

## OBJECT

The object of this game is to conquer and unify China by carefully using geographical advantages, economic resources, and military strategy. The player who would become Emperor must not only build his own power and overcome that of his opponents, but must be prepared to survive treachery and natural calamities over which he has no control.

## DESCRIPTION OF PIECES

- Population Markers:** In five colors, given three per turn with additional markers given for possession of economic symbols.
- Economic Symbols:** Flat discs in three colors, symbolizing cities (red), mines (yellow), and agricultural (green). Symbols remain permanent in a province and grant extra population markers to the possessor.
- Yang Cards:** The Red Deck, which grants "special advantages", economic symbols, and relief from famine and flood.
- Yin Cards:** The Blue Deck, which brings calamities causing loss, or other disasters. Both Yang and Yin Cards are used in OCCUPIED PROVINCES ONLY, not those held by inference".

## RULES OF PLAY

- 1. Setting the Board.** Before play begins, remove the Mandate of Heaven card from the Yang deck. Shuffle both decks thoroughly, place the Mandate card at the bottom of the Yang deck, and place both decks on the appropriate spaces on the board.
- 2. Beginning of Play.** Each player throws both dice. The player throwing the highest number may select the province from which he believes he can conquer China. Play then moves clockwise from the first player. **FOUR OR MORE PLAYERS:** each may in his turn initially occupy only one province with three markers. **THREE PLAYERS:** each may occupy only two adjoining provinces with three markers on each. **TWO PLAYERS:** each may occupy three adjoining provinces with three markers on each. Immediately after each player establishes his State, he draws one Yang and one Yin Card, face down, for use in his domain. (See Rule 4). There will be a number of unoccupied provinces. These may be colonized as soon as expanding population allows a player to move **three** surplus population markers from territory already held into each adjoining unoccupied province desired. Crossing barriers (mountains, rivers, etc.) without a Yang special advantage card to colonize **unoccupied** provinces is permitted. The Formosa Strait may be crossed either way from Taiwan to Chekiang, Fukien, or Kwangtung. The Yellow Sea may be crossed either way from Shantung to Liaoning or Korea. Unlettered areas are outside play. **ADVICE:** Pick a province to start from which is not liable to be quickly boxed in, yet one which offers at least some natural barriers to help you protect yourself. Expand only into provinces which appear to be steppingstones to rich or strategic provinces. It is neither necessary nor

desirable to colonize more new provinces than you really need. If colonization will get you new economic wealth, enable you to get nearer to someone else's wealth, or prevent someone else from getting near your own economic wealth, by all means colonize. But do not colonize simply to be colonizing. Your primary object is to control economic wealth, not empty provinces. A wise player should occupy only those empty territories which block his opponent's route of advance, and hold territory more by "inference" than by occupation. Territory held by "inference" describes provinces which are not physically occupied by any player but are clearly accessible **only to one player**.

3. **A Turn in Five Distinct Phases.** A player's turn consists of the following five steps in this required sequence: ONE, securing and placing new population markers; TWO, colonization of as many new areas as desired; THREE, movements and concentrations of markers into provinces now held; and FOUR, expansion against competing states by bargaining or by roll of the dice (See Rules 8 and 9). FIVE, once all such actions are completed to a player's satisfaction or capability, he at this time draws his Yang and Yin cards, face down. When the actions specified by the cards have been carried out, that player's turn ends, and the next player begins the cycle anew by securing and placing his population markers.
4. **Yang and Yin Cards.** Both cards are drawn together, face down, and may not be examined until **after** the player has announced where they will be used. If a player holds only one province, both cards must be used in that province. If a player physically occupies two or more provinces, however, the player may use Yang in one province and Yin in another. Once the province has been designated, Yin cards are turned face up on the subject province while Yang cards may at this time be privately examined by the player. If the Yang card bestows an economic symbol, the Player should reveal this and receive the appropriate symbol on the **PROVINCE DESIGNATED**. If the card grants a special advantage, the player need not reveal this and may keep the card until he can use it. If the card proves to be the Mandate of Heaven, the game ends. When cards are used, or the actions specified have been carried out, they are returned to the bottom of the deck. For example, if a player uses a "Bribe Guards" card to cross the Great Wall, even if his opponent elects to withdraw, that card is considered "used", and is returned to the deck. If a player designates a Yang card which cancels famine or floods for province "A", and draws a Yin card bringing said disaster to province "B", they cannot cancel. The catastrophe must take its toll, but the Yang card may be held to cancel a future disaster in any province. If famine or floods strike a province having only one marker present, only that one marker is lost. There is no limit on the number of Yang cards a player may hold. **ADVICE:** Yang cards give you power, so use them wisely. Yang grant permanent symbols which steadily increase the population of your State. Also they enable you to overcome the difficult defensive barriers separating you from your opponent's economic wealth. Therefore, your cards should play a large part in determining your foreign policy against other states. Be careful not to select an indefensible area as recipient of Yang, for if the card bestows an economic symbol, that province will become a magnet attracting all your opponents.
5. **Securing and Placing Population Markers.** Population markers are dispensed to each player three per turn regardless of economic symbols held. These three may be placed in any province held by the player or used for colonization. Extra population markers, however, may be secured **each turn** as a result of possession of Agricultural, Commerce, or Mineral wealth symbols in one's provinces. Each green symbol secures two extra markers each turn; each red or yellow symbol secures one. Although these extra markers must initially be placed in province of origin, they may be moved to an adjoining province after placing. **ADVICE:** Remember that economic symbols are the variables of power. The more symbols under your control, and the fewer your opponent controls, the more likely it is that you will win. Therefore, move as quickly as possible to bring productive provinces (i.e., those with symbols) under your control. These will boost your population and thus enable you to continue to expand into other bases of power.

