VIJAYANAGARA

The Deccan Empires of Medieval India
1290-1398

LEARN TO PLAY

by Joe Dewhurst

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1 Introduction

Vijayanagara is a game about the rise of the Bahmani Kingdom and Vijayanagara Empire and the decline of the Delhi Sultanate in the 14th century Indian subcontinent. You play as one of these three Factions, competing for territory and influence across the Deccan Plateau of southern India, while Mongol invaders threaten the Delhi Sultanate from beyond the Hindu Kush mountains to the northwest. The game ends with the arrival of the Mongol warlord Timur and the invasion of Delhi in 1398, although the Delhi Sultanate player can avoid this historical defeat if they prepare well enough.

Each turn an Event card is drawn and eligible players have the opportunity to execute the Event, carry out a powerful Command and Decree from their Faction-specific action menu, or perform a single Limited Command and remain eligible for the next Event. This sequence is periodically interrupted by Mongol Invasions that threaten the Delhi Sultanate and present opportunities for the Bahmani Kingdom and Vijayanagara Empire, and by Succession crises that afford a limited range of free actions to each player.

How to Win

To win the game you simply have to achieve a higher score than both other players after Timur's invasion of Delhi, but the way this score is calculated is different for each Faction:

- **Delhi Sultanate (black):** Your score is equal to the Prosperity of all Tributary Provinces, plus a variable 'bonus' ranging from -3 to 3 depending on how you fare against Timur at the end of the game. All Provinces begin the game as Tributaries, setting your score to its highest Prosperity value of 18, but you will gradually lose these as the other two players launch rebellions against your rule. Your aim is to cling on to as much territory as possible and survive longer than the historical Delhi Sultanate.

- **Bahmani Kingdom (turquoise):** Your score is equal to the Prosperity of all Independent Provinces you Control, plus the number of your Forts on the map (from 0 to 5), plus your Deccan Influence (from 0 to 4). To Control a Province you must first launch a rebellion against the Delhi Sultanate, or else conquer an already Independent Province. To increase your Deccan Influence you must win battles against Vijayanagara, or spread your culture by Migrating into shared territories and fostering economic development.

- **Vijayanagara Empire (yellow):** Your score is equal to the Prosperity of all Independent Provinces you Control, plus the number of your Temples on the map (from 0 to 5), plus your Deccan Influence (from 0 to 4). To Control a Province you must first launch a rebellion against the Delhi Sultanate, or else conquer an already Independent Province. To increase your Deccan Influence you must win battles against the Bahmanis or spread your culture by Migrating into shared territories and fostering economic development.

2 Components and Setup

Take a moment to look at the different board spaces and components listed below as you set up the game, and familiarize yourself with each of them and their purpose. A full setup guide can be found in section 2.1 of the main Rules of Play, and a diagram of the completed setup can be found on the back of the Rules of Play. If needed, a pronunciation guide may be found in the Playbook.

Board Spaces

Unfold the board and lay it flat on the table. The board depicts 14th century India, divided into several different kinds of spaces, and with tracks and holding boxes around the edges:

- The numbered track at the top edge of the board is used to mark each Faction's Resources (embossed cylinders) and Victory Points (flat counters).


- The large boxes are used to hold each Faction's available pieces. Any pieces removed from the map are placed back into that Faction's holding box.

- The Deccan Influence track is used to measure the Influence of the Bahmani Kingdom and Vijayanagara Empire in the Deccan Plateau. As they advance up this track they gain Victory Points, unlock additional units, and enhance their Faction-specific Decrees.

