

imperial governor

VAE VICTIS!

# INTRODUCTION

Imperial Governor is a game of intrigue and conquest for three to six players. It can last a few hours or a few years ... maybe it could last forever, who knows? Technicalities have been kept to a minimum in order to lay greater stress on the diplomatic interplay between the combatants, and players should resolve any difficulties in the spirit of the game rather than in the letter of the rule. Players are forewarned that they are likely to witness the worst side of an opponent's character!

Each player takes the part of one of the emergent or declining nations in the Mediterranean during the last three centuries before Christ, and his objective is to become the predominant power, using honest force of arms, augmented by threats, subterfuge and general skullduggery.

The Initial Set-up

Each player is allocated at random one of the six home countries: Rome (red), Carthage (blue), Pontus (green), Macedonia (white), Egypt (grey) and Parthia (brown). The player who rolls the highest number moves first and play proceeds in a clockwise direction.

Each player will start his first turn by placing anywhere within the bounds of his home country the units which represent his king (dictator or emperor), his three subordinate generals together with legions or squadrons of ships up to the income value in talents of his home country.

# order of play

All other turns will proceed in the following manner:

1. Select a fates card
2. Treasury phase
3. Diplomacy phase
4. Movement phase
5. Combat phase.

The counter-mix contains the optimum number of each type of unit, together with a number of blanks, which can be penciled in and used as required. There are also five Ambassador units for each home country, whose use is explained in the Diplomacy, Negotiations and Ambassadors rules.

MOVEMENT

Only a pIaye1°'s four leader units possess the initiative to move. Legions and squadrons may not move themselves but must be moved by a leader, who has a basic movement allowance of 'five hexes per turn on land and sea. A leader may pick up and detach units at any stage during his five hex move, but no unit may be moved by more than one leader in a single turn.

Land Movement

Although a leader may move across a path of up to five clear (i.e. green) hexes in any one turn, he must stop moving as soon as he has entered a blocked hex, these consist of dark brown hexes (mountains and generally poor communications) and light brown hexes (desert). A leader who travels through a series of such hexes must do so at a rate of one hex per turn.

It is possible to cross the Pillars of Hercules (hexes 0727 and 0728) and the Hellespont (hex 4114) without the use of ships. The only proviso is that a leader should cross the straits at the two places designated by arrows and should stop moving as soon as he reaches the opposite shore (i.e., a leader entering 4114 must

stop. Next turn he may proceed either into Thrace or into Bithynia). This is the only instance where you may make a sea crossing without the use of squadrons.

Sea Movement

A leader may also move up to five continuous hexes by sea, but only when accompanied by at least one squadron. The port hexes on the board are signified by ship symbols and these are the only hexes where a leader may embark. He may, for instance, move three hexes by land to reach the port hex, where a squadron is waiting, embark and conclude the move by proceeding two hexes out to sea.



A squadron which begins its move on the Isthmus of Corinth (hex 3819) may proceed either east or west, since it was possible to drag ships across that narrow neck of land. This is the only time a squadron may move over land.

Legions and squadrons may happily occupy the same hex at the same time.

Transportation

Squadrons of ships may transport legions across the sea on a point for point basis, i.e., five squadrons may transport up to five legions. They must embark with a leader at a port hex and disembark at another port. Should the fleet total fall below the total of legions being transported (through combat losses), the excess legions drown and should be removed from the board.

Enemy-Occupied Hexes

A leader with accompanying units may enter an enemy-occupied hex to engage in combat. The leader may not however move through such a hex but must stop moving as soon as he enters. Should his attack prove unsuccessful, he may leave the hex in a subsequent turn, but only by the route he entered, i.e., he must leave by the same hexside he crossed on entry. Similarly, a defending force which survives such an attack may quit the hex, but it may not cross the entry hexside used by the attacking force.

The single exception to this rule is that a squadron may freely pass through a coastal hex occupied only by hostile legions and similarly a legion may cross a hex occupied by hostile squadrons.

A leader may freely pass through a hex occupied by allied and friendly units.

