ARCANA

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A game by Damien Desnous

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The city of Cadwallon is renown for its intrigues and power struggles.

Within the most exclusive circles of Cadwallon, numerous merchant corporations, known as guilds, compete to control the city's vast resources. Cadwallon is a city of great history. Its thick walls enclose many political centers and relics which have turned Cadwallon into the city of all yearnings.

OBJECTIVE OF **THE GAME**

In *Arcana,* each player becomes the leader of one of the guilds of Cadwallon.

Players must rely on a group of agents to secure the good graces of the city's most influential individuals. These agents will also help players recover precious relics and gain control of major institutions and key locations.

Players race toward absolute control over the city by controlling institutions, locations, and relics, and by securing the support of key personalities for their guild.

CONTENT

This game box contains…
- 4 cards representing the 4 guilds
- 44 Guild cards including…
  - 9 Agents, 1 Location and 1 Relic belonging to the guild of Blades,
  - 9 Agents, 1 Location and 1 Relic belonging to the guild of Ferrymen,
  - 9 Agents, 1 Location and 1 Relic belonging to the guild of Thieves,
  - 9 Agents, 1 Location and 1 Relic belonging to the guild of Usurers,
- 85 Stake cards including…
  - 24 Relics,
  - 24 Locations,
  - 37 Personalities
- 1 "First player" card
- 1 "Game over : Ducal Jubilee" card
- 6 Militia cards: 2 Captains and 4 Soldiers (see Advanced rules)
- 22 "Objective" cards (see Advanced rules)
- And this rule booklet.

THE GUILDS **OF CADWALLON**

All four guilds have the same objective: control and run the different "industries" found in Cadwallon.

The guild of **Blades** claims to be have been established by the same mercenaries who founded the city of Cadwallon. Its shops are the only ones given the privilege to sell weapons.

Transportation is under the control of the guild of **Ferrymen**: ship-owners, carters, coachmen, caravaneers…and assassins who left the guild of Thieves because of monetary disputes.

The heart and soul of organized crime, the guild of **Thieves** regulates smuggling, burglaries and other acts of larceny.

The guild of **Usurers** runs the city's underground. It controls any criminal activity not associated with the guild of Thieves.

SETUP

For your first game, leave aside the "Militia" and "Objective" cards.

Each player chooses a guild. Players are given the 11 cards (9 Agents, 1 Location and 1 Relic) associated to their guild and display the guild card in front of them. If several players want the same guild, a fair compromise must be found.

The 11 cards are shuffled and placed face down in a pile. This will be the player's deck. Players will have two piles of cards in front of them: a Deck and a Resource Deck that will build up as the game progresses.

The Stake cards are shuffled. They are displayed in 5 piles/zones of 12 Stakes (or 4 piles in a 3 player game) at the center of the table (see illustration below). The other Stake cards go back into the box.

The "Game Over : Ducal Jubilee" card is mixed with the last five cards of the pile placed in the Free Zone. The first card of each Stake pile/zone is turned over.

The first player is determined randomly and is given the "First Player" card.

2 PLAYERS **GAME SETUP**
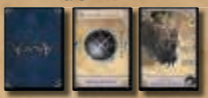
GUILD 1

GUILD 1'S ZONE

GUILD 1'S ZONE

FREE ZONE

GUILD 2'S ZONE

GUILD 2'S ZONE
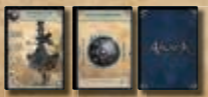
GUILD 2

3 PLAYERS **GAME SETUP**

GUILD 1

GUILD 1 AND 2'S ZONE

GUILD 2

GUILD 1 AND 3'S ZONE

FREE ZONE

GUILD 2 AND 3'S ZONE

GUILD 3

4 PLAYERS **GAME SETUP**

GUILD 1

GUILD 4

GUILD 1 AND 4'S ZONE

GUILD 1 AND 2'S ZONE

GUILD 2

FREE ZONE

GUILD 3 AND 4'S ZONE

GUILD 2 AND 3'S ZONE

GUILD 3

THE ARCANA **OF POWER**

There are four arcana of power. They are represented by symbols on the cards.

Military power is a value associated with the Stave;

Political power is a value associated with the Sword;

Spiritual power is a value associated with the Cup;

Financial power is a value associated with the Ducat, the official currency of Cadwallon.