• The Sequence of Play track is used to mark which action is taken by each Faction during a turn, and if they are eligible to act on the next turn.
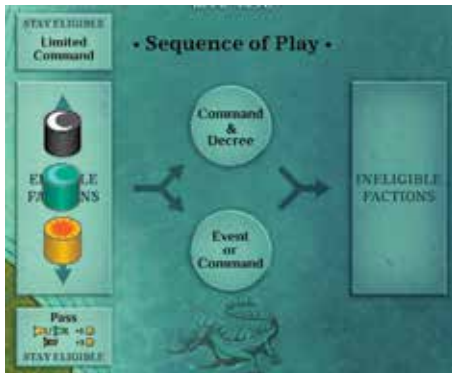
There are three kinds of spaces on the map:

• The large round **Delhi** space is the seat of the Delhi Sultanate. It is easy for them to Conscript a large number of Troops and easier for them to defend themselves from Mongol attacks here. Only Delhi Sultanate and Mongol Invader pieces may enter this space.
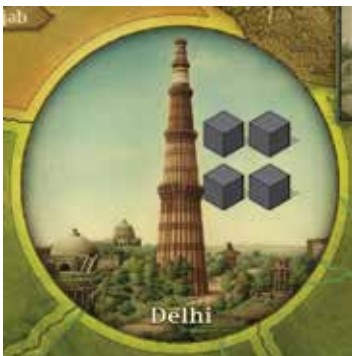
Delhi

• The two irregular **Mongol Invasion Regions** are labeled Mountain Passes and Punjab. Mongol Invaders will enter these spaces as they advance towards Delhi. Only Delhi Sultanate and Mongol Invader pieces may enter these two spaces.

Mongol Invasion Regions

• The remaining thirteen irregular spaces are **Provinces**, marked with a numerical Prosperity value (1 or 2), and with a small circular space where a Tributary or Control counter can be placed. Every Province begins as a Tributary, marked with a Tributary counter. Once this counter is removed a Province becomes Independent.

• An Independent Province is Controlled by the Faction with a majority of pieces there (more pieces than both other Factions combined), marked with a Faction-specific Control counter. If no Faction has a majority of pieces in an Independent Province it is Uncontrolled (indicated by the absence of any Control counter). Mongol Invaders cannot enter Provinces.

Provinces

• The boundaries of some Provinces meet at named **Cities**. A City is not a space, but all Provinces bordering a specific City are considered adjacent to each other (e.g., the Provinces of Gondwana and Andhra are adjacent via the City of Warangal), and some Events instruct the player to select Provinces adjacent to specific Cities (e.g., an Event which specifies a "Province adjacent to Vijayanagara" means either Maharashtra, Andhra, or Karnataka).

• The **Vindhya Range** space, lying at the apex between Malwa, Jaunpur, Madhyadesh, and Gondwana, is impassable. No pieces may ever enter or be placed into this space for any reason.

Vindhya Range

Counters

Pop out the cardboard counters from the countersheet. They will be used to track various things in the game:

• One square counter for each Faction is used to mark its current Victory Point total on the large numbered track. Place the Delhi Sultanate 'Victory' counter on the '18' space of the numbered track at the top of the board, the Bahmani Kingdom 'Victory' counter on the '0' space, and the Vijayanagara Empire 'Victory' counter on the '0' space.

• Two square counters, one each for the Bahmani Kingdom and Vijayanagara Empire, are used to track their current Deccan Influence. Place both Influence counters (turquoise crescent moon for Bahmani and yellow sun for Vijayanagara) on the '0' spaces of their Deccan Influence tracks.

• 10 square Cavalry counters form a pool of available Cavalry that each Faction may draw from when instructed to do so, and then may spend for a bonus in battles (the two sides of the Cavalry counter indicate the two possible bonuses). If no counters remain in this pool, then a player may instead take a Cavalry counter from any other player when instructed to take one from the pool. Cavalry can even be purchased/sold or traded for favors among Factions at any time during the game. Place eight of these in a pool to one side of the board for now, and two in the Delhi Sultanate box on the board (the Delhi Sultanate begins the game with these). The additional red Mongol Cavalry counter should be placed near the Mongol Invaders' box.