Overwhelming Attack

If on entering a hex a leader has a force at least five times bigger than the enemy force which is occupying that hex, he may resolve combat immediately on the 500 /0 column of the Combat Results Table and, if successful, he may continue his move. Such a move would not inhibit a leader's ability to fight in the combat phase. Remember however that a hostile unit in a city has an enhanced defence strength.

Hidden Movement

A valid tactic is to conceal the contents of a force under the leader. An enemy may not examine one of your stacks until he has a unit in the same hex.

Stacking

There is no limit to the number of units which may occupy a single hex. At the same time units are freely interchangeable, i.e. a five legion unit may be exchanged for five single legion units (but may not of course be converted into five single squadrons!).

Finally, movement is quite voluntary. You need not move any of your leaders. but you may move each and every one up to five hexes per turn. You may never, believe it or not, move any unit off the board!

COMBAT

Only a leader can initiate combat, since legions and squadrons cannot attack without leadership. The leader unit has no effect on the combat itself, other than making it possible. Combat is always voluntary and a player can never be obliged to attack. takes place when two opposing forces meet in the same hex. When a player has finished all his movement, he resolves whatever combats he has set up.

He examines his forces in the relevant hex, compares the enemy's forces and expresses the relationship as a percentage ratio (i.e., 5 to 4 would be 125%), rounding in favour of the defender (i.e. 20 attacking 8 would round down to 200%). Having selected the appropriate column on the Combat Results Table, he rolls a die, reads off the result and extracts any losses immediately. Positive results are given in two halves; top left refers to the defender, who always suffers 100% losses; bottom right refers to the attacker, who may lose none, 10% or 25% of his units (rounding losses up so that 25% of 10 is 3).

'NE' means 'no effect' and the attack has not been successful; both sides remain in place. Should the attacker discover to his embarrassment that he cannot muster even 125% superiority, the result is an automatic 'NE' without rolling a die and both sides remain in position. In such a situation however there is no reason why either side should not move in reinforcements in a subsequent game-turn in order to resolve the impasse.

Naval Combat

Land and naval combat are resolved in precisely the same way. A force of legions may have combat with a hostile force of squadrons, but obviously this may only occur on a coastal hex. Legions which are being transported by squadrons may contribute their strength to combat only when it occurs in a port hex.

Fortified Cities

Units which defend in the cities which are marked on the board do not have their combat strength doubled. although the value of the city is added to the combat strength. In this way a single legion defending in Ephesus (4117) would be 1 and the value of the city, 3, would be added to make a total of 4. Once the defending force has been eliminated however, the city is considered to have been taken by the attacker with its value unimpaired. The city gives no assistance to the owner-occupier when he is attacking.

When two hostile forces occupy a city for a number of turns, the player who has maintained the longest uninterrupted occupation is considered to be the owner and receives the enhanced defence.

Naval units may only attack, occupy and receive the enhanced defence from a city which is marked as a port.

Unoccupied Cities

Unoccupied cities, which are either neutral or owned by an enemy, will be considered taken if you end a movement phase with a leader on the city hex accompanied by legions or squadrons which equal or exceed the value of the city, i.e. in order to take unoccupied Ephesus, you must end a move with a leader and three legions on hex 4117. Remember that squadrons can capture only ports. From that point the city is owned by the capturing player, even if left unmanned, and will remain in his possession until another player takes the city in the same manner.

In conclusion remember that all units must defend, but only units accompanied by a leader may attack. Mountains, desert and poor communications have no effect on combat.

# TREASURY PHASE

Keeping account and maintaining the War Chest. In the treasury phase, a player calculates his income in talents, pays his troops in service, raises or dismisses forces and adjusts the balance in his War Chest.

Control of a Province

To receive the income from a province, which is marked on a yellow disc within the province, you must first establish control. In order to control a province, you must own all its cities and maintain a garrison of at least one legion or, if it has a port, one squadron. (N.B. You need not garrison your home country in order to receive its income). As soon as you have established control of a province, you may start to collect its income in talents from the following turn. If the province subsequently revolts, should you fail to keep a garrison of at least one point in the province or if an enemy takes even one of its cities, you will immediately lose control of, and the income from the province.

