CLIVE BARKER'S

IMAJICA

RULEBOOK

IMAJICA.CCG.COM

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AUTHOR'S INTRODUCTION:

The telling of a story is of course a game. The writer plays out on the page scenarios which spring from whatever characters and ideas are dropped into his hands by God.

Having decided to play out the story that became *Imajica*—to allow it to obsess me as it did, overwhelming all other considerations in my life—I then had a second set of rules to consider, those of language. How was I to use the mental dictionary I have compiled over the years to best express my feelings? What was the most potent arrangement of words on the page; the combination that would best defeat my reader's defenses?

For a year and a half I struggled to play my best game, and thought, when the book was written, it was all it could be.

Not so; not remotely so.

In your hands is the beginning of a new *Imajica* journey; a game very different from that which I played writing the novel. In fact, it is in one sense a glorious *undoing* of my labors. For here the words have been returned to images and ideas, and the roads which I chose not to take
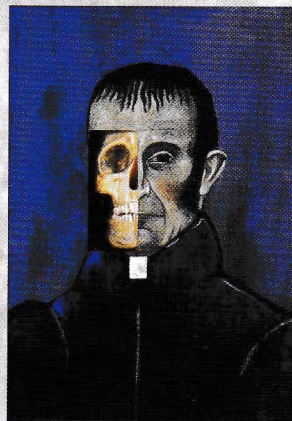
in the book are once more available for the traveling.

Most astonishing is the process by which *chance*, which is steadily ousted from a book as it approaches its final form, is once again at the heart of the adventure. In the fall of a card, the fate of Dominions may be decided.

There are also considerable aesthetic pleasures to be enjoyed. I'm in bliss looking at these intricate extrapolations from my words; at the plethora of pictures that have spiraled up and out of the book. I am deeply indebted to their creators. To Hans and Sean first and foremost, the good fellows of Zehrapushu without whom this adventure would have remained in the ether; and of course to the artists who brought their own unique visions into play.

That's the word I keep returning to: *play*. As in a *match of wits and skill*, of course, but also in the grander sense of a *celebration*, a dance of the creative spirit performed for the sheer pleasure of the motion.

"Magic," says Gentle in the novel, "is the first and last religion of the world." A religion of which—may I add?—play is surely the profoundest ritual.

Clive Barker

Clive Barker, 1997

GAME DESIGN

Imajica is a customizable card game for two or more players. Customizable card games are different from a "standard" card game in one important way: each player uses only cards from their own custom-built deck. Players' cards are never shared. One player never draws cards from another's deck, but the cards can and will affect the other players. The game can be played with the starter deck you have just purchased, but the exciting part of the game is mixing and matching different cards, creating a deck of cards that suits your own unique style of play. You can do this by attaining new cards, either by trading with friends, or purchasing Imajica expansion packs. Each card in the set has unique uses in the game.

Decks may be built from a wide variety of cards, in an even wider variety of combinations. The strategies and themes a deck can have is limited only by the imagination of the players.

HOW TO READ THIS RULEBOOK

The rules for Imajica are simple, and the rulebook has been filled with examples and tips to help clarify any possible points of confusion. These tips will be in colored text. Important rules or charts will be outlined in a black box.

Italicized text in quotations are lines from the novel *Imajica*, and (aside from inspiration and atmosphere) have no bearing on the rules themselves.

GAME BACKGROUND

The Universe is hardly as simple as we would, perhaps, like to imagine. Earth is one small part of a much larger scheme of existence. The Powers in the Universe have struggled for eons to control the people, magic, and energies of the Five Dominions. Earth is only the Fifth of these Five.

Clive Barker's novel *Imajica* revolves around a powerful man named John Furie Zacharias, or Gentle to his friends. Gentle learns of the other Dominions, or Imajica, through the mystif Pie 'oh' Pah, a shape-shifting denizen of the Second Dominion who has become trapped on Earth. Earth has been separated, or

Unreconciled, from the remaining Dominions, making Pie's return home impossible without Gentle's help. The two manage to return to the Fourth, and begin a quest to return to Yzorrderrex, the capital city in the Second of the mysterious Autarch, a powerful Emperor who controls all of the Second through Fourth Dominions.

Gentle eventually learns of his important role in the Imajica: he is the Reconciler of the Fifth, a Maestro of great power, destined to bring the Fifth Dominon back to the Imajica. Moreover, he is the son of the primal Unbeheld He-God, Hapexamendios, who resides in the First Dominon, closed off from the other three Reconciled Dominions.

To reconcile the Imajica, Gentle must find four other Maestros to represent all Five Dominons. The Maestros must occupy a place of power on each Dominon and perform a delicate ritual, taking them through the In Ovo—the realm of horrors between the Dominons—to a meeting place called the Ana. Only when these five Maestros meet in the Ana and complete their ritual may the Five Dominons be joined....

The players in Imajica represent very powerful beings competing to control the Dominions for their own purposes. Each player is an Autarch, a self-proclaimed ruler of these worlds. Each Autarch has their own agenda. Perhaps he wishes to Reconcile the Dominions: to make them connected and whole. Perhaps he wishes to destroy the Dominions once and for all. Perhaps he believes he is a messenger from the Unbeheld Himself, Hapexamendios. Perhaps he wishes nothing more than power over mankind.

Regardless of the Autarchs' desires, they must each secure the Dominions in order to achieve their goals. And they must do so before the other Autarchs manage to secure them.....

"The crowd bore them forward, and they went unresisting where countless multitudes had gone before: into the belly of the city-god Yzordderrex."

TYPES OF CARDS

There are eight basic types of cards in Imajica. Each type of card is identified in the upper left corner with a type icon. If a card's name is underlined, the card is unique. Duplicates of a unique card cannot be in play; once a unique card is in play, duplicates cannot be legally introduced.

Powers and traits are described in the card's description area. Traits are always in italics and printed above the powers. Powers are in standard text below traits. Traits are always in effect, while powers have various effects, explained on the card.

Characters: These represent creatures, people, or other intelligent mortals an Autarch has convinced to aid the cause. Home Dominion (from which the character comes), uniqueness, and gender are all represented on the title line of the card. If a character has "O" for its Home Dominion, it is an oviate. There is no "Zeroth Dominon" in the Imajica. These specifications can be targeted by certain cards.