• 13 double-sided circular Tributary/Delhi Control counters are used to indicate when a Province is either a Tributary or an Independent Province Controlled by the Delhi Sultanate. Place one, Tributary side up, in each of the round spaces in the Provinces on the board at the beginning of the game.

• 13 double-sided circular Bahmani/Vijayanagara Control counters are used to indicate when an Independent Province is Controlled by either Faction, contributing its value to their total score. As no Provinces are Independent at the beginning of the game, place these in a pool to one side until they are needed.

Wooden Pieces

Wooden pieces in Faction-specific colors are used either to mark Resources and Eligibility (large embossed cylinders) or as units and buildings on the map (all other wooden pieces):

• Embossed cylinders, one for each Faction, are used to mark current Resources on the large numbered track. These cylinders are moved up and down the track as Resources are gained or lost during the game. Resources can even be traded among Factions for Cavalry or other favors at any time. Place a black embossed cylinder on the '12' space of the numbered track, a turquoise embossed cylinder on the '6' space, and a yellow embossed cylinder on the '7' space.

• Place one embossed cylinder for each Faction on the 'Eligible Factions' space of the Sequence of Play track. These cylinders are used to indicate Faction eligibility and to record which actions have been taken during a turn.

• Wooden cubes (red Mongol Invaders and gray Troops) and embossed hexagonal cylinders (black Governors, yellow Rajas, and turquoise Amirs) are *Units* placed on map spaces, which contribute to Control of Provinces and may Attack enemy pieces. Amirs and Rajas (but not Governors) may be either *Obedient* (embossed side down) or *Rebelling* (embossed side up).
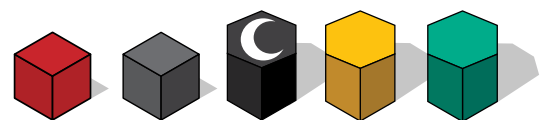
- Place 4 gray Troops cubes in each of Delhi and Punjab; 3 in Malwa; 2 each in Mountain Passes, Jaunpur, and Madhyadesh; 1 each in Sindh, Rajput Kingdoms, Gujarat, Andhra, and Tamilakam; and the remaining 10 in the box marked 'Delhi Sultanate'. Place 1 black Governor hexagonal cylinder in Malwa, and the remaining 4 in the Delhi Sultanate box.

- Place 4 turquoise Amir hexagonal cylinders in Maharashtra; 2 each in Madhyadesh and on the two indicated spaces of the Deccan Influence track; 1 each in Gujarat and Gondwana; and the remaining 6 in the box marked 'Bahmani Kingdom'. All Amirs should be placed embossed side down, to indicate that they are currently Obedient to the Delhi Sultanate.

- Place 3 yellow Raja hexagonal cylinders in Karnataka; 2 each in Andhra and on the four indicated spaces of the Deccan Influence track; 1 in Tamilakam; and the remaining 8 in the box marked 'Vijayanagara Empire'. All Rajas should be placed embossed side down, to indicate that they are currently Obedient to the Delhi Sultanate.

- Place the 12 red Mongol Invader cubes in the 'Mongol Invaders' box.

> **Important** – Every Amir in a Bahmani-Controlled Province is always Rebelling. Every Raja in a Vijayanagara-Controlled Province is always Rebelling. If a Province becomes Bahmani-Controlled or Vijayagara-Controlled, immediately flip that Faction's Units there to Rebelling.

- Wooden embossed disks (Qasbahs, Forts, and Temples) are *Structures* placed on map spaces, which contribute to Control of Provinces and offer Faction-specific bonuses. Structures are always placed embossed side up (although this has no game effect). Place 1 black Qasbah disk in Andhra. The remaining 4 Qasbahs, 5 turquoise Forts, and 5 yellow Temples are placed in their respective Faction's holding box.

Dice

Six regular 6-sided dice (four dark red and two light brown) are used to determine the outcome of battles. Place these to one side near the board.

