from his remaining 2 cards, Steve then adds .5 to his bid. So the bids are 7 for Zev, 7 for Holger, 6.5 for Steve, 4 for Michael and 3 for Paul.

CLAIM DYNASTY CARDS

Players, except those with tied bids or a Reset Card, claim one face up Dynasty Card in bid order, from highest number to lowest, setting aside their Bid Card face up. Bid Cards are set aside face up so that players can see which Bid Cards have been used when trying to avoid or create ties. If no Dynasty Card is left to be claimed, then that player receives nothing and sets their Bid Card aside. Put Dynasty Cards by type in piles in front of their owner. Stack them so players can see how many cards each pile has.

Example: In a four player game, three Dynasty Cards are turned up. The players bid 7, 6, 3, and 1. The 7 claims first, next the 6, and finally, the 3. The player who bid 1 receives nothing. In the example from the previous section, 4 Dynasty Cards are turned up. Since Zev and Holger tied neither get to claim a Dynasty Card. Steve would choose first, Michael second and Paul third, leaving one card unclaimed.



RESET CARD

A Reset card played by itself has no bid value and cannot claim a Dynasty Card. A Reset card has value 0 when played on a tied Bid Card; this stack can claim a Dynasty Card as described in the section - **Tied Bids**. After playing a Reset card, pick up all your set aside Bid Cards at the end of the round and put them back in your hand, even if you used Harvest's ability and chose a second card.

GOAL CARDS

Once any player has two or more Dynasty cards of the same type, that player takes the corresponding Goal Card. Two Warlords take the Emperor; two Nobles (regardless of value) take the Heir; two Bureaucrats, possibly including the Philosopher, take the Palace; two Merchants take the Market, and two Farmers take the Harvest. If a player ever has more of the appropriate type of Dynasty Card than the player with the corresponding Goal Card, immediately shift that Goal Card to its new owner. Shifting the Market or Heir can affect how cards are claimed in a round. Shifting the Palace, Harvest, or Emperor cannot, since bid powers take effect before cards are claimed.

TIED BIDS

If two or more players played the same Bid Card, they tie (unless one of them had the +.5 Emperor bonus). Tied bids do not claim Dynasty Cards. Tied Bid Cards are not set aside; they remain, adding to the Bid Cards played by these players next round, forming stacks. Stacks of Bid Cards tie only if they each contain exactly the same two cards played in the same order. Otherwise, if a stack's total is the same as a single Bid Card, the stack claims its Dynasty Card first. If stacks with the same total have cards in a different order, the stack with the highest card on top claims first. After claiming, set bid stacks aside.



Example: Zev reveals a bid of 6, Holger a 6, Paul a 4, Steve a 4, and Michael a 3. Michael claims a Dynasty Card and sets his 3 aside. The rest are tied (in two ways). Next round, Zev reveals a 0-Reset, Holger a 2, Paul a 4, Steve a 1, and Michael a 6. There are no ties. Paul will claim a card first (4+4), Holger next (6+2), then Zev (6+0), and finally Michael (6). Steve's 4+1 stack receives nothing.

If tied stacks exist, then, in their place in the bid order, these players draw a card from the Dynasty deck (if there are enough cards for all), reveal them, simultaneously place them in their piles (the Market's power can be used), set their bid stacks aside, and, finally, shift Goal Cards if needed.

CLAIM POWERS

The Celestial Dragon, Market, and Heir, if held by players, can affect how cards are claimed.

Celestial Dragon - Before Dynasty Cards are claimed, the Celestial Dragon player must swap it for any one of them, except the Philosopher. A player may not swap the Celestial Dragon for a card whose type this player currently has the most of — among just this player's cards — unless these are the only cards available.

Example: A Celestial Dragon player has two Merchants, two Nobles, and one Warlord. A Noble, Warlord, and Farmer are available to be claimed. This player can swap the Celestial Dragon for the Warlord or Farmer, but not the Noble.

Once the Dragon is swapped, it can be claimed like any other Dynasty Card. Any player who claims the Celestial Dragon gets a 2VP token but does not keep the Dragon; it is set aside until assigned to a player (see below).

Market - When the Market player claims a Merchant, it can be added to either this player's Merchants pile (as one card) or any other pile with at least one card in it where it will count as two cards for determining most



of that type.