Characters have three characteristics: Magic, Strength, and Prime. Magic represents the mastery of the mystical powers of the Universe. Strength represents overall physical well-being. Prime determines how difficult it is to play the character card. It represents strength of being: the more powerful and influential a character, the greater its Prime.

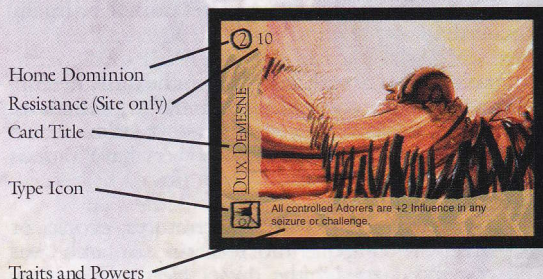A character in play is the Ally of the controlling Autarch.

Sites: These are locations in the various Dominions. The Home Dominion and resistance of the Site are stated on the title line of the card. Resistance is a characteristic of a Site which represents the difficulty a character (or group of characters) has in seizing that Site.
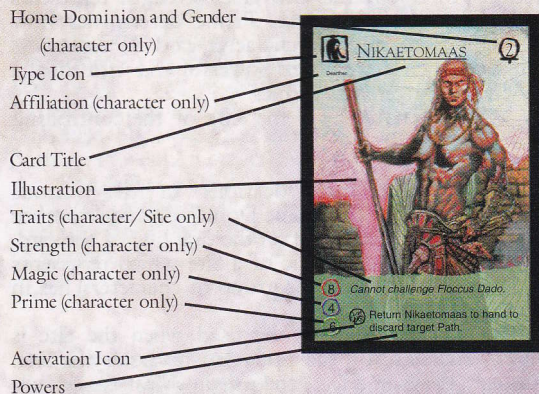
Site powers can only be used when the Site is secured, and only by the Autarch who holds the Site. Traits are always in effect, and usually affect the seizure of the Site.

Anatomy of Cards

Sites and Paths

Home Dominion
Resistance (Site only)
Card Title

Type Icon

Traits and Powers

All other cards (Character card shown)

Home Dominion and Gender
(character only)
Type Icon
Affiliation (character only)

Card Title
Illustration
Traits (character/ Site only)
Strength (character only)
Magic (character only)
Prime (character only)

Activation Icon
Powers

Cards with underlined titles are unique.

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Paths: These represent the journeys of the characters as they approach the Sites. Path cards have a Home Dominion and can only be played, face down, on Sites of the same Dominion.

There is no limit to how many Paths can be played on a specific Site.

Autarchs are limited to one of each Path per deck.

Dictates: These represent the dramatic events in the Imajica, sometimes even the will of God, and can only be played in the Autarch phase.

Ally Actions: These represent the tactics of your characters; the attempted use of an effect pivots an active Ally.

Combat Maneuvers: These are tactics, weapons, and other details of maneuvers performed by characters during a challenge. These may only affect characters involved in the challenge.

Influence Maneuvers: These are maneuvers performed by Allies trying to seize or contest a Site, and are only effective against involved characters or Sites.

Flashes: These represent the natural turns of fate and destiny that affect the Universe. Flashes represent events that are beyond the control of a specific Autarch or character, and can be played at any time during the Autarch or Ally phase.

PERMANENTS AND INSTANTS

The card type icons also tell whether the card effect is permanent or instant. Square-bordered icons represent permanent cards. Once played, a permanent card will remain in play until removed by another card. Circle-bordered icons represent instant cards. These cards have an immediate effect, and are then discarded.

All Sites and characters are permanent. All other cards types can be instant OR permanent, though Paths follow slighty different rules. If a permanent targets another permanent, place the second card played under the target (see diagram of **Game Layout**).

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Instant Flash   Permanent Flash

DECK CONSTRUCTION

Each Imajica deck should be built to the taste of the player. However, there are a few official restrictions:

1) A play deck must contain exactly 60 cards.
2) Only one of any specific Path can be included.
3) A deck must contain at least one Site from each of the Five Dominions.
4) Some cards are limited to only a few per deck. These individual limitations are listed on those cards.

STARTER DECKS: A starter deck may contain duplicate Paths. If so, remove the duplicate, even if this reduces the deck to less than 60 cards. Your opponents must also reduce their deck so that all players are using decks of the same size.

Nothing can guarantee a winning deck, but these tips might grant a head start.

Build the deck to cope with the tactics of opponents, along with focusing on a theme—the general means by which victory will be achieved.

Characters are the backbone of the deck. It is suggested by the writers that the deck contain no less than fifteen characters, and probably more. Without characters, an Autarch cannot seize Sites, prevent the taking of important locations or inflict harm on opposing forces. Card combinations can turn apparently weak or useless effects into game breakers. Some of these combinations are described right on the card, but discovering methods to produce new and powerful mixtures is a fun purpose for collecting!

"Speed" is a consideration of most experienced card gamers. Often, a game can be won by introducing the less powerful, but easier to place, characters while the opponent relies upon those which are nifty, devastating, but difficult to put in play.

Using unique cards is a good way to ensure a better hand, but discovering the cards and methods to undermine the opponent's selections, especially in the race to avoid duplicates, are often more important.

GAME LAYOUT

The Circle is the middle of the playing area, between all Autarchs. Only unsecured Site cards are placed in this area; ANY player's characters are allowed to seize any Sites in the Circle, as described later in the rules.

All other cards are played to an Autarch's Realm, signifying the control of a card by a particular player. An Autarch's Realm is divided into three areas: the *state*, the *active area*, and the *reserve*.

Secured Sites are placed in the state of the controlling Autarch. Allies holding the Sites, along with their permanents, remain under the Site after the specific card is secured. Permanents that affect Sites are placed here as well.

Beside the state is the active area. This is where an Autarch's active Allies are placed. Active Allies are face up, with any permanent cards affecting them face up next to them.
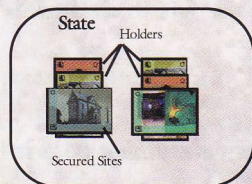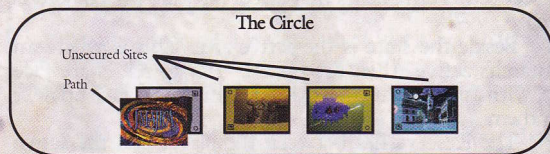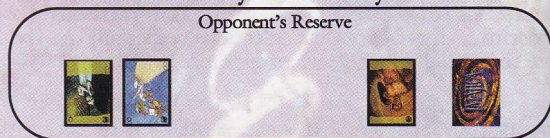
The Reserve lies between the player and the active area. This area holds the Destiny (draw pile), the In Ovo (discard pile), any cards affecting that Autarch, recently introduced Allies, and other Allies using the protection of the reserve. Cards in the Destiny or In Ovo are considered out-of-play.