Pawns

Nine wooden pawns (six white and three brown) can be used to track spaces selected for actions during play. These are purely for convenience and have no game effect; set them aside for now.

Cards

A single Dynasty card indicates the current family ruling the Delhi Sultanate. At the start of the game, the Khalji Dynasty rules from Delhi with an iron fist, preventing the other two Factions from selecting the Rebel Command. Once this card is flipped to its Tughlaq Dynasty side, the power of the Delhi Sultanate begins to wane and the Rebel Command becomes possible. Place the Khalji Dynasty card near to the board. The other four kinds of cards are used to form the deck which drives turn-to-turn gameplay:

- Event cards feature two possible options that a player may select from, typically one that benefits the Delhi Sultanate and one that benefits either or both of the other two Factions. Any Faction may select either option on an Event card, even if it does not directly benefit them.

- Mongol Invasion cards interrupt the usual sequence of play and instruct either the Bahmani Kingdom or Vijayanagara Empire player to take two sequential actions on behalf of the non-player Mongol Invaders, and then choose whether or not to accept a 'compromising gift', which lowers their Influence in exchange for Resources and Cavalry.

- Succession cards are seeded periodically throughout the event deck (after every eight cards) and give each Faction a particular action in a certain order. The first Succession card also permanently flips the Dynasty card from its Khalji side to its Tughlaq side. These cards are pictured on the player strategy aid sheets for ease of reference during the game.
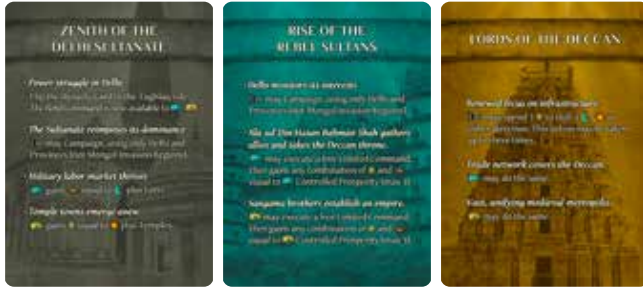
- The two identical Timurid Empire cards appear in the final 8 cards of the deck. The first time one of these cards is drawn, half of the available Mongol Invader units are placed into the Mountain Passes. The second time one of these cards is drawn, Timur's Invasion occurs, triggering a final special sequence before the game immediately ends. This sequence is described on the Mongol Invaders page of the player aid.
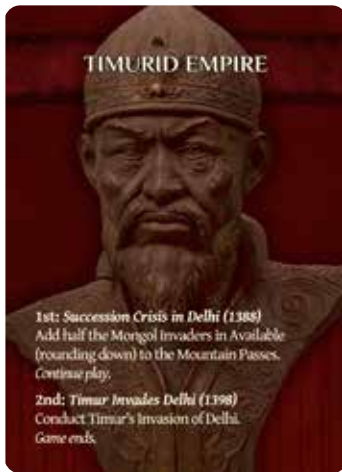

Deck construction is detailed in section 2.1 of the Rules of Play, but for now we will simply take the following six Event cards and two Mongol Invasion cards and form them into a stack in the following order, facedown from top to bottom: Sage of Vidyaranya (#13), The Turquoise Throne (#28), Mongol Invasion with Bahmani alliance, Uprising in Daulatabad (#15), Mongol Invasion with Vijayanagara alliance, Taghi the Elusive (#27), Malik Kafur (#1), and Bengali Resistance (#19). Put the Zenith of the Delhi Sultanate card on the bottom of this stack, then place the deck near the game board, where every player can easily see it.

3. Example of Play

We are now ready to begin playing the game. Turn over the top card of the deck, Sage of Vidyaranya, and place it face-up next to the deck. This is the active card for the first turn, which will determine the order in which Factions take their turns and the possible Event options that may be executed.

