

UWE ROSENBERG
HAGEN DORGATHEN

BABEL

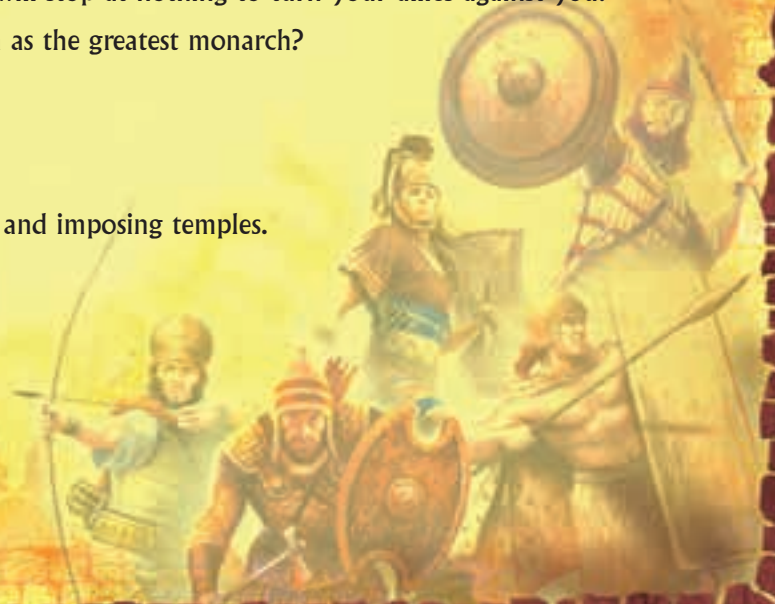
A game of power for 2 players, aged 13 and up.

In an era gone by, the greatest monarchs constructed temples to demonstrate their great power and enormous wealth. The grandest temples belonged to the richest of those fit to rule. In this game for two, you are one of these rulers. With the help of diverse tribes, your success will be measured by the height of your temples – ever more grandiose and magnificent as they climb further and further towards the sky. However, you must be increasingly cautious of your adversary and the nations under his service, for they are bent on your destruction and will stop at nothing to turn your allies against you.

Who will reign as the greatest monarch?

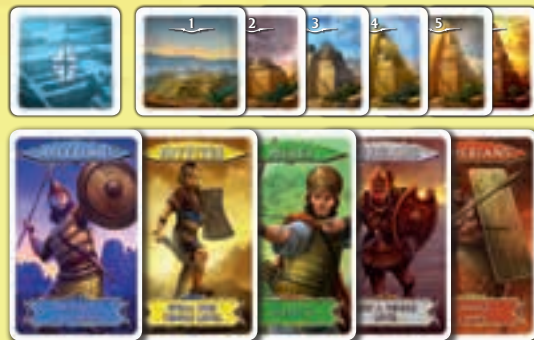
GOAL

Be the player who constructs the most majestic and imposing temples.



COMPONENTS

- 1 board illustrating 5 temple construction sites for each player and a quarry to hold the Temple cards
- 45 Temple cards of different levels of majesty (10x level 1, 9x level 2, 8x level 3, 7x level 4, 6x level 5, and 5x level 6)
- 60 Nation cards (12 per Nation): Assyrians, Hittites, Medes, Persians, and Sumerians
- 2 pawns



GAME SETUP

- 1 Place the board in the middle of the table.
- 2 Each player takes a level 1 Temple card and places it before himself.

Note: This one card may only be built by the player who holds it and must be constructed on the player's first turn. This first card is the only one to which this rule applies.

Shuffle the remaining Temple cards and place them face down in the Quarry. **2B**

- 3 Each player takes a pawn and places it on their side of the quarry.



Quarry

2B

- 4 Shuffle the Nation cards. Determine a start player by whatever method the players choose (for example: the youngest player or the one who speaks the most languages). The start player draws 3 cards and his adversary receives 5. These cards are kept secret. The remaining Nation cards form a face down draw pile near the board.

