LEO COLOVINI'S

AZTLÁN

ARES

Introduction

I n the mythical land of Aztlán, four tribes strive to survive and prosper under the scrutiny of the gods themselves.

Each tribe takes its name from the totem animal their ancestral kings chose to protect them: the People of the Ocelot, the People of the Quetzal, the People of the Serpent, and the People of the Coyote.

Peaceful coexistence between the different peoples of the land brings wealth and prosperity to all, but the fearful Gods of this land also favor those who are mighty in war, who bring to them their subdued enemies as cruel offerings...

Only one of the four tribes will be granted the right to stay in this blessed land when the Time of Exile comes, at the end of the Fifth Age of the Sun.

The people who builds the mightiest empires through the ages will be rewarded with the favor of the gods, while the weak ones will be cursed to leave Aztlán to carve new realms in the dangerous lands to the west.

Overview of the Game

AZTLÁN can be played by 3 or 4 players. Each player guides one of the four tribes. (When playing with 2 players, use the variant rules *Aztec Gods,* page **11**.)

A game is divided into five stages, called **ages**.

At the beginning of each age, each player secretly chooses one of his **power cards**, and then, one at a time, places and moves a certain number of his **tribe pawns** in one of the territories on the game board.

The game board is divided into five different types of territory: deserts, terraced fields, jungles, mountains/volcanoes, and cities.

The power card chosen for the age indicates the strength of that player's tribe and identifies one type of territory (of the five different types). The greater the domains of that player, and the greater the number of territories of that type included within them, the higher the victory point score.

If a territory is disputed by several players, the strongest tribe may defeat the weaker ones; but war is not the only path to victory and peaceful coexistence with the other tribes sometimes brings greater rewards.

At the end of the fifth age, the player who scores the most victory points is the winner. His tribe rules Aztlán, while the time of Exile befalls his opponents!

Game Components

A **game board**

120 **Tribe pawns** in 4 different colors, 30 for each tribe.

24 **Power cards**
(4 sets of 6 each, each set numbered from 4 to 9)

30 **Prosperity cards** *(3x Blessing of Mixcoatl; 3x Blessing of Tepeyollotl; 3x Blessing of Xipe Totec; 9x Offering to the Gods; 3x Sacred Games; 3x Rafts and Canoes; 3x Great Tlatoani; 3x Eagle and Jaguar Warriors)*

1 **Scoring Bonus card**

5 **Pyramid counters**
(in two parts)

Game Board

The game board represents the mythical land of Aztlán, divided in 30 territories ①, of 5 different territory types. There is also a scoring track around the outside of the board ②, where players place their score counters to keep track of victory points, and two smaller tracks to show the current age ③ and turn order ④.

TERRITORY TYPES

| Jungle | Desert | Mountains | Terraced Fields | City |

Tribe Pawns

Tribe pawns, in 4 different colors, are placed on the game board to create **domains**.

Serpent   **Ocelot**   **Coyote**   **Quetzal**

Power Cards

Each tribe has one set of power cards, identified by the tribe's image.

Each power card has a number on the front ⑤ that represents the **power** of the player's tribe in a given age.

Each power card also identifies a particular **type of territory** ⑥, shown by an icon and the background illustration. These territories score extra victory points at the end of the age in which the card is played.

Finally, each power card has a **victory point value** ⑦, which is scored at the end of the game if the card has not been used in any age.

Prosperity Cards

A prosperity card is the prize a player receives when he chooses to coexist with his opponents.

These cards can grant advantages to the players who play them during the conflict and scoring phases.

Pyramid Counters

These counters are used on the scoring track to show how many victory points the players have during the game. Each player has a base and a top score counter.

If a player has more than 100 points, he stacks the top counter on the base as a reminder.

The grey color pyramid counter is used on the age track to show the current age.

EAGLE AND JAGUAR WARRIORS

BLESSING OF TEPEYOLLOTL

Score 2 VPs per Mountain you control.

SETUP

Place the game board in the middle of the table.