Payment

Having established your total income for this turn, you must now pay each legion and squadron in service at the rate of one talent for each (i.e.„ should you have 10 legions and 5 squadrons in service, you must pay them 15 talents per turn). You must pay all troops in service before you attempt to raise more. If you have too many troops on the board and insufficient funds to pay them, the excess will desert and should be removed from the board. 

Raising Forces

You may purchase additional troops each turn at a cost of two talents per legion or squadron, which need not be paid on the same turn they are raised. Any home country or controlled province may be used to raise forces, but you may raise squadrons only in provinces which contain a port. Squadrons are raised on the port hex and legions may be raised on any hex in the province. Forces may be raised up to the value of the home country or province each turn, e.g., if a player controlled Macedonia, Moesia and Thrace and had enough talents, he could raise 11 legions per turn.

Disbanding Forces

You will find from time to time, particularly at the end of a victorious campaign, that you have too many forces on the board. You may disband those you no longer need, but first you must pay them off. Instead of the usual one talent, pay three talents per unit and remove them from the board.

War Chest

When you have gathered all your income for the turn and made all necessary payments, the balance should be paid into your War Chest. Alternatively, if expenditure exceeds income in any turn, you must deduct the balance from your War Chest. I recommend that you keep account on a piece of paper as follows:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 1. Current income from home country and controlled provinces talents
 | 2. Current total of forces in service | 3. Current balance in War Chest talents |

N.B. In any turn when 1 exceeds 2, the balance is added to 3, but whenever 2 exceeds l, the balance is deducted from 3.

Capture of Leaders

Any leader who is captured alone by a hostile force or left unaccompanied in a hex following a defeat in combat is removed from play and must be ransomed by the owning player. A general will cost you a mere 50% of your current income, whereas your king will cost 75%, which should be paid to his captor at the start of your next turn (after you have collected the income, but before you pay your troops). You must ransom a leader, even at the cost of failing to pay your forces. On payment of the ransom, the leader should immediately be placed on your capital and may move normally in that turn.

Loss of Home Country

If an invading enemy captures one of the cities in your home country, it does not affect your income, which you continue to receive in full, but it does affect your ability to raise troops there. For each city in your home country which you lose to an enemy, your ability to raise troops there is reduced by 20% and you may not raise troops in a city which has fallen.

When all your cities have been captured, you may no longer raise troops there, nor may you draw income from your home country. Your king however is considered to carry around with him a large portion of that country's resources so that, although the invading player will draw the full income from what was your home country, you will start to draw your king's personal income of five talents per turn. You should now designate any one of your controlled provinces as your new home country.

Loss of Home Country and All Provinces

It is impossible to 'lose' and thus be obliged to drop out of the game. Even when your home country and all provinces have fallen, your forces have been disbanded and all your leaders captured (could it be worse?), you may still start again. In this, the worst of circumstances, you would firstly have to pay your captor to release your leaders. You still have an income of five talents per turn and you must pay him, but only to the limit of your purse. He is then obliged to release all your leaders wherever you wish in his empire. Since you have no home country, you may build units on your king's hex. The additional capacity for a homeless, stateless player to build just one squadron on any coastal hex will enable you to take to the sea quickly with all leaders and possibly one legion to avoid further capture. Should your king die at this point, he may be replaced on your next turn on any hex occupied by one of your generals.

You have two main choices at this point. You could take ship to some remote corner of the board (e.g., Britannia or Bosporus) and await better days. Alternatively, you could approach one of the other players to become your patron as follows:

Client Kings

When a client and a patron reach a mutually advantageous agreement, the patron must give his client a province, however small, which the client may use as his home country. The patron should also defend the client in that country, should an enemy invade. In return the client must never attack his patron and in addition may add the whole of his client's empire to his own when calculating points for victory.

A clientship can only be terminated either when it is agreeable to both parties or when the patron loses his home country. In practice a patron may be induced to release his client in return for a large bribe. Clientships are very advantageous to both parties and are highly recommended.