One of these values is written in gold. This is the Stake card's main arcanum.

Relic

A Relic is a present used to bribe a Personality. It has to be played on one of your Agents. The Ducat value of the Relic is added to the Agent's arcana value.

• If the total is higher or equal to the Stake card's Ducat value, the Stake card is won immediately. The Relic and the player's Agent(s) are sent to their Resource Deck and a new Stake card is revealed on top of the pile.

• If the total is lower than the Stakes card's Ducat value, nothing happens. The Relic is sent to its Resource Deck.

Important:

• It is impossible to bribe a Relic or a Location.

• It is possible to use a Relic on several Agents. The total value resulting from such bribery is calculated by adding the Agents' arcana value and the Relic's Ducat value.

Example: *The player of the Guild of Blades wishes to bribe Arkabast (7 Ducats, main arcana: Cups). During the previous turn, this player displayed a Goblin fire-support (4 Cups) next to this Stake card. This turn this same player displays a Drinking horn (3 Ducats).*

*The player has 7 bribery points (4 from the Goblin fire-support and 3 from the Drinking horn) against 7 for Arkabast. The player **immediately** wins this Stake card, regardless of Agents played by other players.*

CARDS

The background color on the cards is used to tell them apart.

Guild Cards

Guild Starter Deck

Guild Card

Objectives

Stakes

Personalities   **Relics**   **Locations**

Militia

Captains   **Soldiers**

Special Cards

First Player Card   **Game Over : Ducal Jubilee Card**

Information pertaining to an agent's guild or a card's location in the city can be found under the title.

STAKE **CARDS**

There are three types of Stake cards: Personality, Location and Relic.
Once Stake cards have been won, they are sent to the player's Resource Deck.

PERSONALITY

A personality placed in a player's Resource Deck now counts as an Agent. Some of these Agents have far better arcana values than those of Agents from the beginning of the game.

LOCATION

Playing a Location card triggers its effects immediately. The Location card is then sent to the player's Resource Deck.
Important: A location can never be displayed to win a Stake card.

GAME **ROUND**

A game of *Arcana* is a succession of game rounds during which players sends their guild's Agents to take control of Stakes, relying on their knowledge of Cadwallon's arcana of power.

Playing Agents

Players pick the first 4 cards from their Deck. If there are not enough cards, players take whatever cards are left. Then a player whose Deck is empty shuffles his/her own Resource Deck in order to build a new Deck from which cards can be immediately drawn.

Players take turns to play.

During a turn, a player can perform one action:
• Display an Agent face-up next to one of the Stakes located in a zone which is not controlled by the player or in the free zone;
• Display an Agent face-down next to one of the 2 Stakes located in one of the zones controlled by the player;
• Play a Location (see further). Once the card's game effects have been resolved, the card goes to the Resource Deck;
• Display a Relic on one Agent to corrupt a Personality Stake card (see further);
• Send a card to the Resource Deck without applying its effects.

It is then the next player's (clockwise) turn to perform one action. Once all the players have played their 4 cards, the round is resolved.

Resolving the round

Once all the cards have been played or sent to the Resource Deck, the power struggle is resolved for each Stake card. Stake cards are attributed to the winning player one at a time, starting with the card which is the furthest to the left from the first player.

The arcana values of the Agents displayed next to the Stake card are summed before they are compared to the Stake card's **main arcanum** (the number in **gold**). Once the Stake card's **main arcanum** has been identified, players add the values of this **same arcanum** as indicated on the Agent cards they have placed next to the Stake card. For example, if the Stake card's main arcanum is military power, players will then add their Agents' (⚔) military value.

• If the total of one of the player's arcana is higher or equal to the Stake card's main arcanum, this player wins the Stake card and places it in his/her Resource Deck. All Agents are sent to their respective Resource Deck;

• If the total of several players' arcana is higher or equal to the Stake card's main arcanum, the player whose total is the highest wins the Stake card and places it in his/her Resource Deck. In case of a Draw, the Stake card stays where it is (unless mentioned otherwise). All the Agents stay where they are;

• If the total of each player's arcana is lower than the Stake card's main arcanum, nobody wins. All the Agents stay (face up) where they are.

End of the round

New Stake cards are flipped over in the empty zones. The first player hands the "First player" card to the player to his/her right. A new round can begin.