Next, each player chooses one of the four available tribes – **People of the Quetzal** (Blue), **People of the Coyote** (Green), **People of the Serpen**t (Red), and **People of the Ocelot** (Yellow).

Every player takes the tribe pawns of his chosen color, to create his reserve of pawns, and a set of matching power cards.

Next, each player places his base score counter on the space marked "0" on the scoring track. The counters will stack on top of each other. Choose the stacking order randomly: the player with his counter on the top plays first, the player with the counter immediately below plays second, and so on.

Place one unused pawn of each player on the turn order track to show the current turn order more clearly.

Finally, the players shuffle the prosperity cards and place the deck, facedown, close to one side of the game board.

Place the grey pyramid on the first space of the age track.

Now the game can begin… only one tribe will gain the right to live in Aztlán!

HOW TO PLAY

The game is divided in 5 ages and each age is divided in four phases as follows:

1) **Choosing Phase**

2) **Development Phase**

3) **Conflict Phase**

4) **Scoring Phase**

During each phase, the players can play **prosperity cards** (see page **9**) that can influence the outcome of that phase.

1) CHOOSING PHASE

At the beginning of each age (except the first age), advance the grey pyramid on the age track. Then, each player chooses one of his power cards and lays it on the table facedown.

After a player has chosen his power card for the current age, he takes a number of tribe pawns from his reserve, determined by the current age and the number of players.

Check the table below to see how many tribe pawns each player can use in each age.

Age	Tribe pawns: 3 player game	Tribe pawns: 4 player game
I	8	7
II	7	6
III	6	5
IV	5	4
V	4	3

2) DEVELOPMENT PHASE

The player with the most victory points takes his turn first and then the other players take their turn, one at a time, in decreasing order of victory point score.

When two or more players have the same score (as it happens in the first age, when all players have a score of 0), start with the player whose score counter is on the top of the others, and proceed with the ones below it. Once the turn order is determined, place one unused pawn of each player on the turn order track to show it more clearly.

Each player's turn is composed of two steps:

1) **Placing one pawn**
2) **(optional) Moving one pawn**

In turn order, each player places, one at a time, one of his tribe pawns.

Each tribe pawn can be placed anywhere the player desires, on any territory, empty or occupied by other pawns, adjacent to territories where he previously placed pawns or not.

Note: A lake (a blue zone without a territory icon) is not a territory and no tribe pawn can be placed there.

In addition, the current player, after he has placed a tribe pawn, may (if desired) move one of his tribe pawns already on the board from one territory to an adjacent territory.

When all players have finished placing all of their tribe pawns, the phase is over and each player reveals the power card he chose for that age.
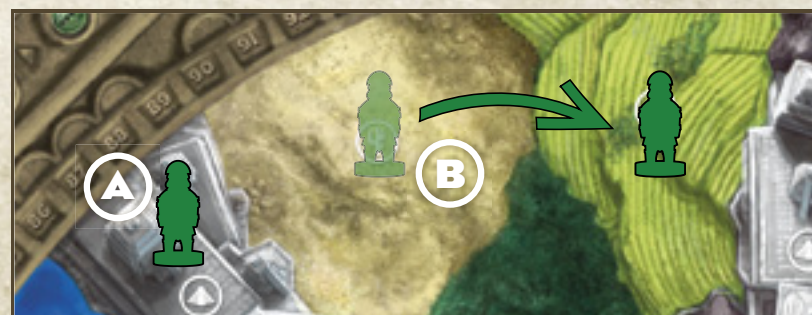
Example *The green Coyote player places a tribe pawn (A) on a city territory and then he moves another tribe pawn (B) from a desert territory to an adjacent terraced fields territory.*

3) Conflict Phase

After all players have placed their tribe pawns for the current age on the game board, the conflict phase begins.

Starting with the player with the highest score and then in decreasing score order (breaking ties as indicated before), the player checks his territories. There is a **conflict** in each territory where his tribe pawns are present with the tribe pawns of one or more opponents.

Each conflict is resolved by first determining the power of the opponents, then with the winner deciding for battle or coexistence (see below).

After the player with the highest score has resolved all of his conflicts, the second highest score player resolves his conflicts and so on, in decreasing score order.