Sequence of Play

Along the top of each Event card are the three Faction flags, in this case the Vijayanagara Empire (yellow), Bahmani Kingdom (turquoise), and Delhi Sultanate (gray). The order of these flags determines the sequence in which the currently eligible Factions choose and execute their action for the turn. At the start of the game all three Factions are eligible, as indicated by the location of their eligibility cylinders in the 'Eligible Factions' box of the Sequence of Play track. (You can read about the Sequence of Play in more detail in section 2.3 of the Rules of Play.)

As Vijayanagara is first eligible, they get first choice of which action to perform. They have four options, as indicated by the spaces around the Eligible Factions box on the game board: **Command & Decree**, **Event or Command**, **Limited Command**, or **Pass**. The two options in the circles to the right of the box may each only be performed by a maximum of one Faction per turn, and typically make that Faction ineligible to act on the next turn. The other two options, in the small boxes above and below the Eligible Factions box, may always be performed by any number of Factions and allow you to stay eligible to act on the next turn. As Factions act during a turn they place their cylinders in the relevant space on the track to indicate which option they have chosen. All Eligible Factions will act on each card.

Turn 1 – Events

The current Event card is quite attractive for the Vijayanagara Empire, so they place their cylinder in the **Event or Command** circle, which allows them to execute either one of the two options on the card, or to perform one Command in any number of spaces. They choose to execute the top (unshaded) Event option, which instructs them to first increase their Deccan Influence track two steps (indicated by the yellow sun symbol). Move the yellow Influence marker two spaces to the right, to the '2' box. This unlocks the four yellow Rajas in the '1' and '2' boxes – move them to the Vijayanagara Empire box. It also enhances the effects of the Compel Decree, and raises the Vijayanagara Victory total by 2 – move the yellow 'Victory' marker to the '2' box now. Next, the Event text instructs Vijayanagara to place any units just gained (the four Rajas unlocked from the Deccan Influence track) "adjacent to Vijayanagara" – meaning, in any map spaces adjacent to the city point labeled 'Vijayanagara'. Place two Rajas in Maharashtra and one each in Andhra and Karnataka. As the Event has been fully executed, the Vijayanagara Empire's turn is now complete.

The Vijayanagara Empire performs the unshaded Event text on the Sage of Vidyaranya card, shifting its Deccan Influence twice and adding Rajas adjacent to Vijayanagara (two into Maharashtra and one each into Andhra and Karnataka).

Turn 1 – Commands and Decrees

The next eligible Faction is the Bahmani Kingdom, as indicated along the top of the current Event card, and they can now choose from any of the remaining three options. They choose **Command & Decree**, which will allow them to perform one of their regular Commands in any number of spaces, coupled with a powerful Decree either before or after the Command. Place their eligibility cylinder in this circle, and then take a moment to look at the Bahmani page of the player aid, which lists their available Commands and Decrees along with some additional information. (You can read about the Commands and Decrees for all Factions in more detail in sections 3.0 and 4.0 of the Rules of Play.)

At the start of the game, the most attractive Command options for the Bahmanis are probably **Rally** (to place additional Amirs) or **Migrate** (to move Amirs into new territory). **Attack** requires a larger number of Amirs to maximize the chances of success, while **Rebel** is only possible after the first Succession card has flipped the Delhi Sultanate's Dynasty card from Khalji to Tughlaq. Vijayanagara has access to these same Command options, while the Delhi Sultanate has a different menu of options that we will look at shortly.

The Bahmanis decide to Migrate first. They may choose any Provinces as destinations, and pay 1 Resource per destination to move in up to three Amirs from adjacent Provinces (each Amir may only move once during the entire turn). They decide to Migrate to Malwa, Bengal, Gondwana, and Andhra, costing 4 Resources total – shift their Resource cylinder from the '6' space to the '2' space. Then, move one turquoise Amir from Gondwana to Bengal, one from Madhyadesh to Gondwana, one from Maharashtra to Malwa, and one from Maharashtra to Andhra.