- 5 The start player plays their turn, after which the players alternate turns.

Player 2's
Temple cards
stack



Player 1's
Temple cards
stack

Construction
sites

THE CARDS

The Temple cards

The Temple cards indicate the level of majesty attained by each of your temples as their construction progresses.

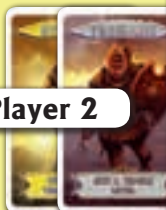
- The number indicates the temple's level. Level 1 represents the lowly foundation from which each temple must start, and level 6 is the loftiest of achievements.



2



Player 2



The Nation cards

The Nation cards permit you to perform the various possible actions available during the game. The following information can be found on each of these cards:

- The name of that Nation.
- The special ability unique to that Nation.
- The color associated with that Nation shows the construction site you may move your pawn to.



Draw
pile

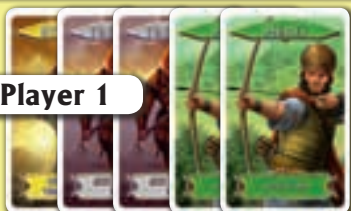


Discard
pile

2



Player 1



PLAYING THE GAME

On each turn, a player will perform the 3 following phases, in order:

1. Draw 3 Nation cards
2. Perform actions
3. Draw 2 cards to the temple stack closest to you

1. Draw 3 Nation cards

At the start of your turn (including your first turn), draw 3 Nation cards and add them to your hand.

Note: If you are required to draw from an empty draw pile, shuffle the discard pile to create a new draw pile.

2. Perform actions

After you have added 3 Nation cards to your hand, you may perform the following actions in any order you choose, and as many times as you wish. There is one exception: a player may only perform a single migration action each turn.

Possible actions:

- a) Move your building pawn
- b) Deploy a Nation card
- c) Construct a temple
- d) Perform a migration (no more than once per turn)
- e) Use a nation's special ability

A) Move your building pawn

Each player's building pawn begins at the quarry. To move your building pawn from one construction site to another, you must discard a card whose color matches the color of the construction site you wish to occupy.

Your first move will be from the quarry to a construction site. Then, your pawn will move from one construction site to another.

The pawns of both players may occupy the same construction site.

B) Deploy a Nation cards

Deploy a Nation card from your hand below the construction site your pawn currently occupies, on top of previously deployed Nation cards. Place them in such a way that the names of previously deployed Nation cards remain visible.

You are permitted to deploy multiple Nation cards to the same construction site during your turn.

Important: All Nation cards must be placed so that they are visible to both players.

Once Nation cards have been deployed, they may only be moved through the use of the Migration action or by using a Nation's special ability.

Example:

- 1** The player's pawn occupies the Sumerians construction site. At this site, the player deploys 2 new cards, one Assyrians and one Persians, to those deployed on a previous turn. They are shown in their played order of Assyrians, Assyrians, Assyrians, Persians.
- 2** The player discards an Assyrians card from his hand and moves his pawn to the Assyrians construction site.
- 3** The player then deploys 2 Sumerians at this new construction site.



C) Construct a temple

To construct a temple, take a Temple card from either temple stack (explained on page 10) and place it at the construction site where your building pawn is located. You may not lay Temple cards at other construction sites.

Each temple must be constructed in the numerical sequence of level 1 to level 6. Therefore, a level 1 Temple card may only be played on an empty construction site, a level 2 Temple card may only be played on a level 1 Temple card, and so forth to level 6. Only special abilities may interrupt this numerical sequence.

Additionally, the construction site must have a number of your Nation cards greater than or equal to the level of the Temple card you wish to build.

Example: In order to place a level 4 Temple card, you must have at least 4 Nation cards at the corresponding construction site.

Important: It is only at the moment of construction that the presence of Nation cards is necessary. Once a temple level has been constructed, the presence of Nation cards is no longer required. The movement or destruction of these Nation cards will not affect a previously constructed temple.