The In Ovo is always face up, and reveals only the top card. Opponents only have the right to see discards when they are discarded.

"Strange thing to say...May everything be as it seems."

"It's the profoundest curse a sway-worker knows...It's a curse, because if that were the case, we'd all be living just to die, and mud would be king of the Dominions."

Two-Player Game Layout

Opponent's Reserve

Opponent's Active Area

Opponent's State

The Circle

Unsecured Sites

Path

State

Holders

Secured Sites

Active Area

Permanent affecting Ally

Active Allies

Reserve

In Ovo

Destiny

Reserves

GAME SETUP

After laying out the table, the game begins by putting a certain number of Sites in play. Each Autarch needs to separate out all Sites from the deck. Determine which Autarch will act first; the writers recommend a game of "Rock–Scissors–Paper."

Starting with this Autarch, each player will play a Site to the Circle. Order will proceed clockwise from the starting Autarch. The first Autarch will place a First Dominion Site, the next will place a Second Dominion Site, then the Third Dominion, and so forth, until five cards are in the Circle.

All Autarchs replace the Sites to their customized decks, shuffle, and place them face down in their reserve. Each Autarch then draws FIVE cards from the top of the deck, called the Destiny.

If an Autarch draws no characters, this Autarch may reveal the hand and reshuffle it into the deck, to draw a final hand of five cards. After all Autarchs have drawn a hand, the normal sequence of play begins with the Coming of Order...

OBJECT

To win, an Autarch must secure one Site from each of the Five Dominions.

> In brief, these sites are secured when an appropriate number of characters are dedicated to holding it, and these Sites must be unpivoted during the Reconciliation phase to be counted for victory. The competition for Sites is the major focus of player interaction.

ORDER OF PLAY

Imajica is played in a series of rounds: each round is broken up into phases. During each phase, every Autarch will be active once, in order. Each Autarch will only get one turn, but may take other actions, in response to other Autarchs' actions, challenges, and contests or through the play of Flashes. The specific actions the Autarch may take are determined by which phase it is.

One Autarch will act first in every phase for one full round. When this Autarch's turn is complete, play will proceed clockwise. The right to act first shifts clockwise every Coming of Order.

The player to act first for the first round of the game is the Autarch to the left of the player who revealed the first Site during the setup.

Phase 1: Coming of Order

All cards in play that have an effect "at the beginning of a turn" take effect during this phase. If two cards affect the same target, the Autarch controlling the target chooses which occurs first. Otherwise, these effects occur as simultaneously as possible.

Unpivot all cards in play, and every Autarch draws two cards from the top of their Destiny, according to the order of play for the round.

EXAMPLE:
In a three-player game, John is to the left of Josh, who is to the left of Mike. Mike laid Sites first during setup, so during the first round, Josh will act first in every phase, with play proceeding to John, then Mike. On the second round, John will act first, with play proceeding to Mike, then Josh.

Phase 2: Autarch Phase

Each turn, an Autarch may reveal any number of Sites, play any number of Paths, and make one Dictate (which may be taken as a reassignment of Allies).

Reveal Sites: The Autarch can place any Sites from hand to the Circle—always face-up. The Autarch must immediately draw a card to replace every Site played, and can place newly drawn Sites.

The Autarch does not HAVE to play Sites, and may hold them indefinitely.

Play Paths: The Autarch can place any number of Paths from hand to Sites in the Circle. The Site Dominion must match the Path Dominion. Paths are played face-down atop the target Site.

If a Site already has a Path on it, the second Path is laid atop the first.

The Autarch does not HAVE to play Paths and may hold them indefinitely.

Dictate: The Autarch can play one Dictate card OR reassign Allies.

Reassign Allies: Reassign Allies by moving any Allies, pivoted or not:

1) from Site to Site in your state, OR
2) from the active area to a Site in the state, OR
3) from the state to the reserve.

Holders of a Site may be moved to the reserve, but if the remaining holders at the Site do not have enough influence to secure it, the Site immediately becomes uncontrolled.

After the Autarch makes a Dictate, or declares a refusal of it, the turn is over. The opportunity to place Sites and Paths, or play a Dictate, is lost until the next round.

Allies moved to the Reserve cannot be targeted by opposing characters.

When all Autarchs have had their turn, the phase ends, and play proceeds to the Ally phase.

Phase 3: Ally Phase

During the Ally phase, the Autarch first brings new Allies into play, via the reserve; this is called *establishing alliances*. The characters controlled by an Autarch are considered Allies.

Establishing alliances: Autarchs have a Prime allowance of 7 for introducing new characters as Allies. As long as the totaled Primes of characters played do not exceed 7, the Autarch can place the new Allies into the reserve area.

The Autarch can ALWAYS bring one Ally into reserve from the Dominion of a controlled Site, even if its Prime exceeds the limit. (This assumes the character is in hand.) If an Ally is brought to the table in this way, the Autarch can establish no other alliances for this turn.

Some characters have Primes of greater than 7. These characters are most commonly brought into play using the above method.

The Autarch cannot introduce duplicates of unique characters in play.

EXAMPLE OF ESTABLISHING ALLIES:

Autarch Craig is establishing alliances. In his hand, Craig holds the characters Judith (Prime 7), Geoffrey Light (Prime 3), and Gideon (Prime 4). Bill could play Geoffrey and Gideon (total Prime 7) or Judith alone.

Once Allies have been established, every active Ally may perform one action. Active Allies are characters in the active area of the Autarch's Realm. Allies in Reserve, called *reserves*, may never perform actions.

The order by which the Allies act is entirely up to the controlling Autarch.

When the action is resolved, the Allies pivot. The Autarch can continue to make as many actions as desired, pivoting all acting Allies, until all active Allies are pivoted or accounted for by being idled.

The Autarch then cedes the turn to the next Autarch.

