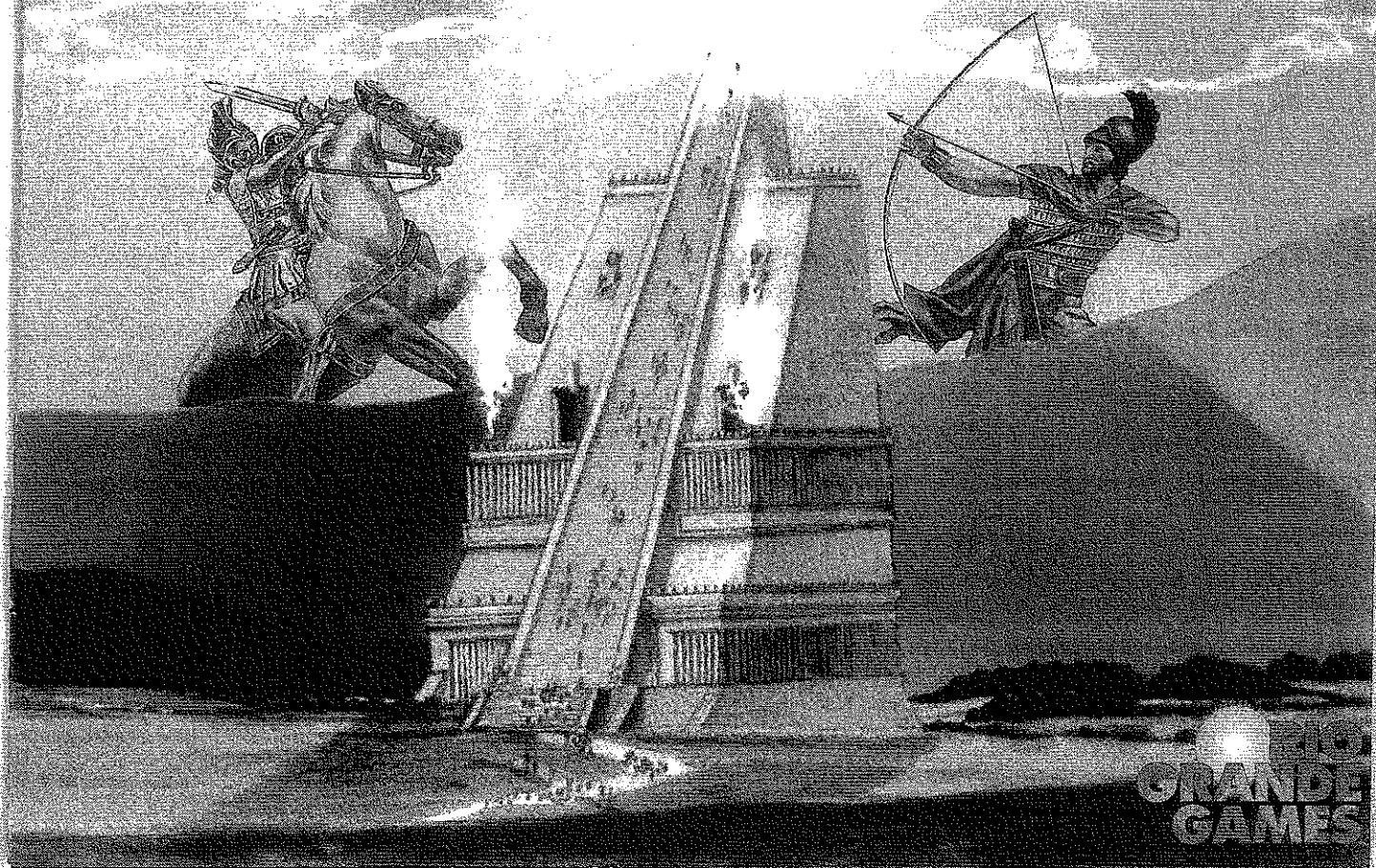


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# BABEL

a clever power struggle for two



# BABEL

A clever power struggle  
for two players aged 12 and up

## Overview

Mesopotamia was home to many tribes and many golden ages as each tribe had its season in the sun. During its season, a tribe would start new temples or continue working on temples begun by other tribes. Thus, with the help of various tribes, the temples grew more and more beautiful and eventually reached so high they seemed to touch the sky. The temples of these master builders took peoples' breath away, but natural and man-made disasters could bring the temples down. When this happened, the craftsmen began anew, moved to work on other temples, or just went home. Even with such setbacks, the temples continued to grow toward the sky as the players worked to complete these monuments.