Each player may choose freely from the two stacks of Temple cards created during the game. However, only the top card of each stack may be taken.

Reminder: At the beginning of the game, each player will already possess a level 1 Temple card. Each player is obligated to construct this card on his or her first turn.

D) Migrate

Important: You may not perform this action more than once per turn.

Regardless of where your building pawn is located, you may move 3 of your Nation cards from one construction site to another. You must move exactly 3 cards with this action, never more or less.

The Nation cards moved may belong to one more nations. Although it does not matter from which construction site you choose to move these cards, only the top 3 Nation cards (those most recently deployed at that construction site) are eligible to be moved.

The moved Nation cards are then placed on top of those Nation cards already present at the destination construction site, without changing their order.

Example of temple construction:

- 1** The player discards a Medes Nation card in order to move her pawn to the Medes construction site. She wishes to construct a temple there. As there are already 4 Nation cards present, she may construct her temple up to level 4, but no higher.
- 2** The player constructs the level 2 Temple card from the temple stack closest to herself, which then allows her to construct levels 3 and 4 from the temple stack closest to her opponent. She lays these cards, in numerical order, at the construction site.
- 3** She then deploys 2 additional Nation cards, bringing the total number of Nation cards present to 6.
- 4** The player may then construct level 5 from the temple stack closest to her opponent, followed by the level 6 temple from the temple stack closest to herself.



Migration example:

- 1** The player's building pawn occupies the Hittites construction site.
- 2** The player moves the 3 most recently deployed Nation cards at the Medes construction site (specifically Sumerians, Sumerians, Hittites) to the Persians construction site. The level 4 temple found at the Medes construction site remains intact in spite of the fact that less than 4 Nation cards remain there.

However, in order to construct level 5 of the temple found at the Medes construction site later in the game, it would be necessary to amass at least 5 Nation cards at the site before doing so.



E) Use a nation's special ability

Each nation possesses a special ability. This ability may only be used when 3 or more identical Nation cards are grouped one after the other at the same construction site (other Nation cards may be present, but may not interrupt this sequence). This group need not be the first or last 3 cards at a construction site.

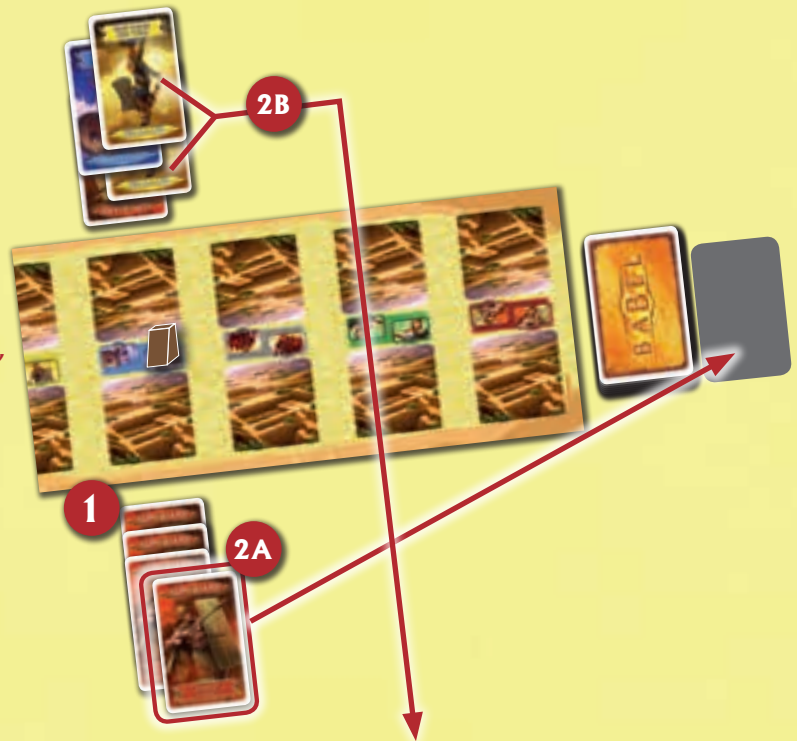
During your turn, you may use a nation's special ability by discarding one Nation card from a successive group of 3 cards or more. If there are more than 3 Nation cards grouped in this way, it is possible to use that nation's special ability multiple times in succession (discarding a card for each use).