Actions: The actions the Autarch's Allies can perform are:

1) *Challenge Rival's Ally:* Attempt to kill one targeted character of a rival Autarch.
2) *Seize a Site:* Attempt to control a Site in the Circle.
3) *Ally Action:* Play any Ally Action card.
4) *Retreat:* The Ally moves from the active area to the reserve.

The above actions cause the Ally to pivot, after the action. To pivot a card, turn it 180°, so that it faces the other direction. Pivoted cards may not make any actions until unpivoted.

5) *Idle:* Wait to participate in forthcoming challenges or seizure contests on another Autarch's turn. Idling does not pivot the character.

Challenge Rival's Ally:

An Autarch's Allies attempt to kill a rival character. The acting Autarch announces which unpivoted active Allies will make the challenge (these are the challengers), and which opposing active character is to be the challenged target. Only one character can be targeted in a challenge, but multiple challengers can be named. Characters in any Autarch's state or reserve cannot be targeted.

The Autarch of the targeted character has the opportunity to defend the character, by naming unpivoted active characters as defenders. Only characters controlled by the same Autarch as the targeted character may defend. Reserves and Holders may not defend. After defenders are named, no more characters are allowed into this fray.

Before the challenge formally begins, all players, involved or not, have one last chance to play Flashes. Once the challenge is underway, only the involved Autarchs can interfere, and even then, only with combat maneuvers.

After the last call for Flashes, the challenge begins.

Each Autarch totals the strength values of their Allies involved in the challenge. Combat maneuvers might affect this total, as well as bonuses of the participating characters. This final total is the Autarch's combat strength. Whichever Autarch has the higher combat strength is the victor, and may assign damage.

Damage is equal to the difference in the combat strengths. The victor may freely assign this damage, whole or in part, to any characters involved in the challenge. Damage does not have to be applied to the target of the challenge.

Autarchs have the opportunity to play Flashes after damage is dealt, possibly saving a life, or finishing one off.

If a character receives more damage than its strength value, it goes to the In Ovo. If the damage is not enough to kill a character, the damage is lost at the end of the challenge.

After the challenge is resolved, all challengers and the target are pivoted.

Defenders are not pivoted.

EXAMPLE OF CHALLENGE:

Autarch Stephen has decided Autarch Cheryl's Ally Gentle must die. During his Ally Action phase, he announces: "Two gek-a-geks are challenging Gentle." Each gek-a-gek has a strength = 8. Gentle has only a strength = 7.

If Cheryl did not name defenders, Stephen's combat strength would be 8 + 8 = 16, while hers would only be 7. Stephen would be the victor, and would assign damage of 16 - 7 = 9 to Gentle. This is more than Gentle's strength of 7, so Gentle would be discarded, and the gek-a-geks pivoted.

However, Cheryl defends with her Ally Irish, strength = 6. Cheryl's strength is now 6 + 7 = 13. Stephen is still the victor, but his damage is only 16 - 13 = 3. This is not enough to kill Gentle or Irish. The damage of 3 is lost at the end of the challenge. Both gek-a-geks and Gentle are pivoted, while Irish remains unpivoted.

Challenge Summary

1) Acting Autarch names target character of another Autarch and active unpivoted Allies as challengers.

2) Targeted Autarch may name active unpivoted Allies to defend the target character.

3) All Autarchs in the game have one last opportunity to play Flashes.

4) Challenge formally begins

◆ Only combat maneuvers may be played, and only from the Autarchs involved in the challenge.

◆ Total up the strengths of all remaining, unpivoted characters from each side. The Autarch with the highest total strength is the victor.

◆ Damage is the difference in combat strengths. The victor may apply the damage, whole or in part, to any character(s) involved in the challenge. Any character receiving more damage than its strength is "dead" and discarded at the end of the challenge.

◆ No pivoted characters may participate in a challenge. If a character becomed pivoted during the course of the challenge, it is removed, and cannot add its strength to the combat strength.

5) All challengers in the challenge are pivoted. The target of the challenge is pivoted. Defenders are NOT pivoted.

6) All Autarchs in game may resume the play of Flashes; dead characters are discarded.

Combat maneuvers: A character may use as many combat maneuvers as the Autarch cares to play. These cards do not pivot the character, but an acting, involved Ally must be named to play one. Combat maneuvers can only target characters involved in the challenge. Effects of instant combat maneuvers end with the challenge.

EXAMPLE OF COMBAT MANEUVERS:

The character Sartori is involved in a challenge. His strength would usually be 7 but the combat maneuver Pneuma is played from him. This adds 6 to his combat strength, giving him a total of 13.

No pivoted characters may participate in a challenge. If a character becomed pivoted during the course of the challenge, it is removed, and cannot add its strength to the combat strength.

Seize a Site:

The Autarch's unpivoted active Allies invade a Site (seize it) in the Circle, and attempt to control it (secure or hold it).

Only Sites in the Circle can be targeted; secured Sites (in other Autarchs' states) cannot be targeted. The seized Site must be named, along with unpivoted active Allies participating in the seizure. Reserves may not seize a Site.

"Oethacs, Pie called them...Easy targets, Gentle remarked, but Pie whispered that their brains were small, their skulls thick, and their tolerance for pain heroic, the latter evidenced by the extraordinary array of livid scars and disfigurements they all bore on skin that was as white as the bone it concealed."

Contesting the Seizure:

After seizing Allies and a target Site have been named, opposing Autarchs with unpivoted, active characters may attempt to contest the seizure. Starting to the left, each Autarch has one opportunity to contest the seizure. Only one Autarch at a time may attempt this—opponents cannot "gang up."

The contesting Autarch must name the unpivoted, active characters to the contest; no reserve Allies can participate.

Before the contest formally begins, Paths on the Site are revealed and resolved.

All Autarchs, involved or not, then have one last chance to play Flashes. Once the contest is underway, only the involved Autarchs can interfere, and then only influence maneuvers can be played. After the last call for Flashes, the contest begins.

Each Autarch determines influence. Influence is the total of magic values of involved Allies, including bonuses from traits or powers, influence maneuvers, and permanents.

The seizing Allies win the contest if their influence is greater than the contesting Characters' influence. They remain unpivoted, and continue to seize the Site. Other Autarchs may yet contest them, with the opportunity passing to the left. Each Autarch only has one chance to contest.

If the opposing characters win the contest, the seizing characters are pivoted, and returned to the active area. The Site is not secured, and it remains in the Circle.