Note: The current player can resolve his conflicts in the order he prefers.

1) DETERMINING THE POWER

First, the active player checks which player has the highest power in the territory. The power of a player corresponds to the number shown on his current power card, multiplied by the number of tribe pawns he has in that territory.

If the active player is not the player with the greater power, he simply ignores the territory and checks the next one (if any).

2) BATTLE OR COEXISTENCE

If the active player is the player with the greater power, he must decide how to resolve the conflict between two different options: Battle and Coexistence.

Battle: he removes all his opponents' tribe pawns from the territory.

Coexistence: he allows all the opponents' tribe pawns to survive and he receives a **prosperity card** (see *Prosperity Cards,* page **9**) as a reward for his "magnanimity".

- If there are more than 2 players in the territory, the winner of the conflict has to decide if he coexists with all his opponents or if he removes them all. It's not possible to coexist with one player in a territory and remove the tribe pawns of another player also in that territory. If the winner of the conflict decides to coexist with his opponents, he draws only one prosperity card, even if there are two or three opponents.

- If there is a tie for the highest power points among the players, they automatically coexist, but nobody is rewarded with prosperity cards.

- If a weaker player is present in a territory, with two or more opponents who tie among themselves for the highest power, his tribe pawns are automatically removed, while the tied players peacefully coexist (without drawing a prosperity card).

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Example *The yellow Ocelot player has 2 tribe pawns in the territory and his chosen power card for the current age is "5". The red Serpent player's chosen power card for the current age is "9," but he has only one pawn.*

The Ocelot player has a total power of 10 (5x2), while the Serpent player only has a total power of 9 (9x1), so the Ocelot player is the winner of this conflict.

Example *The yellow Ocelot player, who wins the conflict (10 power points against 8 and 4 power points) in this territory, has to decide if he wants to remove all the opposing tribe pawns (blue Quetzal pawns and green Coyote pawns) or coexists with them all.*

If he chooses the second option, he picks up only one prosperity card.

Example *The green Coyote player and the blue Quetzal player both have a power of 8. They coexist but neither of them gets a prosperity card.*

Example *The green Coyote player and the blue Quetzal player both have a power of 8. The yellow Ocelot player is weaker, with a power of 5. The Coyote player and Quetzal player coexist, the Ocelot tribe pawn is removed.*

Example *There are five conflicts in this Age (A-B-C-D-E). The red Serpent player has the highest score and is involved in conflicts A and C, but only wins conflict A. He decides what to do in that territory. Then, the player with the second highest score, the yellow Ocelot, takes his turn. He wins in conflicts B and C. The blue Quetzal player wins Conflict D. Conflict E has no winner because it is a tie, so the green Coyote player doesn't decide any conflict.*

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4) Scoring Phase

Starting with the player with the highest score and then in decreasing score order (breaking ties by the position of the counters, as usual), each player calculates his score.

The active player separately scores each **domain** he controls. A domain is a series of adjacent territories (one or more) in which the player has at least one tribe pawn, alone or in a coexistence – even in minority.

Note that if there is a lake between two territories, they are not considered adjacent (except when using a *Rafts and Canoes* card, see *Prosperity Cards*, page **9**).

A domain scores victory points as follows:

— **1 point per each territory in that domain, plus**

— **a bonus equal to the number of territories matching the chosen power card for the age multiplied by itself** (see the *Scoring Bonus Table* below).

SCORING BONUS TABLE

Number of Matching Territories	Victory Points Bonus
1	1
2	4
3	9
4	16
5	25
6	36

If a domain does not contain at least one territory matching the power card chosen for the age, the player does not score any points for that domain.

Advance the player's counter on the scoring track to indicate his new score. If the position reached on the scoring track is already occupied by another player's counter, place the advancing counter on top of the other counter.

Note: All the power cards are linked to a type of territory, except the card with the number "4" on it. This power card is a sort of wild card. There isn't a territory on this power card, so during the scoring phase, the player may choose the most favorable territory for his score (normally, the type of territory which would give the highest bonus score).