6. **Movement of Population Markers.** Markers may be moved to only one adjoining province at any one turn. There is no limit on the number of moves between adjoining provinces so long as all are completed prior to the opening of the conflict/negotiation phase. It is necessary to leave a marker behind, **only** if a province possesses economic wealth, or if an escape route is desired. (A Player may not withdraw to an unoccupied province.) No more than TEN population markers may be in any one province at any given time; excess markers noted by an opponent (except during the securing/placing phase) must be removed from the board. If a player is surrounded, and thus unable to move out his excess markers, they must be removed from the board. Nor may he secure additional markers until either he secures an outlet for them, or his population drops. **ADVICE:** Make the best possible use of your population markers. Avoid becoming either over-crowded or stretched too thin. Concentrate your strength in key areas, well forward. If you find yourself leaving one marker here, one marker there, until your strength is spread thin, pull back from some of the less important provinces. Try to control more by "inference" than by actual occupation.
7. **Economic Symbols.** Economic symbols remain permanently in a province. When a province changes hands, all assets pass to the new ruler and produce for him on his next turn (if he continues to hold the province.) A province which has become depopulated through Yin misfortune or withdrawal, requires re-colonization from adjoining territory.
8. **Expansion Phase – Negotiation.** Negotiation is preferable to conflict; therefore, if a State has become weak or surrounded by a powerful neighbor, it may be advantageous for both to merge. During their respective turns, either party may propose such a merger. If agreed upon, the population markers of the weaker party are replaced by an equal number of those of the stronger. If it is the weaker party's turn, that State draws its Yang/Yin and then ceases to exist. The two players continue the game as senior and junior partners. Players may also attempt to persuade opponents to withdraw from a given area, or they may try to cajole opponents into attacking some other player. **ADVICE:** Always try to bluff or cajole your opponents into withdrawing from the provinces you desire, or into merging with your State, **BEFORE** you resort to the dice. Persuade them that you hold the appropriate "advantage" cards and necessary power to crush them anyway. (You need not actually hold said Yang card but you must produce the card if you decide to attack.)
9. **Expansion Phase – Conflict.** Should conflict prove inevitable, you must resort to the dice. Offense always rolls and may continue the attack as long as he possesses the will and the strength. (He may attack even with only ONE marker.) Even numbers are victories for the Offense, one Defense marker being removed for each even number thrown; odd numbers are losses, and the Offense must remove one of his own markers for each odd number thrown. If victorious, the Offense may occupy with as many or as few markers as he chooses, or leave the province vacant and move in a new direction. Offense may not roll more dice than he has markers. **ADVICE:** Never pass up the opportunity to take advantage of an opponent. If he is weak, pressure him. If he is beset by enemies on other fronts, attack him. But always try to eliminate your opponent with as little violence as possible. Persuade your opponent to give up and merge into your expanding State whenever you can; crush him by a throw of the dice only when you must. This avoids needless loss of both parties.
10. **Defense Withdrawal Prerogative.** If Defense foresees the eventual loss of a province, he may elect to withdraw his men to an adjoining province which he already holds. He may withdraw either when attacked (before a roll is taken, not during), or merely if he feels that continued occupation of a province is profitless. However, if Defense has no adjoining province into which he can withdraw, he must fight to the end or merge into the attacking State. He cannot attempt to escape by "colonizing" because it is not his turn. If Defense chooses to resist and is eliminated, his Yang cards are returned to the deck, and the player ceases to participate in play. If a player has become surrounded or "cornered" in a province from which he cannot move within five turns, he must

merge into the surrounding State, or remove his markers from the board and cease play. **ADVICE:** While you have the strength to resist, even by a well-calculated withdrawal, by all means resist. But when you clearly see that you have been “cornered”, or otherwise beaten, you can save face by joining your opponent. There is always a place in the Chinese political system for a joiner, but rarely for a die-hard.

11. **Geographical Barriers.** Geography influences a State’s capability to move and expand. Yang cards are necessary to cross all barriers DEFENDED by a competing State. If a State does not possess the appropriate Yang card to neutralize the Defense’s mountains, rivers, Great Wall, or sea, it cannot attack. Borders are considered mountainous if the clear majority of the border is lined with mountains; an “open border” is one with few mountains, no rivers or sea, and no Great Wall. Where two barriers supplement each other (river and mountains between Szechwan and Hunan for example), the most formidable is the barrier to be breached. The Great Wall is more formidable than mountains, mountains are more formidable than rivers or seas. **ADVICE:** Use your Yang cards as soon as possible. Your opponent is not likely to grow steadily weaker. By the same token, the longer you hold your “advantage” cards, the greater is the possibility that you will draw a Yin traitor and lose all your advantages in one full sweep.
12. **Winning.** A player is said to receive the Mandate of Heaven to become Emperor of China when he successfully holds fifteen or more provinces, by physical occupation or clear “inference”, through one complete rotation of turns (all remaining players). A player may also declare himself Emperor if he has eliminated all opposition from the board by force or merger, regardless of the number of provinces he himself holds. Or, should the Mandate of Heaven card appear with no clear winner, the game ends and all remaining players’ holdings are counted. Population markers are counted one point each, cities and mines one point each, agricultural symbols two points each, Yang cards held as one point each, and provinces either physically occupied or **clearly** held by “inference” as two points each. The player with the greatest holdings is declared Emperor and founder of a new dynasty.

“When the Enemy advances, we withdraw;  
When the Enemy halts, we harass;  
When the Enemy tires, we attack;  
“When the Enemy retreats, we pursue.”

Paraphrase of Sun Tzu (6th century B.C.)  
by Mao Tse-tung on Chingkangshan, 1928