Characters which contest a seizure are always pivoted, whether successful or not.

EXAMPLE OF A CONTEST:

Autarch Eric has named Henry Holland (Magic 3) and Horace Tyrwith (Magic 4) to seize Slew. Autarch Brian names Joshua Godolphin (Magic 3) and Huzzah Aping (Magic 6) to contest. (Paths would be revealed and resolved now.) Eric's influence is 7, while Brian's influence is 9. Bran has successfully contested the seizure. All characters are pivoted, and returned to the active area.

> Influence maneuvers: A character can use as many influence maneuvers as the Autarch cares to play from hand. Such cards do not pivot the character, but an acting Ally involved in the contest must be named when playing one. Influence maneuvers can only target characters or the Site involved in the contest or seizure. The effects of instant influence maneuvers end with the seizure or contest.

No pivoted characters may participate in a seizure or contest. If a character becomes pivoted during the course of the action, it is removed, and cannot add its influence to the total influence strength.

Paths:

Paths are typically "booby-traps" to hinder Autarchs' attempts to secure a Site; however, some Paths can grant advantages.

Paths must be revealed and resolved before any attempt to seize or contest the Site can be resolved.

After an Autarch has committed Allies to seize a Site, and the first Autarch announces contesting characters, the Paths are revealed. Unless specifically stated, ALL characters involved in the seizure are targeted by a Path, including the contesting characters.

Flashes may be played in response to the Path.

If more than one Path lies on a Site, all are picked up and turned over as a group, so that the first Path played on the Site will be the first encountered. Paths are encountered one at a time. If all characters are removed while other Paths remain unrevealed, return the unread Paths to the Site face-down.

If the Path has an instant icon, it is read, has an immediate effect, and is discarded. If the Path has a permanent icon, it remains on the Site and continues to have the effect until the Site is secured. Permanent Paths should be replaced face-down to the Site, retaining its same position with the other Paths.

Once a Site is secured, all permanent Paths on it are discarded.

Securing the Site:

Once any Paths and contests are resolved, the Autarch totals the magic values of Allies remaining in the seizure. Any character that has been pivoted is removed from this calculation. This total of magic values is called *influence*. If the influence is equal to or greater than the target Site's resistance, the Site is secured, and moved to the Autarch's state.

The seizing Allies are now called *Holders of the Site* and placed underneath it in the state.

> Holders cannot be targeted by challenges. They may not defend, contest seizures, or act in any way while holding the Site. The secured Site is immune to further seizures or contests. It will remain in the controlling Autarch's state unless a card is played which can remove it. Pivoting the Holder of a Site will not change its influence.

Holders MAY be targeted by cards which might adjust the influence enough to make the Site unsecured. End of Autarch's turn.

After all possible or desired actions are completed, the Autarch announces the end of the turn. Remaining unpivoted, active Allies are idled. They will only be able to defend against challenges, contest another Autarch's characters, or play appropriate cards, like Flashes, for the remainder of the Ally phase.

After all Autarchs have had one turn, play proceeds to the Reconciliation.

Seizing Sites and Contests

1) Name a Site from the Circle, and active unpivoted Allies to seize it.

2) Other Autarchs can contest, in order. The first contesting Autarch names active, unpivoted Allies to be involved.

  a) Paths on the Site are revealed and resolved. (Involved characters, on both sides, are targeted by Paths.)

  b) All Autarchs have their last opportunity to play Flashes in this contest.

  c) Contest formally begins:

  ◆ Only influence maneuvers may be played, and only from the Autarchs involved in the contest.

  ◆ Total up the influence of all remaining unpivoted characters from each side. The Autarch with the highest influence wins.

  ◆ If the contesting Autarch wins, the Site remains uncontrolled, and all characters involved are pivoted. If the acting Autarch wins, the contesters are pivoted, and the acting characters continue to seize the Site.

  ◆ No pivoted characters may participate in a seizure or contest. If a character becomed pivoted during the course of the action, it is removed, and cannot add its influence to the total influence strength.

3) The opportunity to contest continues until all Autarchs have had one opportunity.

4) When all contests are done, the seizing Allies attempt to secure the Site. If Paths were not revealed during a contest, reveal them now.

  ◆ Pivoted Allies cannot participate.

  ◆ If the influence total of those seizing exceeds the resistance of the Site, the Site is controlled, and taken into the Autarch's state, with Allies underneath.

Phase 4: The Reconciliation

The Autarchs take the normal turn procedure with an option to move any of their unpivoted reserves forward to the active area. Allies may remain in reserve, however; there is no requirement to move newly introduced, or recently assigned characters into the active area. Pivoted characters may NOT move forward from the reserve.

Any existing cards that have effect "at the end of a turn" take effect on the Autarch's turn.

An Autarch who controls five unpivoted Sites, one from each Dominion, wins.

If two Autarchs can meet the requirement in this phase, the one with the most controlled, unpivoted Sites wins. Otherwise, no one is declared a winner, and the game continues.

During the course of a turn, Sites can become pivoted by using a card's power or by other effects. When close to victory, note the pivot of Sites in play!

PIVOTED CARDS

Cards are normally placed such that the card's description area can be read by its owner. Cards will occasionally be pivoted, or turned 180º to face the opposite direction. Pivoting a card shows that it has been used, expended its power, or otherwise neutralized for this turn. PIVOTING A CARD DOES NOT ACTIVATE ITS EFFECT.

No pivoted characters may participate in a challenge, seizure, or contest. If a character becomes pivoted during the course of the action, it is removed, and cannot add its abilities or characteristics to its allies.

For example, after a character acts in the Ally phase, it will be pivoted. A pivoted card is unusable again until that card is unpivoted (most likely during Phase 1: Coming of Order).

Pivoted cards are still in play, and can be targeted by other actions or cards.

Pivoted characters are unable to defend Allies in challenges, but a pivoted character still adds its Strength

characteristic to combat strength if it is the target of the challenge.

Pivoted reserves are unable to become active at the end of the Ally phase.

Pivoted Sites cannot count for victory during the Reconciliation.

Pivoted characters cannot participate in a seizure, nor can they challenge a rival.

Pivoting occurs if the action is successful, or not.

A card is pivoted AFTER the action, power, or effect is resolved. If a card performs some action or effect and then pivots, it is not possible to counter the action or effect by causing the card to pivot first. The pivoting does not cause the effect; it is a result of the effect.