If the player has more than one domain, his choice applies to all of his domains.

SCORING EXAMPLE

Example *The yellow Ocelot player has power card number "9", which has "City" as the bonus territory. He controls 4 separate domains.*

"A" domain is composed by 4 territories, but only one matches the territory shown on the power card, so this domain scores 4+1x1=5.

His second domain, "B", is composed of just 3 territories, but two of them match the territory shown on the power card, so the domain scores 3+2x2=7.

"C" domain is composed by only 1 territory, which matches the territory shown on the power card, so this domain scores 1+1x1=2.

"D" domain is composed by only 1 territory, but doesn't match the territory shown on the power card, so this domain scores 0.

The total Ocelot player score is 5+7+2+0= 14 victory points.

SCORING EXAMPLE

Example *In this age, the yellow Ocelot player chose power card number "4."*

At the end of the conflict phase he has three domains of 2, 3 and 6 territories each. He decides that the type of territory to give him the greatest bonus is desert.

He has at least one desert in all his three domains and his largest domain, made up of six territories (domain value of 6 points), has three deserts, so it will give him a 9-point bonus, for a total of 15 (6+9) points.

The other two domains will give him a bonus of 1 point each, in addition to their value of 2 and 3 points respectively, for a total value of 3 (2+1) and 4 (3+1) points. The total score for the age is 22 points (15+3+4).

SECOND TO FIFTH AGE

After the scoring phase of an age, a new age begins, with each player taking the appropriate number of pawns from his reserve (one less than in the previous age) and choosing a new power card from his hand.

The power cards used by the players in the previous ages remain on the table, face up, always visible to the other players during the game.

Note that both the tribe pawns placed in the current age and those that have survived from the previous age now have the power indicated on the new power card.

Tribe pawns placed in this age or in previous ages may be moved during the development phase.

END OF THE GAME

The game ends at the end of the 5th age.

In the scoring phase of the last age, each player calculates his score for the final age normally, as described in the *Scoring Phase* section (see page **7**).

Then, each player adds the bonus value of the power card he did not used during the game to his score, plus 1 additional point for every unused prosperity card he has in his hand.

The player who has scored the most points is the winner.

In case of a tie, the winner is the player with the score counter below the other counters with the same score.

PROSPERITY CARDS

As already explained in the *Conflict Phase* section (page **5**), every time a conflict winner chooses coexistence in a territory, he can draw one prosperity card from the prosperity card deck.

Every prosperity card has a different influence on the game. Each card specifies when it can be played: either during a specific phase or at the end of the game. A player can only play a card during his turn, unless otherwise indicated.

Note that it is possible to use a card in the same phase it is drawn.

BLESSING OF THE GODS
(MIXCOATL, TEPEYOLLOTL, XIPE TOTEC)

BLESSING OF MIXCOATL — Score 2 VPs per Jungle you control.

BLESSING OF TEPEYOLLOTL — Score 2 VPs per Mountain you control.

BLESSING OF XIPE TOTEC — Score 2 VPs per Field you control.

When you play this prosperity card, the gods bless you with their gifts, bestowing a boon on your people. Mixcoatl, god of the hunt, will reward you if you control jungles; Tepeyollotl, the "heart of the mountain," god of earthquakes, will reward your control of mountains/volcanoes; Xipe Totec, god of agriculture and vegetation, will give his blessings if you control terraced fields.

You can play this card during any scoring phase of the game, earning 2 additional points for each territory of that type you control in that age.

OFFERINGS TO THE GODS — Score points depending on the number of offerings you have.
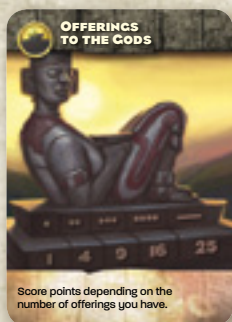
OFFERINGS TO THE GODS

When you play this prosperity card, you offer your wealth in sacrifice to the gods, asking for their favor.

You keep these cards in your hand until the end of the game. At the end of the game, you score 1 victory point if you have only 1 of these cards, 4 points if you have 2, 9 points if you have 3, 16 points if you have 4 and 25 points if you have 5.