## Goal

The player who builds the highest and, therefore, most valuable temples wins the game.

## Contents

- 1 gameboard with 5 territories with temple building places for each player and 1 supply space for the stack of temple cards.
- 45 temple cards at different levels: 10 of level 1, 9 of level 2, 8 of level 3, 7 of level 4, 6 of level 5, and 5 of level 6.
- 60 tribe card, 12 each of Medes, Sumerians, Hitites, Persians, and Assyrians
- 2 stone figures

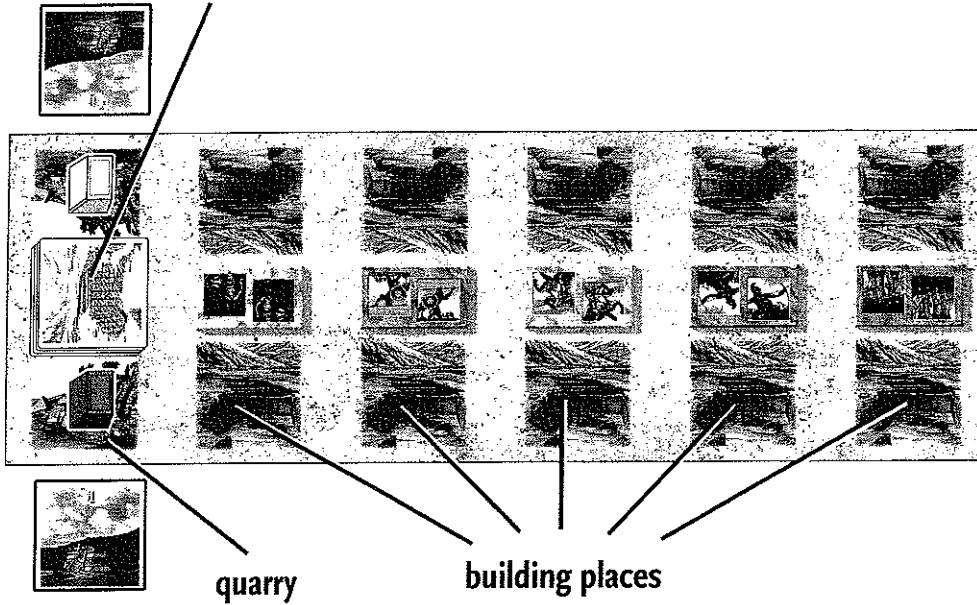
## Preparation

- Place the game board on the table between the two players.
- Remove two level 1 temple cards from the deck of temple cards. Each player takes one and places it face up in his play area next to his quarry to start his temple column. Shuffle the remaining temple cards and place them face down on the supply space.
- Shuffle the tribe cards and deal 5 face down to each player, who takes these as his starting hand. Place the remaining cards face down next to the board as a tribe card supply.
- Each player takes a stone figure and puts it on his quarry (next to the temple card supply space).
- The oldest player starts and then the players alternate turns.

player 2

temple card  
supply space

tribe card  
supply space



space for discarding  
tribe cards

player 1

# The cards

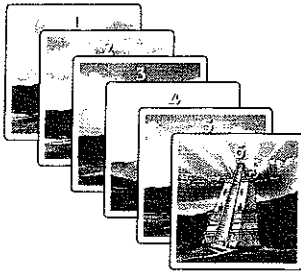
The two kinds of playing cards have the following properties:

## Tribe cards



- The tribe name is at the top of the card.
- The color shows where a player can move their figure using this card.
- The skill listed below the picture indicates the special ability for this tribe.

## Temple cards



- The value shows which temple level is represented by the card. 1 is the lowest and 6 is the highest level.

# Playing the game

Each player turn is divided into 3 phases:

1. draw tribe cards
2. take actions
3. draw and play temple cards

The 1st and 3rd phases move very quickly. It is phase 2 that is the core of the game. Here the players have many possible choices, that they may take in any order and number, depending on the supply of cards in their hands.

## 1. draw tribe cards

To begin his turn, a player draws 3 tribe cards from the face-down tribe card supply and adds them to his hand. This is also true for the first turn where players already have 5 cards.

When the tribe card supply is exhausted, shuffle the discard pile and use this as the new tribe card supply.

## 2. take actions

The player has 5 different actions at his disposal that he may take in any order and number (except migration), following the rules and requirements for each action.