BORDER SITES AND ADJACENCY

Some Sites are located "between" two Dominions. These Sites are links between those Dominions, and should be treated as though they are from BOTH.

Border Sites are distinguished by having 2 Home Dominions. The Border Site is considered as a Site from BOTH Dominions, satisfying two victory requirements. If an Autarch controls a Border Site, only THREE MORE Sites are necessary to win the game.

The Dominions of a Border Site are always adjacent. Adjacent Dominions are side-by-side in numerical order. For example, Dominions 1 and 2 are adjacent, but Dominions 1 and 3 are not. Dominions 5 and 1 ARE adjacent, since the Imajica form a circle.
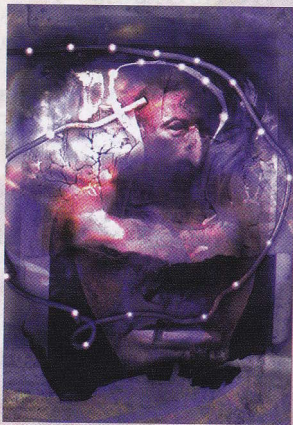
When building a deck or setting up the game, the Border Site may only count as if it is from one of the two Dominions. Five Sites must still be contained in the deck, and five starting Sites must always be set up.

EXAMPLE OF BORDER SITES:

The Erasure is a mysterious, impenetrable wall of void in the Second Dominion. Through the Erasure, one may enter the First Dominion. The Erasure acts as a link between these worlds, and is partially contained in each. The Erasure card is a Border Site, from both the adjacent First and Second Dominions. Any card targeting Second Dominion Sites OR First Dominion Sites will affect the Erasure.

"You're the Reconciler of Dominions. You're the healer of the Imajica. Hide from that, and you hide from understanding. Maestro, there's a worse anguish than remembering, and another suffers it because you leave your work unfinished. Go back into the Fifth Dominion and complete what you began. Make the many One. This is the only salvation."

CARD POWERS, TRAITS, AND SPECIAL RULES

Powers and traits are abilities found on many cards. The general timing and effects of these are explained in the card's description area. Effects are either targeted to any character, or affect the controlling Autarch, unless otherwise noted on the card.

Traits are permanent effects, and are active whenever the card is used. Unless otherwise stated, traits on characters are NOT cumulative, and traits on Sites ARE cumulative

Powers with an icon force the card to pivot after activation. The icon is called an activation icon. The power is usable whenever a card of the same type would be usable. Pivot the card after attempting the use of the activation power.

Powers without an icon are always in effect and are cumulative. Activation powers on characters can only be used when the character is active and unpivoted.

If a card has two powers separated by "OR," you may use only one of those powers at a time.

For Site powers, the card must be secured to make use of the effect.

EXAMPLE OF ACTIVATION POWER:

The character General Rosengarten has an activation power that reads, "Target Site is Resistance -3 until end of round." The activation icon is the Ally action icon. General Rosengarten may use this power in place of an Ally action. Pivot Rosengarten to activate this power.

Note that powers and traits are separate concepts. If a card removes powers from another card, the traits will remain untouched.

SOME SPECIAL POWERS

Remove from Game

If card instructs the removal of it or another card from the game, the card is not discarded to the In Ovo.

The card is removed from play entirely and cannot be brought back.

Counter P

P is a power, specific or in general. Countering always negates the card or action, if played following the activation of the named power. For timing purposes, a counter prevents the effect of the card, but does not prevent the pivot.

"+N versus Y Sites"

Y is a named Site or type of Site. Whenever this Ally attempts to seize or secure the named Site, influence is adjusted by N. This power also applies during a contest.

EXAMPLE OF "VERSUS SITES" POWER:

The character Charlotte Feaver has the power "+4 versus Roxborough Tower." Whenever Charlotte is involved in a seizure or contest for Roxborough Tower, her influence is increased by +4.

"May hold Y alone"

If a character's text states "may hold Y alone," where Y is a Site, then this character is considered in maintenance of the required influence, regardless of the actual influence of the Holders

EXAMPLE OF "HOLDING SITE ALONE" TRAIT:

Thomas Roxborough has 0 magic, which would not normally allow him to hold any Site. However, he can hold Roxborough Tower alone due to his trait, "May hold Roxborough Tower alone."

SOME SPECIAL TRAITS

"Allies for -N if..."

Apply the bonus N, where N is a number, to the Prime of this character, when brought into play, if the described conditions are met.

EXAMPLE OF "ALLIES FOR -N" TRAIT:

The character card Gentle has a Prime of 11. Gentle's description area reads: "Allies for -1 if any females are controlled."

If at least one female character is controlled by the introducing Autarch, Gentle can be put into play as if his Prime were 10.

"+N Versus X"

X is a named character or type of character. Whenever the X character or characters are in opposition in a challenge, whether as a challenger, target, or defender, this character's strength is adjusted by N.

EXAMPLE OF "VERSUS ALLIES" TRAIT:

The character card Celestine has the trait "+4 versus Dowd." Whenever Celestine is in a challenge against Dowd, she adds four to her strength.

AFFILIATIONS

Many characters in Imajica belong to factions, each with its own goals and agendas. Characters belonging to certain affiliations have a special power. Affiliations are listed in the description area of a card. If a character belongs to more than one affiliation, it has all of the appropriate powers, but can only use one at a time.
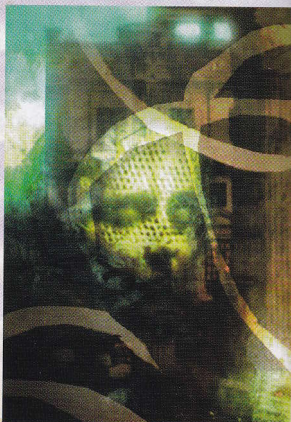
Note that an affiliation is a trait which grants a power. If the trait is neutralized, the power is also. However, if the power is somehow neutralized, the affiliation still remains.

Maestro:
An individual attempting to reconcile the Five Dominions.

A Maestro can seize and secure a Site alone, regardless of the resistance.

If contested, the Maestro still must have a greater influence than the opposing characters to secure the Site.

Vassal:
The aristocracy of the Imajica.

Cannot be challenged by characters with Primes of less than 5.

Adorer (of the Unbeheld):
A character touched by the often-cruel power of the god Hapexamendios.