# FATES CARDS

The pack of Fates Cards is intended to represent the whimsical caprice of blind Fate. Some cards will help you along, others will hinder you, some will have no effect at all. Each player should take a card at the Start of each turn and put the result into effect immediately. The cards are as follows:

* Nos. 1 to 36: Storm. There is a storm in one of the 12 sea areas. Consult the Storm Table on the board and roll a die twice as indicated to pinpoint the exact location. All squadrons which are at sea in that area, i.e., not in a port, together with any legions which they are transporting, are sunk, drowned, destroyed and removed from the board.
* Nos. 37 to 46: Revolt. There is a revolt in one of the provinces (not necessarily one of yours) Consult the Revolt Table on the board and roll the die twice as indicated to identify the revolting province. All leaders, legions and squadrons on the coast in that province, which belong to the controlling player, are destroyed and removed from play. The leader will reappear on the owning player's capital at the start of his next turn, but control of the province is lost and it resumes its neutral status. Forces belonging to another player, which happen to be in the province at the time, remain unharmed.
* Nos. 47 to 56: Rome Only. The Roman player starts the game with a greater income than other players and these ten cards, which are self-explanatory, are intended to restore the balance somewhat. They operate only when drawn by the Roman player. Should a card be drawn by any other player, neither he nor the Roman player is affected in any way.
* Nos. 57 to 66: Credit. These cards will give you an additional income of three, four, or five talents, which you will receive each turn for as long as you keep the card. Return the card to the pack only when you draw a Credit Over card.
* Nos. 67 to 71: Credit Over. Return your Credit cards and shuffle the pack.
* Nos. 72 to 81: Bonus. These cards represent a once-for-all payment to your War Chest, you lucky people.
* Nos. 82 to 100: Miscellaneous. These cards are self-explanatory and vary in their degree of villainy from mere nuisance to outright disaster. Card 98 is particularly nasty, but the consequences may be averted if the Roman player is prepared to accept a fat bribe

# DIPLOMACY, NEGOTIATIONS AND AMBASSADORS

Diplomacy is the most important single aspect of the game and players are encouraged to indulge in detente, intrigue, conspiracy and skullduggery. Should one player wish to open negotiations with a second player, who is either hostile or neutral, he should place an ambassador counter face down on that player's capital, during his diplomacy phase. If his opponent is willing to listen he will turn the counter face up and negotiations will begin.

It is customary when seeking such an audience to offer a gift before negotiations begin. A gift of one, two, or five talents may be considered appropriate at the start of the game or when a player is in severe financial straits. Five, 10 or 20 talents would be more appropriate when the game is in full swing. Each player is supplied with cards which represent gifts of one, two, five, 10 and 20 talents. When he wishes to use one, he must first purchase it at the appropriate price by deducting that sum from his War Chest. He will then present the card, face down, at the same time as he places his ambassador counter, face down, in the capital of his choice.

Players should feel free to accept the gift but reject the embassy, if they consider the gift too niggardly. Should the receiving player fail to turn over the ambassador counter, the embassy is rejected and negotiations cannot take place in that turn. Players should note however that a gift of one talent often implies a threat and they are strongly advised to listen, even after so poor a gift. Where a player is in the midst of financial collapse and cannot buy any ambassadorial gift, he should petition any or all other players to loan him one talent.

A player who receives such a gift should add the value of the gift to his War Chest before returning the card to the ambassador's owner. The ambassador may use that card again, but only after paying the relevant purchase price. Once the discussion is over, the ambassador counter is, removed from the capital.

When two players have concluded an offensive and defensive alliance, each should keep an ambassador counter face up in the other's capital so that they keep in constant touch without observing the niceties of gift giving. Once a particular war is over however and that alliance has no immediate purpose, those standing embassies should be withdrawn.

Ambassador counters do not act as normal units, may not move normally, may not be involved in combat and cannot be eliminated. Each player has five such units.

# GENERAL NOTES

Roman Predominance

The other players should note that there is a deliberate imbalance in the game. With his larger income the Roman will soon develop into the predominant power on the board unless he is resisted by an alliance of neighbouring players.