- 1) move
- 2) settle
- 3) temple building
- 4) migration (once per turn)
- 5) skill

### 1) move

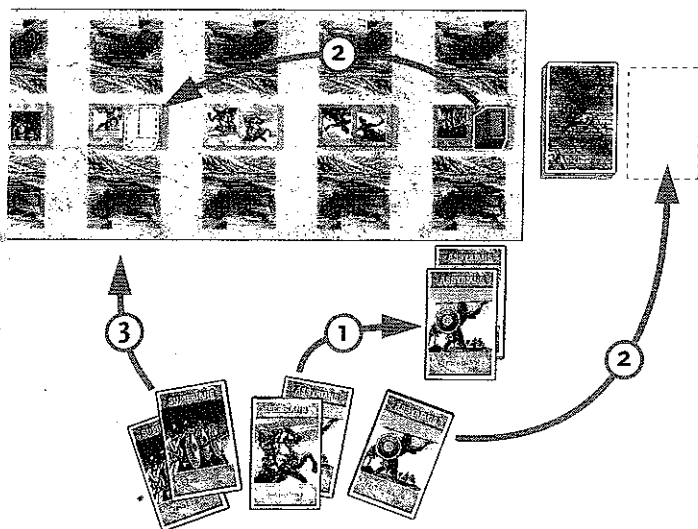
The player plays a tribe card on the discard pile and moves his stone figure to the territory matching the tribe on the card. On the first travel action, a player moves his figure from his quarry. The figure remains in that territory until the player moves it with a subsequent travel action. The figures from both players may be in the same territory.

### 2) settle

The player plays a tribe card on his side of the board. He may only play the card next to the temple building space that is in the territory with his figure. He places the card so that it overlaps any previous card played in that territory so that the tribe on all cards can be seen.

A player may play several tribe cards on a turn, either in the same territory or in a different territory (if he moves his figure). Once played in a territory, a tribe card may only be moved using the migration action (see below) or a tribal skill (see below).

example:



- ① The player's figure stands in the Sumerian territory. The player plays an Assyrians card and a Persians card from his hand on top of the two Assyrians cards already there. Now there are 3 Assyrians cards and 1 Persians card there.
- ② Next, he plays an Assyrians card from his hand on the discard pile and moves his figure to the Assyrian territory.
- ③ Finally, he plays his two Sumerians cards next to his temple building space in the Assyrian territory.

### 3) temple building

The player plays a temple card on the temple building place in the territory where he has his stone figure.

The player must play the temple cards in numerical order. Thus, on an empty space, the player must play a level 1 temple card. On a level 1 temple card, a player plays a level 2 card and so on. The only exception to this rule is with the use of a tribe skill (see below).

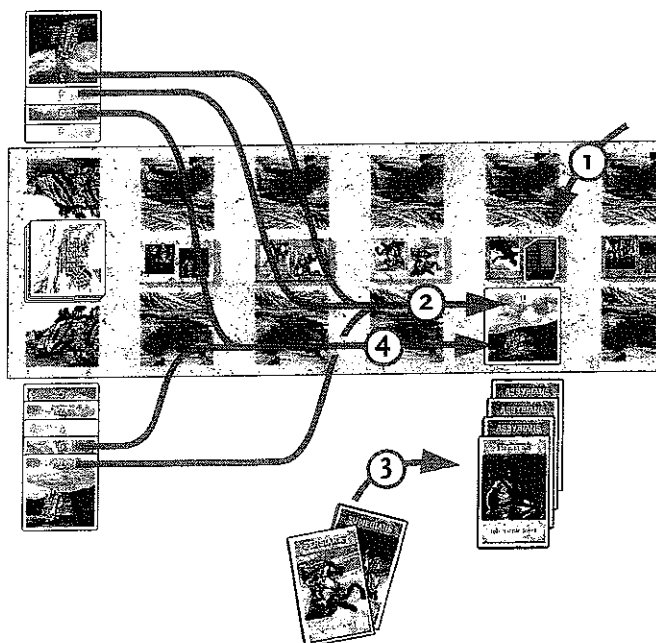
To play a temple card, the number of tribe cards in the territory must equal or exceed the number of the temple level the player plays (e.g. to play a level 4 temple card there must

be at least 4 tribe cards in that territory). Once a temple level is built, however, tribe cards may be removed from the territory (e.g. migration) without the need to remove temple levels.