Two additional conditions must be met to use a nation's special ability:

1. Your pawn must occupy the construction site where you wish to use the special ability.
2. At the moment you wish to use the special ability, the group of 3 or more identical, successive Nation cards must also occupy the same construction site.

Example:

- 1 The player possesses a group of 4 successive Sumerians Nation cards at the Assyrians construction site.
- 2 He discards any one of the successive Sumerians Nation cards and uses their special ability to take possession of all of his opponent's Persians Nation cards occupying the same construction site (see the Sumerians' special ability on the following page).





Assyrians :
Destroy a temple

At this construction site, destroy your opponent's temple in its entirety. The destroyed Temple cards are placed face down on top of the Temple card draw pile (i.e.: not in the discard pile). These cards are placed in descending order with the highest value Temple card being placed first, followed by the Temple card of the second highest value, etc.



Hittites :
Steal a temple level

At this construction site, steal the highest level Temple card belonging to your opponent and place it on your own temple. Two conditions must be met:

1. The stolen Temple card must be of a higher value than your own at the same construction site. It is possible to skip temple levels in this way.

2. You must have a number of deployed Nation cards equal to or greater than the value of the Temple card you wish to steal.

(Note: The Hittites card that you will discard to use this special ability counts toward these required Nation cards.)

You may steal a Temple card even if your construction site is otherwise empty.



Medes :
Desertion

Choose a nation. Your opponent must discard all Nation cards of this type found at this construction site. Your own Nation cards are not affected.



Persians :
Skip a temple level

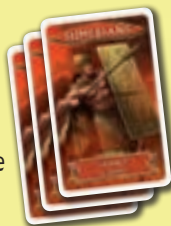
At this construction site, you may skip a temple level in order to construct a Temple card 2 levels higher than the current temple level. In other words, you may construct a level 2 Temple card on an empty construction site (temple level 0), a level 3 Temple card on a level 1 Temple card, etc.

The following two conditions must be met:

1. As normal, the Temple card you wish to construct must be taken from the top of either Temple card stack.

2. As normal, the construction site must have a number of Nation cards greater than or equal to the level of Temple you wish to build.

(Note: The Persians card that you will discard to use this special ability counts toward the required Nation cards.)



Sumerians :
Change camps

At this construction site, all of your opponent's Nation cards matching those of *his most recently played Nation card* (at this construction site) defect to your side of the board. These defecting Nation cards are placed on top of your own Nation cards at the same construction site in their original order.

All Nations: Discard half of your opponent's hand

Instead of using the corresponding special abilities listed above, a player may choose to force his opponent to discard half his hand of Nation cards (rounded down in favor of your opponent). Your opponent chooses which cards to discard. This special ability is used in place of a nation's unique special ability, and is resolved in the same way by discarding one card of a group of three or more identical, successive Nation cards occupying the same construction site as your building pawn.

Example: A player uses 3 Sumerians Nation cards to force his opponent to discard half of his cards (rounded down). An opponent with 7 cards in hand must therefore discard 3 cards of his choice.

3. Draw 2 cards to the temple stack closest to you

To end your turn, you must draw 2 Temple cards and place them on the temple stack closest to you. Place these 2 Temple cards in descending value, so that the card of lesser value is at the top of the stack. As a reminder, only the top card of either temple stack is available to be constructed by the players.

Play then passes to the opposing player.