Immune to Hapexamendios Action cards; if targeted by such a card, the card is used, but this character is not affected.

Aphrodyte (of the Goddesses):
A character touched by the benevolent visions of the Goddesses.

Pivoted Aphrodytes can defend other characters.

Artist:
The artists of the Dominions lend unique insight into the other worlds.

Pivot to give another Ally magic +3 until the end of the round.

Tabula Rasa:
The Society of the Tabula Rasa is dedicated to removing all magic from the Dominions, particularly England.

Take back any Tabula Rasa Ally into your hand as an Ally action to send any permanent Ally Action card or permanent Flash card to its owner's In Ovo.

Oviate:
One of the horrific creatures from the vast In Ovo. Immune to all emotion effects.

Can challenge Vassals, regardless of their Prime.

Oviates have no Home Dominion or gender.

Minor Affiliations
There are other affiliations throughout the Imajica, such as the Dearthers or Eurhetemecs. Such affiliations have no affiliation powers, but might affect or be affected by other cards via effects or card text.

"In between the Reconciled Dominions and the Fifth is a state called the In Ovo. It's an ether, in which things that have ventured from their worlds are imprisoned. Some of them are innocent. They're there by accident. Some were dispatched there as a judgement. They're lethal."

DAMAGE OUTSIDE OF CHALLENGES
Sometimes a card will cause damage on characters outside of a challenge. This damage should be applied directly to the characters' strength to discard them, as in the last stage of a challenge. It is not reduced by opposing strength.

EXHAUSTED DESTINY

When an Autarch draws the last card from the Destiny, the Autarch must act quickly. The round is finished normally, but if victory cannot be secured by the end of the Reconciliation, the Autarch is removed from the game. In a two-player game, the opponent automatically wins. In a multiplayer game, any characters played by the Autarch are discarded, but other permanents remain in play. The remaining players continue the game normally.

TARGET ALLIES AND ACTING ALLIES

Combat maneuvers, influence maneuvers, and Ally Action cards all are played from an acting Ally. These cards can only be played on targets specified on the card. If the card does not specify a "target character," only the acting Ally may receive the card's effect.

EXAMPLE OF ACTING CHARACTERS WITHOUT TARGET CHARACTERS:

The Ally Action Ritual says "Acting Ally gains Adorer affiliation." Only the Ally that pivots to perform this action can gain the Adorer affiliation. If the card had said "target character gains Adorer affiliation," then one Ally would act to play the card, and another Ally could be named to receive the affiliation.

> *"The past has been written by men. But the future—pregnant with possibilities—the future was a woman."*

UNIQUE CARDS

Duplicates of a unique card cannot be in play at the same time, in any Autarch's Realms. If a second card comes into play, it is immediately discarded upon recognition.

Unique cards can be held in an Autarch's playing hand, even if a duplicate is already in play.

Unique cards have underlined names on the title line. With few exceptions, Sites are unique. For this reason, NON-unique Sites are marked in the description area of the card. This is not true of character cards.

Philosophical note: In Imajica, a returning unique card is one that has somehow escaped doom, and has resurfaced elsewhere, perhaps aligned with another Autarch. Unique cards can be brought into play if the previous in-play card is somehow discarded or otherwise removed from play.

LOSING CONTROLLED SITES

If the loss of a secured Site occurs, from card effect or lack of influence, the Holders of the Site are immediately removed to the reserve, and the Site is removed to the Circle.

SITES ARE NEVER DISCARDED.

USE OF TOKENS

Players should use easily identifiable pairs of tokens to represent the links from effects, or multiple targets of some cards. Identical tokens should be used to signify identical effects. Coins or colored glass beads are suggested.

DISCARDING

When cards are lost to the In Ovo, it is called *discarding*. A discarded Ally is lost along with permanents. A permanent targeting only the discarded character would be discarded as well.

All discards must go to the OWNER'S In Ovo.

TIMING AND COUNTERING

All Autarchs must have the opportunity to respond to any action, provided it is in the context of the game sequence, before that action is resolved.

If multiple players are intent on playing actions, the acting Autarch should direct the opportunities to play cards or effects, allowing all players a chance to respond, and noting the order of cards or effects played.

The first card played is the first card that acts; cards played following are resolved in first to last order.

Exceptions:

Flashes:

If a Flash (or a power with this activation icon) and any other card type or action both target the same card or action, the Flash has its effect first, regardless of order of play. Multiple Flashes should be resolved in the order played. Permanent Flashes played earlier in the game take precedence over instant Flashes played later.

EXAMPLE OF FLASH TIMING

The character Sartori has the permanent Flash Emotion: Guilt played on it. Guilt forces a character to remain in reserve. Its owner cannot later play Patashoquan Highway on Sartori, which would usually allow it to move into the active area. Since Guilt was played first, it takes precedence.

Countering:

A counter must be played after the desired target or action is played. If the target was an instant card, immediately remove the target card from the cards to be resolved.

EXAMPLE OF TIMING WITH COUNTERING / FLASHES

Autarch Dennis controls the Little Ease, which is currently unpivoted. Autarch Liz plays the permanent Flash Amnesia on Gentle. Since he is unpivoted, Little Ease may use his Flash power "Counters Amnesia" before Amnesia is resolved. Little Ease pivots, and Amnesia is discarded.

SHORTER GAMES:

A typical game of Imajica will take anywhere from 30 minutes to an hour and a half, depending on the number of players. A shorter game can be played by making the following adjustments:

*Game setup remains the same. There should still be five Sites in play at the beginning of the game.

*Increase the Prime limit for establishing alliances to a mutually agreed value. The writers recommend 9

*An Autarch wins when he controls Sites from any three of the Five Dominions.

*Border Sites can only count as one Dominion for victory. You cannot win by controlling one Border Site and one other Site.

These guidelines should shorten game length roughly by half, with a minimum playing time of about 20 minutes.

Glossary

Active Ally: An Autarch's character in the active area with the option to move, maneuver, or play a card.

Active Area: The area of the Realm where Allies are positioned to act.

Adorer: An affiliation; immune to Hapexamendios cards.

Adjacency: Dominions in the Universe are connected in numerical order, with 5 and 1 also connected.

Affiliation: Trait that often gives a power, as described in the rule book.

Ally: A character, as controlled by its Autarch.

Ally Action: A type of card, played though an active Ally, which causes the Ally to pivot.