The player takes temple cards from either his column of temple cards or his opponent's column of temple cards to play in his temple building spaces. The player may only take the topmost card from a column to play. At the beginning of the game, each player has one level 1 temple card in his column. He must play this temple card in his first turn.

#### Example:

- ① The player plays a Medes card to move his figure to the Medes territory. Here, he may now build a temple.
- ② He has 4 tribe cards in the territory and may build a 4 level temple there. He takes a level 2 temple card from his column and level 3 and 4 temple cards from his opponent to build a 4 level temple in the territory.
- ③ Now he plays two tribe cards in the Medes territory, increasing the number of cards in the territory to 6.
- ④ Finally, he takes the level 5 temple card from his opponent's column and the level 6 temple card from his column and plays them on his Medes temple (the 6 tribe cards allow him to now build the 6 level temple).



#### 4) migration (only once per turn!)

The player may, regardless of where his figure stands, move 3 tribe cards from one territory to another. He moves the topmost 3 cards. The cards may be from the same or different tribes. He may move them to an empty territory or to one that has one or more tribe cards already. He places them in the new territory so they overlap and all cards in the territory may be seen.

The player must always move exactly 3 cards. Also, the player must leave the order of the cards moved unchanged.

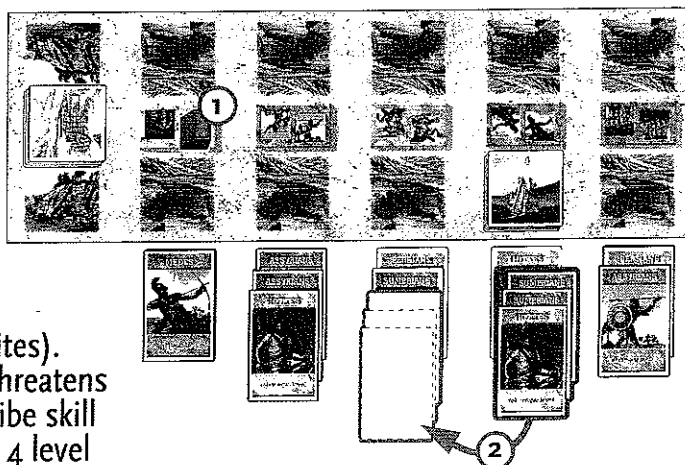
Note: if a territory has less than 3 tribe cards, a player may not migrate cards from this territory.

After a migration, the number of cards in a territory may be less than the number of levels a player has on his temple in that territory.

Note: a player may only do one migration on his turn. A player may execute the other four actions as many times as he wants and has the resources to do them.

example:

- 1 The player's figure stands in the Hitite territory, but this location has no bearing on a player's choice for migration.
- 2 The player moves the topmost 3 tribe cards from the Medes territory (Sumerians, Sumerians, Hitites) to the Persian territory yielding: Persians, Sumerians, Sumerians, Sumerians, Hitites). His combination of 3 Sumerians cards threatens his opponent with the change of side tribe skill (see below) in the Persian territory. The 4 level temple in the Medes territory remains, even though there is now only 1 tribe card there. To raise that temple to level 5, the player would need to add 4 cards to the Medes territory.



## 5) tribe skills

Each tribe has special skills that a player may use when he gets a group of them together. When a player has 3 or more consecutive tribe cards of the same tribe together in a territory, he may use their special skill. The 3 tribe cards may be together anywhere in the territory, not just the topmost 3 cards. To use the special skill, the player discards 1 of the set of 3 cards to the discard pile.

Note: if a player has more than 3 consecutive tribe cards together in a territory, he may use that tribe skill more than once in that turn.

There are two further requirements for using a tribe's skill:

- The skill may only be used in the territory where the player has his figure. The player may, of course, use the move action to move his figure to the territory where he wants it, if he has the correct tribe card.
- The 3 tribe cards being used must also be in the territory where the player has his figure.

Each tribe has its own skill:

Assyrians:	destroy temple
Hitites:	rob temple level
Medes:	emigrate
Sumerians:	switch sides
Persians:	jump a level
All:	halve hand cards

### destroy temple (3 Assyrians)



The Assyrians destroy the opponent's temple in this territory. The player places the temple cards face down on top of the temple card supply without changing their order. Thus, the first card placed on the supply is the highest level, then the next highest level, and so on.

### rob temple level (3 Hitites)



The Hitites steal the opponent's topmost temple level from this territory, placing it on top of your temple in this territory.