Should you end your turn with 4 or more Nation cards, you must indicate to your opponent the number of cards in your possession.

GAME END

The game ends when the combined value of one player's temples is equal to 15 or more AND the combined value of the other player's temples is equal to 9 or less.

However, if when a player's temples reach or exceed a combined value of 15 or more, the other player's temples have a combined a value of 10 or more, the game will instead enter the «end phase». Once the players have entered the «end phase», the game will end immediately in the following two situations:

- 1) One player's temples have a combined value of 20 or more.
- 2) One player's temples have a combined value of 9 or less.

Special case: The game will also end immediately when the deck of Temple cards is exhausted.

In all cases, the player whose temples have the greatest combined value is declared the winner. In case of a tie, the player with the most Nation cards in hand is declared the winner.

Example:

To help you better understand the flow of the game, the following example presents the numerous actions possible during the second phase of a turn. In order to follow along with the example, we recommend setting the game up in the following way:

At the Hittites construction site:

*Player 1: Sumerians – Sumerians – Sumerians
– Sumerians – Assyrians – Persians – Persians*

*Player 2: Persians – Sumerians – Assyrians
– Assyrians – Medes*

At the Assyrians construction site:

Player 1: Hittites – Hittites

At the Sumerians construction site:

Player 1: Persians – Persians

Player 1's hand of cards:

Assyrians – Hittites – Sumerians



Player 1's pawn currently lies at the Hittites construction site and he wishes to destroy his opponent's level 6 temple. How can he do this with the cards he has in hand?

Solution: Player 1 discards one of his Sumerians to use their special ability (change camps), stealing his opponent's Medes card and placing it atop his own Nation cards at the same site.

Then, he migrates the top 3 cards at the Hittites construction site (Persians – Persians – Medes) to the Sumerians construction site where a pair of Persians are already present. The Hittites construction site is left with the following: Sumerians – Sumerians – Sumerians – Assyrians.

He discards another Sumerians, using their special ability again to take his opponent's Assyrians and places them atop his own. He now possesses 3 successive Assyrians and can therefore use their special ability to destroy his opponent's level 6 temple. That had to hurt!

Player 1 then discards the Assyrians card from his hand to move his pawn to the Assyrians construction site where he deploys a Hittites Nation card. Now that he has 3 successive Hittites, he discards one of them in order to steal the level 3 Temple card from the top of his opponent's temple and places it on his own empty construction site.

(Note: The construction of a level 3 temple was possible because the discarded Hittites Nation card counted toward the number required before being discarded.)

Finally, player 1 discards the Sumerians Nation card from his hand to move his building pawn to the Sumerians construction site, containing: Persians — Persians — Persians — Persians — Medes. He discards 2 Persians from the site (to use the special ability available to all nations), one after another, to force his opponent to discard half his cards, twice. His opponent, who is holding 7 cards, is forced to discard down to 4, then to 2 cards in hand.

Player 1 finishes his turn by drawing 2 Temple cards and places them (in descending order) atop the temple stack closest to him. Since he destroyed a temple during his turn, those cards are a 1 and a 2. His opponent will certainly find them useful.

Uwe Rosenberg was born in 1970 and has been designing games since 1998. He lives and works in Gütersloh. He is known around the world for his heavier games like «Agricola», «Le Havre» and «Ora & Labora». His games are among the most popular in their respective age group.

Hagen Dorgathen was born in 1968 and met Uwe Rosenberg in Dortmund, Germany, where the two studied. He continues to live in Dortmund and works at the University of Dortmund. Babel is currently his only published game.

Credits:

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English version: Team Z-Man Games

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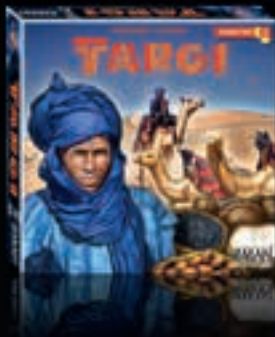
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