Ally phase: Third Phase of the round, where new characters are brought into play, and Allies take actions.

Aphrodyte: An affiliation; can defend while pivoted.

Artist: An affiliation; grants bonus in magic.

Autarch: A player.

Autarch phase: Second phase of the round, Sites and Paths are played, and the Autarchs may make a Dictate.

Border Site: A Site with 2 Home Dominions, counts as both and is affected as either.

Challenge: The attempt to kill a character, resolved by comparing strength totals.

Challenger: An Ally attempting to kill another Autarch's character.

Character: A card type that represents beings from the Five Dominions.

Characteristic: Numerical values of Sites or characters: Magic, Prime, Strength, or Resistance.

Circle: Area in the center of the playing area where unsecured Sites are placed.

Combat Maneuver: A card type or power usable during a challenge.

Combat Strength: The total strength of all characters on one side of a challenge.

Coming of Order: First phase of the round, where cards are unpivoted and new cards are drawn.

Contest: Attempt to prevent a Site seizure, resolved by comparing influence.

Damage: Determined by subtracting combat strengths in a challenge. Every point of damage can be applied against the strength of characters to possibly kill them.

Dearther: An affiliation which grants no special power.

Defender: An Ally named to add its strength during a challenge to the target character of a challenge. Defenders are not pivoted after the challenge.

Destiny: The "draw pile"; new cards waiting to be drawn.

Dictate: A card type that affects overall game play, or a movement option; used only in the Autarch Round.

Discard: Removal of a card from play. These are placed to the In Ovo.

Dominion: One of the Five interconnected worlds of the Imajica. The In Ovo is not a Dominion.

Duplicate: Any unique card that is already in play.

Establishing Allies: Bringing in new characters, first to the reserve. Limited to 7 Prime per turn, or 1 character from a secured Site/Dominion.

Eurhetemec: An affiliation which grants no special power.

Flash: A card that affects local situations, often with immediate effect.

Gender: The sex—male, female, both, or neither—represented in the title line of the character card.

Hapexamendios: The Unbeheld He-God who resides in the First Dominion. Any card with the word Hapexamendios in the title line is a Hapexamendios card.

Holder (of a Site): A character stationed on a Site, in the State, to maintain influence over that controlled Site.

Home Dominion: The Dominion from which a Site, character, or Path comes.

Idle: Refusing the action option for an Ally, in order to use it later in the phase.

Imajica: The collection of all five Dominions.

In Ovo: The "discard pile"; currently out of play cards.

Influence: The totaled Magic of involved Allies in a seizure or while holding a Site.

Influence Maneuver: A card type or power usable in a contest.

Kuyrmid: An affiliation which grants no special power.

Maestro: An affiliation; allows the character to attempt to seize and hold a Site alone.

Magic: A characteristic which affects Site seizure, totaled as influence.

Naming: The target and source of any action must be clearly defined. For effects, names are in the title line of the card, affiliations in the text.

Oethac: An affiliation which grants no special power.

Oviate: An affiliation; creatures which live in the In Ovo, immune to motions, able to challenge Vassals, and with no Home Dominion or sex.

Path: A card type placed face down on a Site in the Circle, which affects Site seizure.

Phase: One of four periods of action in a round. During each phase, an Autarch gets one turn to act.

Pivot: The physical result of a power or act, causing it to rotate 180°. Pivoting signifies the exhaustion of a character or card for the turn.

Power: The effect of a card in the game, printed in standard text on the card.

Prime: The essence of a character; this number affects the amount of characters introduced in a turn (see **Establishing Allies**).

Realm: The area and cards controlled by an Autarch.

Reassign Allies: Movement of an Autarch's characters within the Realm.

Reconciliation: Last phase of the round, where victory is determined.

Reserve: The area of the Realm where Allies are protected from challenges, and are unable to act.

Resistance: Characteristic of a Site, compared with influence, which affects its securing.

Retreat: Movement to the reserve from the active area.

Round: The play of all four phases in order.

Secure: The final step in taking control of a Site, comparing influence to resistance.

Seize: An attempt to control a Site in the Circle, which may be contested.

Site: Location in the Dominions. One from each of the Five Dominions is required to be held, unpivoted, to win.

State: The area of the Realm where controlled Sites are placed.

Target: The specific card or cards affected by another card or action.

Target (of challenge): One specific character named to be challenged by another Autarch's Allies.

Trait: The effect in italicized text on the card, always in effect.

Turn: The opportunity for an Autarch to act in a phase, directly or through Allies. Each Autarch gets only one turn per phase.

Vassal: An affiliation; immune from the challenges of characters with small Primes.

"Maestro Sartori
Wants a bit o' glory.
He loves the cats,
He loves the dogs,
He turns the ladies into frogs,
He made some hats
Of baby rats;
But that's another story."

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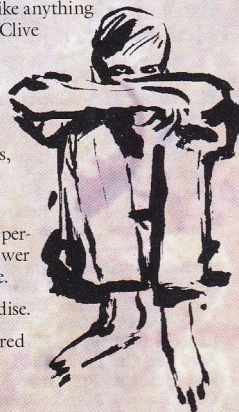
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SUMMARY OF PLAY

Phase One: *Coming of Order*

- Establish the leading Autarch for the round. This Autarch will be to the left of the Autarch who led last turn.
- Unpivot all cards. The leading Autarch unpivots first, proceeding to the left.
- All Autarchs draw 2 cards.

Phase Two: *Autarch Phase*

Each Autarch takes a turn completing all of the following:

- Play as many Sites as desired. Draw a card to replace every placed Site.
- Play as many Paths as desired.
- Play one Dictate, or reassign Allies.

The phase ends when all Autarchs have had a turn.

Phase Three: *Ally Phase*

Each Autarch takes a turn to act with any active Allies (controlled characters) he wishes.

Play up to 7 Prime worth of new Allies to the reserve.

Active Allies may:

- Seize a Site
- Challenge a rival
- Perform an Ally Action card
- Retreat

The above cause the Ally to pivot.

- Idle

When all Allies are pivoted or idled, play proceeds to the Autarch to the left.

When all Autarchs have had a turn, the phase ends.

Phase Four: *Reconciliation*

Unpivoted Allies in reserve may be moved into the active area. This is resolved in turn order.

Any Autarch controlling an unpivoted Site from each of the Five Dominions wins.