Two additional requirements must be met to use this skill:

- The opponent's stolen temple level must be higher than the player's highest level in this territory, but need not be just one level higher. Temple levels may be skipped!
- The player receiving the stolen level must have enough tribe cards in the territory to support the level stolen (5 for level 5, etc.), including the card that is discarded after using the skill.

A player may even steal a temple level when he has no temple cards in the territory.



### emigrate (3 Medes)



The Medes force all members of one tribe from his opponent's side of the territory. The player decides which tribe his opponent loses. His opponent takes all cards from that tribe in that territory (regardless of where there

are) and places them in the discard pile.

### switch sides (3 Sumerians)



The Sumerians attract tribe cards from the opponent. All tribe cards on the opponent's side in this territory that match the opponent's topmost (last played) tribe card, switch sides. The player places them on top of his cards in this territory.

### jump a level (3 Persians)



The Persians allow the player to skip a level when building a temple in this territory. Two additional requirements must be met to use this skill:

- The temple card must be on top of one of the players' temple card columns.
- The player must have enough tribe cards in the territory to support the level jumped to (5 for level 5, etc.), including the card that is discarded after using the skill.

### halve hand cards (3 of the same tribe)

A set of 3 consecutive tribe cards of the same tribe (any of the 5 tribes), together in the territory can force an opponent to reduce his hand size by half (rounding down: with 5 cards, he discards 2). His opponent decides which cards to discard. He places them face up on the discard pile one at a time so they can be seen as he places them there.

## 3. draw and play temple cards



After finishing all his actions, the player draws 2 temple cards from the face down supply. He then places them on his temple column so they overlap previous cards in the column

so both players can see the level numbers. He places the temple card with the highest level first and then the other temple card. Remember that when building a temple, players must take the topmost cards from the temple columns.

The player's turn is now over.

When a player ends his turn with 4 or more tribe cards in his hand, he must announce the number of tribe cards he has to his opponent.

## Game end

There are three different ways for the game to end:

- The game ends when one player has temples with a total of 15 or more total temple levels and his opponent has temples with a total of less than 10 total temple levels. If one player has 15 or more temple levels, but his opponent has 10 or more, the game enters the end phase (below).
- In the end phase, the game ends when one player has temples with a total of 20 or more total temple levels or when one player has temples with a total of less than 10 total temple levels, regardless of which player triggered the end phase by having 15 temple levels.
- If the last temple card is drawn before the game ends with the above conditions, the game ends immediately.

Each player sums the total levels in all of his temples. The player with the most total temple levels is the winner. If the two players tie, the player with the most tribe cards left in his hand is the winner.

## Example

This example shows the possible actions available in phase 2. Please lay out the board and cards as shown below and play through the example to better understand the possible actions.

in the Hitite territory:

Anna: Sumerians – Sumerians – Sumerians –  
Sumerians – Assyrians – Persians – Persians

Bob: Persians – Sumerians – Assyrians –  
Assyrians – Medes

in the Sumerian territory:

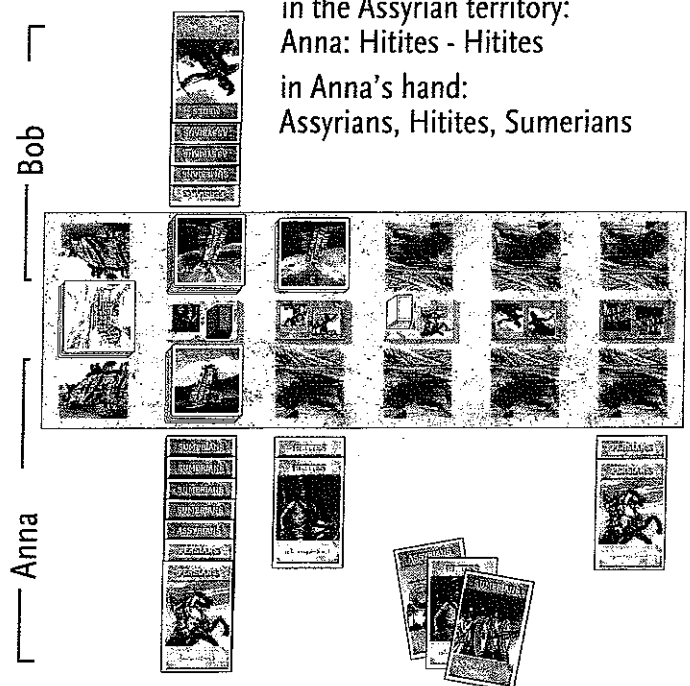
Anna: Persians - Persians

in the Assyrian territory:

Anna: Hitites - Hitites

in Anna's hand:

Assyrians, Hitites, Sumerians



### example:

Anna's stone figure sits in the Hitite territory and she wants to destroy her opponent's level 6 temple in that territory.