This score is in addition to the value of 1 point for each prosperity card you have in hand at the end of the game.

SACRED GAMES — Survive in a territory in which you are defeated. The winner draws a prosperity card.
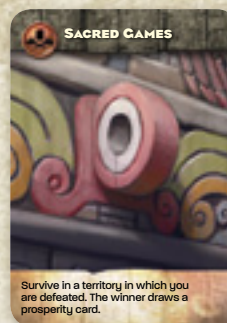
SACRED GAMES

When you play this prosperity card, you host sacred games with your opponent, to resolve a conflict without bloodshed.

You can play this card during a conflict phase, after a winning opponent declares that he wants to eliminate your tribe pawns by doing battle. The winner of the conflict must agree to coexist with you – he receives a prosperity card and your pawns remain in the territory. If any other player is defeated in the same territory, his pawns are removed normally.

If you are defeated by multiple opponents who are tied for the highest power, you cannot use this card.

RAFTS AND CANOES — Two territories on the same lake are considered adjacent.
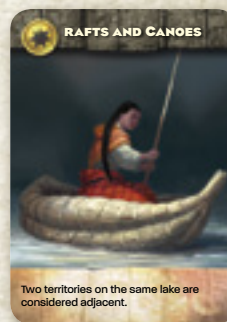
RAFTS AND CANOES

Your people have developed advanced watercraft abilities. When you play this prosperity card, you can use your skill in boating to shorten the distance between two territories, joining them into one domain.
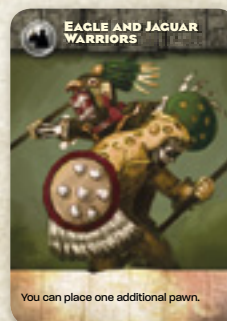
You can play this card during a scoring phase. You may consider two separate territories bordering the same lake as adjacent.

GREAT TLATOANI — If you tie for most power, you win the conflict.
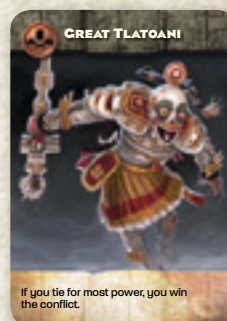
GREAT TLATOANI

Your people are led by a great and powerful king. When you play this prosperity card, you can use his skills to turn a conflict in your favor.

You can play this card during a conflict phase, if you are tied for the most power to break the tie and win control. As the conflict winner, you can now decide to eliminate your opponent(s) in battle or coexist.

EAGLE AND JAGUAR WARRIORS — You can place one additional pawn.

EAGLE AND JAGUAR WARRIORS

The warriors of your people are elite troops, with superior fighting skills. When you play this prosperity card, you use these elite troops to give your army a great advantage in battle.

You can play this card during a development phase. You can place one additional tribe pawn in any territory at the same time you place one tribe pawn from your reserve. If you don't have enough pawns in your reserve, take one from the pieces removed from the game in a previous age.

Strategy Tips

Choosing the Power Card

Your choice of power card is the most important part of your strategy in the game. You can choose to start with a low value power card, following a "waiting strategy" at the beginning of the game, keeping the higher value cards for the end game to impose your strength on the game board when the land becomes more crowded. Remember that, in later ages, you have fewer tribe pawns to place and move...

Or you could decide to start with a stronger impact on the game board, trying to immediately defeat your opponents' tribal pawns and then manage your advantage in the following ages.

Note that each power card is linked to a specific type of territory, so looking at your opponent's moves, you can try to guess their strength – but a wise player should try to hide his intentions, to leave the opponents in the dark about his real strength.

Remember that every power card has a victory point value that is scored in the last scoring phase, if you haven't used it during the game. This bonus may win or lose the game for you, so don't forget to consider it during play!

Coexistence and Prosperity Cards

When you're merciful and decide to coexist with your opponents, you're rewarded with prosperity cards. Remember that in this case the defeated players will get points from the territory just like you do, so you must be sure that you make the most out of the prosperity card, and that by choosing coexistence you're not giving the opponent more than you get!