If any of the moving Amirs had been Rebelling (embossed end up) and their destination had been a Tributary (in this case, all destinations), they would have had to flip back to Obedient (embossed end down). At the end of a Migrate Command, if any Amir has moved into a space with Vijayanagara pieces (in this case Andhra), the Bahmanis may spend an additional Resource to increase their Influence by 1 and lower Vijayanagara Influence by 1. They do this now – lower their Resources to 1, increase their Influence to 1, and lower Vijayanagara Influence to 1. This also requires the Vijayanagara Empire to return two Rajas from their supply (or from the map if none are in the supply) back onto the '2' space of the Influence track, and lowers the Vijayanagara victory total by 1 while raising the Bahmani victory total by the same amount – do this now.

Next, the Bahmani Kingdom may perform a Decree, choosing from either **Trade** (to gain Resources and Cavalry), **Build** (to place a Fort), or **Conspire** (to replace enemy pieces, particularly the dangerous Governors of Delhi). They decide to Trade, which grants them 1 Resource for every space with a friendly piece. In this case there are seven such spaces, increasing their Resources to 8 total. Trade also grants them at least one Cavalry, plus one or two if they have at least Influence 1 or 3, respectively. As they are at 1 Influence, they gain two Cavalry tokens – take these from the shared pool and place them in the Bahmani Kingdom box now. The Bahmani turn is now complete.

The Bahmani Kingdom executes a Migrate Command into four Provinces, then a Trade Decree. Commands and Decrees are performed to completion at once, but can be performed in either order.

Limited Command or Pass

The Delhi Sultanate is the last Faction eligible to act, and as the two circular spaces are already filled their options are restricted. They can either **Pass** to gain 3 Resources, or take a **Limited Command:** a Command in one space only. In both cases they would remain eligible to act on the next turn. The Delhi Sultanate decides to take a Limited Command (place their eligibility cylinder in this box now).

The Delhi Sultanate has four Commands to choose from: **Conscript** (to place Troops), **March** (to move units), **Govern** (to place Governors, remove Obedient enemy units, and place Qasbahs), and **Attack** (to remove enemy pieces). Attack can only be used against Amirs and Rajas if they are Rebelling, so it is not useful right now. They decide to Conscript, which costs 1 Resource per space to place either five Troops in Delhi, two Troops in any space with a Qasbah, or one Troop in a Tributary Province. Because this is a Limited Command they can select only one space, so they pay 1 Resource to place five Troops in Delhi. Do this now.

The Delhi Sultanate uses a Limited Command (a Command in only one space) to Conscript five Troops in Delhi.

Finally, now that all eligible Factions have acted, eligibility is reset for the next turn. Unless otherwise specified, any cylinder in the two circular spaces is moved to the 'Ineligible Factions' box on the right – slide the Vijayanagara and Bahmani cylinders to the Ineligible box now. Any other cylinder is returned to the Eligible Factions box – slide the Delhi Sultanate cylinder to the Eligible box now. Then, draw the next card from the deck and place it face-up on top of the currently active card – the new card is now the active card for the next turn.

Turn 2 – Collect Tribute and Govern

The second active card is THE TURQUOISE THRONE, with eligibility order favoring first the Bahmani Kingdom, then the Vijayanagara Empire, and finally the Delhi Sultanate. However, as the only eligible Faction is the Delhi Sultanate, they get to choose which action to perform first and can select any option. The Event text is not appealing to them, so they select Command & Decree and place their cylinder in that space on the Sequence of Play Track. A Decree can always be performed either before or after the full Command, and they decide to perform it first, selecting **Collect Tribute**. This increases their Resources by half the total Prosperity value of Tributary Provinces, which is currently 18, so they

gain 9 Resources – set their Resource cylinder to the '20' space. They also gain two Cavalry tokens, which come from the shared pool and should be placed in the Delhi Sultanate box (along with the two tokens already there from the setup).