The solution: first, Anna uses the Sumerian skill (switch sides) in the Hitite territory to take a Medes tribe card from Bob. She must now discard 1 Sumerians card from the Hitite territory.

Next, Anna uses migration to move the topmost 3 cards from the Hitite territory (Persians, Persians, Medes) to the Sumerian territory, yielding Persians, Persians, Persians, Persians, Medes in her Sumerian territory.

Anna now has Sumerians, Sumerians, Sumerians, Assyrians in the Hitite territory. She again uses the skill of the Sumerians (switch sides) to take both Assyrians from her opponent, giving her Sumerians, Sumerians, Assyrians, Assyrians, Assyrians in the territory (she had to discard 1 Sumerians to use the skill).

Now Anna uses the Assyrian skill in the Hitite territory to destroy Bob's level 6 temple there.

Next Anna plays her Assyrians card from her hand to the discard pile to move her figure to the Assyrian territory. Then, she plays her Hitites card there, giving her a set of 3 Hitites cards, which she uses to steal the topmost temple card from Bob's temple (a level 3

card). She places this on her temple building place (it was empty) to give her a level 3 temple in the Assyrian territory. Her 3 Hitites cards make this a valid temple level. Then, she discards 1 Hitites card for using the skill.

Finally, she plays the Sumerians card from her hand to the discard pile to move her figure to the Sumerian territory. There, she has Persians, Persians, Persians, Persians, Medes as a result of her earlier tribe migration. She uses the special skill of all tribes twice in a row to twice halve Bob's hand. This reduces Bob's hand from 7 cards to 4 cards to 2 cards! Bob chooses which of these cards to discard.

Thus, ends Anna's phase 2.

Anna draws 2 temple cards: a level 1 card and a level 2 card, two cards that Bob can use to begin restoring his destroyed temple. She places the level 2 card first in her temple column and then the level 1 card.

It is now Bob's turn.

## Game summary

### End game/victor:

- 15 or more points in temples, if opponent has less than 10
- highest temple points if all temple cards drawn
- end-phase is 15 or more points with opponent greater than or equal to 10:  
victor is first to 20 temple points or  
loser is first to fall below 10 temple points

### Preparation:

- each player takes one level 1 temple card
- shuffle remaining temple cards; place in supply
- shuffle tribe cards and deal 5 to each player; place remaining cards face down next to board
- each player places stone figure in quarry
- oldest player begins

### Playing the game:

- draw 3 tribe cards
- take actions
- draw and place 2 temple cards

### Actions:

- move - play tribe card and move figure to territory matching tribe card
- settle - play tribe card to territory where your figure stands
- build temple - play temple card to territory where your figure stands:
  - take temple cards from either players' column
  - build in level order: 1, 2, 3, ...
  - maximum level equals the number of tribe cards in the territory
- migrate - move topmost 3 tribe cards from one territory to another territory (limit: once per turn), regardless of location of your figure
- skill - discard 1 of set of 3 tribe cards to use that tribe's ability in the territory with your figure

- 12 -

## Tribe skills

- Assyrians - place opponent's temple face down on top of temple supply in number order
- Hitites - place opponent's topmost temple card on your temple, regardless of number order, but it must be higher than yours and your tribe cards greater than or equal to level stolen
- Medes - discard all of one tribe from opponent
- Sumerians - take all tribe cards from opponent that match his topmost tribe card
- Persians - jump one temple level, but the temple card must be available on one of the two columns and your tribe cards greater than or equal to the level played
- all - force opponent to discard half his cards, rounded down

## The authors

Uwe Rosenberg, born in 1970, lives in Dortmund. He spends his time inventing games. Two of his games have been selected for the Spiel des Jahres list: Bohnanza and Mamma Mia. He likes to spend his free time playing Badminton.

Hagen Dorgathen, born in 1968, also lives in Dortmund. He enjoys designing games, reading, and politics. He has participated in the World Boardgame championships since 1994. This is his first published game.

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