END OF **THE GAME**

Once the "Game Over : Ducal Jubilee " card is revealed, the current round continues until its end. Then the game is over.

Each player adds the Victory points of the cards in his/her Deck and in his/her Resource Deck.

The player with the most Victory points wins. The winning guild is now master of Cadwallon.

A ROUND **IN A NUTSHELL:**

Phase 1: Game round

• Each player draws 4 cards (recreate a new Deck with his/her Resource Deck if necessary).

• The player plays (or sends to his/her Resource Deck) an Agent, a Personality, a Location or a Relic.

• The following player does the same and the game goes on until none of the players have anymore cards left in their hand.

Phase 2: Resolving the round

• The appropriation of Stake cards is resolved one Stake card at a time.

• The Stake card is sent to the Resource Deck of the player who won it. Agents associated with this Stake card are sent to their Resource Deck.

• Stake cards that were not won stay on the table with the Agents which were associated with them.

Phase 3: End of the round

• New Stakes are flipped over to complete the piles.

• The First player's card is moved one player to the right.

ADVANCED RULES

"Objective" cards

At the beginning of the game, each player receives 4 Objective cards dealt face down. Players look at their cards. Each player discards two cards without showing them, and puts them back into the box with the rest of the Objective cards. Each player keeps the two remaining cards in front of him.

At the end of the game, players reveal their Objectives and check if they were fulfilled. Then players score the appropriate amount of victory points.

"Militia" cards

At the beginning of the game, the 6 "Militia" cards are piled face down into an independent deck, the Militia Deck.

During his/her turn, a player can send a Relic to his/her Resource Deck to obtain the support of the Militia. This player then draws the first card from the Militia Deck and places it next to one of the Stake card.

After resolving the Stakes, the card returns to the Militia Deck which is re-shuffled.

Tactical removal

When a Stake card is won, the victorious player has two options:

• Add it to his/her Resource Deck (as usual);

• Remove the card from play by putting it under his/her Guild card. The Stake card stays there until Victory points are counted at the end of the game.

This rule allows a player to make his/her deck smaller in order to optimize strategy.

MORE **EXAMPLES**

Resolving a Stake

Once all four cards in their hand have been played, players resolve the round for each stake.

In this example, the Stake is a Barhan sword with an arcana value of 4 Staves.

The Guild of Ferrymen reaches an arcana value of 5 Staves (3 for the Crossbowman + 2 for the Necromancer).

The Guild of Usurers reaches an arcana value of 3 Staves (3 for Pale).

The Guild of Ferrymen wins the Barhan sword. The Barhan sword and the two Ferrymen Agents go straight to the Reserve Deck of the player who leads the Guild of Ferrymen.

Corrupting a Personality
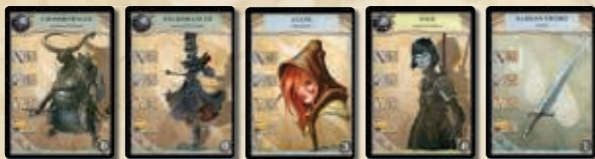
It is the Guild of Usurers' turn to play. During the previous turn, this player had displayed Pale next to Ayane, whom is also desired by another player.

The Usurer player takes a Barhan sword from his/her hand and displays it to bribe Ayane. The player adds the Ducat value of the Barhan sword to the

displayed Agent's arcana value (the same as the Stake's main Arcanum; here the Stave). The Usurer player reaches an arcana value of 8 (3 for Pale and 5 for the Barhan sword), which is higher than Ayane's Ducat value (7).

The Guild of Usurers immediately wins Ayane, who is sent to the guild's Reserve Deck, along with Pale and the Barhan sword. The Guild of Ferrymen does the same with its two Agents.

The Harlequin

The Stake is the Harlequin. Each player must announce the nature of the arcana value they intend to use (Stave, Sword, or Cup).

The Guild of Ferrymen reaches an arcana value of 5 Cups (3 for the Necromancer and 2 for Dil-Dan-Alar). The Guild of Usurers reaches an arcana value of 6 Staves (thanks to Ayane).

The Guild of Usurers, who has the highest arcana value, wins the Harlequin.

Hints

If a Stake Card has several gold numbers and thus several arcana values (i.e. Penthow or Harlequin), players may decide, on an individual basis, on which arcana value they will bid. The highest value will win (for Penthow, winning bid has to have a minimal value of 2.)