Simultaneous Movement

Once players have mastered the simple treasury-movement-combat system, play will move faster if the powers, who are not currently in conflict, move at the same time. Bear in mind however that players must be aware of each other's potential moves, intentions and spheres of influence, so that they do not interfere with each other. Moreover, in these circumstances all fates cards should be drawn, read and put into effect before any player proceeds with a movement phase. Simultaneous movement is very useful during periods of peace, but should be abandoned once war has been declared.

# THE SCENARIOS

1. All six powers are allocated at random among the players.
2. For Five Players. Parthia is omitted and the remaining powers are allocated as above.
3. For Four Players. Pontus and Egypt are omitted.
4. Alternative for Four: "The Successors of Alexander". The four combatants are Macedonia, Egypt, Pontus and Parthia. Players may not normally enter any country west of Noricum, Gallia Cisalpina, Italy, Sicily and Tripolitania, inclusive.
5. For Three players: "The Punic Wars". The three players represent Rome, Carthage and Macedonia and may not normally enter any country east of Armenia, Pontus, Bithynia, Pergamum, Crete and Cyrenacia, inclusive.
6. Alternative for Three: "The Successors of Alexander". This scenario is identical to Scenario D, except that Macedonia is reduced to the status of a province.

**N.B.** In Scenarios D, E and F players may only enter forbidden countries when they are 'in extremis', i.e., they have lost their home country and all provinces and there are no provinces left to colonize. In these circumstances a player may colonize an otherwise forbidden country.

Accelerated Start

If players wish to skip the early colonization stage and proceed more quickly to the vitals of the game, each participant, having selected a home country at random, should roll a die to discover what additional provinces he controls. He may then allocate his leaders and units up to the income value of his empire at the start anywhere within his empire. No player may invade the empire of another power on the first turn.

The additional provinces for each power are as follows: —

Carthage Die-roll

1. Tripolitania
2. Numidia
3. Mauretania and Tripolitania
4. Mauretania and Numidia 
5. Mauretania, Numidia and Tripolitania
6. Mauretania, Numidia and Tripolitania

Egypt Die-roll

1. Cyrenaica
2. Crete and Rhodes
3. Cyrenaica and Palestine
4. Cyrenaica, Crete and Rhodes
5. Cyrenaica, Crete, Palestine and Rhodes
6. Cyrenaica, Crete, Palestine and Rhodes

Parthia Die-roll

1. Syria
2. Armenia
3. Syria and Cyprus
4. Syria and Cyprus
5. Syria, Cyprus and Armenia
6. Syria, Cyprus and Armenia

Pontus Die-Roll

1. Cappadocia
2. Bithynia and Cilicia
3. Cappadocia and Pergamum
4. Bithynia, Cappadocia and Cilicia
5. Cappadocia, Bithynia, Cilicia and Pergamum
6. Cappadocia, Bithynia, Cilicia and Pergamum

Macedonia Die-roll

1. Thrace
2. Achaea and Pannonia
3. Illyricum and Thrace
4. Achaea, Pannonia and Illyricum
5. Achaea, Pannonia, Illyricum and Thrace
6. Achaea, Pannonia, Illyricum and Thrace

 Rome Die-roll

1. l. Gallia Cisalpina and Noricum
2. Add Rhaetia
3. Add Germania Superior
4. Add Germania Inferior
5. Add Belgica
6. Add Lugdunensis

# DECIDING THE VICTOR

'Imperial Governor' can be a very long game, since no player need drop out, no matter how badly he is faring, and since each player needs the active help of others. It follows therefore that the more players there are, the less likely there is to be an outright winner, i.e., a player who cannot successfully be opposed by a combination of all the other players.

A more realistic approach therefore is to set a time limit to the game. As the game ends, each player should divide his income at the end by the income which he had at the start. The player with the highest resulting figure is the winner. In any event this player will be the most successful conqueror-cum-diplomat.

An alternative is to award the laurels to the player with most talents in his War Chest. This player will be the most successful businessman! A final (and rather whimsical) alternative is to conduct a poll among the competitors as to who has proved the most trustworthy ally, since every game of skullduggery should award a prize to 'the nice guy'!

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