BLESSINGS OF THE GODS

This card is useful to earn more victory points when you have a great number of territories of one type. You can use it in the scoring phase on the turn you get it or in a later one – choosing the right time to play it can give you the victory!

OFFERINGS TO THE GODS

These cards are at their best if you pursue a coexistence strategy through the game and draw a lot of prosperity cards. In this case, they can be really important to earning victory points, but if you decide to follow this strategy, you have to know when to be benevolent with your opponents!

SACRED GAMES

This is a card that can help you to keep a territory you don't want to lose. Use it to protect yourself, especially to avoid your domain splitting into several parts or to prevent the loss of too many of your tribesmen.

RAFTS AND CANOES

This card is really valuable in scoring more points by preventing your domains from being split or by surprising your opponents when you join two domains that are apparently separate. If you have this card in hand, take it into account when considering your strategy in the development phase!

GREAT TLATOANI

This is another card that can turn the tide during a conflict. It is really useful when you want to keep a territory or when you want to draw more prosperity cards to increase your strategic possibilities, especially at the end of the game.

EAGLE AND JAGUAR WARRIORS

This is a really useful card, especially when you need more forces to keep your territories or if you want to conquer new ones belonging to your opponents. This card can be deadly during the first ages if you want to attack the other players who have chosen a high value power card. Even in the later ages, this card can be useful to protect your territories from the opponents' attacks.

Aztec Gods

Variant for two players

To play Aztlān with two players, use the following rules. With this variant, a player does not directly control any of the four tribes of Aztlān; instead, he tries to maximize his victory point score, alternating the control of two opposing factions from one age to the next.

Combine the pawns of the Coyote and Quetzal people (green and blue) to form one faction, and the pawns of the Ocelot and Snake people (yellow and red) in another faction.

Pawns of a different color that belong to the same faction are considered to be the same people for all rule purposes; for example, if they are in the same territory, they are added together when resolving conflicts.

At the beginning of the first age, each player takes a set of power cards of his choice (the color is not important), and he takes control of one of the two factions (choose randomly, or on the basis of the player's color preference). He places a score counter matching the color of his power cards on the scoring track. Each player then takes 10 pawns of his current faction.

The age is played as in a normal multi-player game.

The power card chosen by a player applies to the pawns of the faction he currently controls, and a player scores points with the faction he currently controls.

At the end of the first age, after scoring, players will swap the control of factions: the player controlling the Coyote/Quetzal in the first age will control the Ocelot/Snake in the second age, and vice-versa.
Only the control of the pawns is exchanged: prosperity cards and power cards belong to the player, not to the faction.

Play continues with the players swapping the control of factions at the end of every age, until the end of the fifth age (so each player will be in control of the faction he begins play with for three ages, and of the other faction for two ages).

The victory point score belongs to each player, not to a faction, and each player will accumulate his own victory point score. The winner is the player with the highest score at the end of the fifth age, as usual.

The number of pawns of a faction entering the game in each age is:

1ˢᵗ age: 10; **2ⁿᵈ age:** 9; **3ʳᵈ age:** 8; **4ᵗʰ age:** 7; **5ᵗʰ age:** 6.

Credits

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Domain Scoring Table

You may use this table to calculate the victory point value of a domain. Cross-reference the number of territories in the domain with the number of bonus territories, to find the total victory point value.

Number of Territories	Number of Bonus Territories						
	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
1	0	2	-	-	-	-	-
2	0	3	-	-	-	-	-
3	0	4	7	-	-	-	-
4	0	5	8	13	-	-	-
5	0	6	9	14	-	-	-
6	0	7	10	15	22	-	-
7	0	8	11	16	23	32	-
8	0	9	12	17	24	33	-
9	0	10	13	18	25	34	-
10	0	11	14	19	26	35	46
11	0	12	15	20	27	36	47
12	0	13	16	21	28	37	48
13	0	14	17	22	29	38	49
14	0	15	18	23	30	39	50
15	0	16	19	24	31	40	51

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