Heir - After bids have claimed Dynasty Cards, if one or more Dynasty Cards remain (due to ties or Reset Cards), then the Heir player claims one of them.

DISCARD UNCLAIMED DYNASTY CARDS

After Dynasty Cards have been claimed and the Heir, if held, has acted, discard any remaining Dynasty Cards.

ASSIGN THE CELESTIAL DRAGON

Once at least four Goal Cards are held by players, assign the Celestial Dragon if possible. Give it to the player with the fewest Goal Cards (even if that player has no Goal Cards). If tied, give it to the player among them with the fewest Dynasty Cards. If still tied, give it, if possible, to the player among them who had the Celestial Dragon least recently. Otherwise, do not assign it.

REVEAL DYNASTY CARDS

Turn two, three, or four Dynasty Cards face up in the center, for three, four, or five players, respectively. If there are not enough Dynasty Cards left to do so, the game is over.

FINAL SCORING

Give the Heir to the player with the most Warlords. If there is a tie, discard it.

Each player totals up the Victory Points (VPs) on the Dynasty and Goal Cards they control and any tokens they have collected, subtracts points for missing Dynasty Card types, scores their Farmers and the player with the Philosopher adds points for his Bureaucrats.

VPs ON CARDS AND TOKENS

Cards with a jade emblem on top have a VP value equal to the number on the jade. These are the Heir (5), Palace (4), Market (3),



Celestial Dragon (2), Philosopher (1), Nobles (2-4) and Warlords (1). All tokens are worth 2VP each.

DYNASTY CARD TYPES

Players without at least one card of each type of Dynasty Card score -3 points for each missing type (the Philosopher counts as a Bureaucrat for this purpose).

FARMERS

The player with the fewest Farmers (possibly none) discards all of his or her Farmers. All other players also discard this number of Farmers. Each player with remaining Farmers scores VPs according to the chart to the right.

Farmers	Points
1	2
2	5
3	8
4	14
5+	20

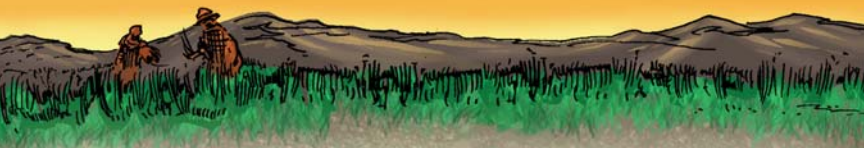
THE PHILOSOPHER

The player with the Philosopher scores 1 for each Bureaucrat that he or she has. All other Bureaucrats are worth 0.

Example: Zev ended the game with the Palace (+4VP), the Philosopher (+1VP), 3 Bureaucrats, 4 Farmers, 3 Nobles (+4+2+2 VPs), 1 Warlord (+1VP) and 3 2VP tokens (+6) totaling 20VP. He doesn't have any Merchants so he gets -3VP, making his current total 17VP. Steve has the fewest Farmers with 1 so all players must discard 1. Zev has 3 Farmers left so he gets +8 Points. He also has the Philosopher and gets +3VP for his Bureaucrats bringing his final total to 28VP.

WINNING

The player with the highest total wins! If a tie exists, then the player among those tied with the most Dynasty Cards wins. If still tied, then these players all win.



TWO PLAYER GAME

Play as above, with the following changes:

- Turn up three Dynasty Cards during setup and each round.
- Each player plays two separate bids each round, except the Palace player, who places one Bid Card and a second one after Bid Cards have been revealed. If the Palace player has a tied card from the previous round, he or she indicates whether or not the first Bid Card is added to the tied stack before it is revealed. A player who begins a round with just a reshuffle card in hand, plays it instead of two bid cards.
- The Emperor player must designate which one of his or her two Bid Cards receives its +.5 bonus.
- Each player can now potentially claim two Dynasty Cards in a round; each card is claimed separately, in bid order.
- A player who plays a Reset Card and whose other bid ties, does not pick up the tied Bid Card.

EXPERIENCED THREE PLAYER VARIANT

Play using the two player rules, except turn over five Dynasty Cards during setup and in each round.

PLAYTESTING AND ADVICE

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