The Delhi Sultanate executes the Collect Tribute Decree, increasing its Resources by half the total Tributary Prosperity, and adding two powerful Cavalry tokens to its box.

Next, the Sultanate decides to execute the **Govern** Command. Govern may be used to select any Tributary Provinces, Independent Provinces Controlled by the Delhi Sultanate, Mongol Invasion Regions, and/or Delhi itself. In each selected space, the Sultanate must pay 1 Resource and then either add a Governor, or if there is already a Governor they may remove up to two *Obedient* (embossed side down) Amirs or Rajas *and* place a Qasbah. As the Sultanate already has a Governor in Malwa and there is an Obedient Amir there, they select this space first, paying 1 Resource to remove the Amir (place it back in the Bahmani Kingdom box) and place a Qasbah. The Sultanate also Governs in Bengal, Gujarat, Punjab, and Delhi, paying 4 additional Resources total to place a Governor in each space – do this now. Their Resource cylinder should now be at '15'. Complete the turn by moving the Bahmani and Vijayanagara cylinders from Ineligible to Eligible, and sliding the Delhi Sultanate cylinder to Ineligible. Draw the next card.

The Govern Command in Malwa removes the Obedient Amir there and places a Qasbah as well.

Mongol Invasion 1 – Amass and Attack & Plunder

The next card drawn is a MONGOL INVASION card, which interrupts the usual sequence of play while it is executed. Take a look at the Mongol Invaders page of the player aid now. Each Mongol Invasion card indicates that either the Bahmani or Vijayanagara Faction should decide which two Commands the Mongol Invaders will perform, and then that Faction can also choose to accept 'Compromising Gifts' from the Mongols, lowering their Deccan Influence in exchange for Resources and Cavalry. In this case the card indicates the Bahmani Kingdom, who first selects the Mongol **Amass** Command, placing three red Mongol Invader cubes in Mountain Passes. They could then select Amass again, or even Advance, but instead select **Attack & Plunder** with the cubes now in Mountain Passes.

Mongol Invaders Attack and Plunder in the Mountain Passes. Factions hit on rolls less than or equal to the number of their units in the battle. Cavalry tokens are used to modify the roll before any units are removed.

Mongol Invaders Attack works in the same way as it does for the player Factions: the attacker rolls four dice, the defender rolls two, and any die whose value is less than or equal to the number of units on that side forces the enemy side to remove a unit. The Bahmani Kingdom rolls for the Mongols a 5 and three 1s, while the Sultanate rolls a 2 and a 3. But the battle is not over yet!

After the dice have been rolled the Factions involved may spend Cavalry tokens, attacker first, then the defender. The Mongols are always treated as having one Cavalry token available, which they will use to Charge and convert a miss into a hit if possible, but in this case it will not make any difference to the outcome. Next, the Sultanate can choose to spend its Cavalry tokens; each token can be spent either to 'Charge', lowering the value of one of its dice by 1, or to 'Screen', removing an enemy die (other than a 1) completely. As they are already going to have to remove more units than they have in the space, they just spend one Cavalry to Charge, lowering their 3 to a 2 (move one Cavalry token from the Sultanate box to the shared pool). Cavalry having been spent, hits are finally tallied. Here two Mongol Invaders are sent back to the Mongol box, and the Sultanate removes both of its Troops cubes, returning them to the Delhi Sultanate box.

Finally, as part of this Command the Mongols *Plunder*, removing 1 Resource from the Sultanate for each of their cubes left in the space – in this case just 1, lowering the Sultanate's total Resources to '14'. They would then return any Mongol cubes in excess of three in that space to the Mongol Invaders box (in this case, there is only one cube remaining so none are removed). The Bahmani player also chooses to accept Compromising Gifts, lowering their Influence from 1 to 0 in exchange for 2 Resources (up to '10') and two more Cavalry tokens (adjust the Bahmani Resources, Influence, and Victory markers now, and add two Cavalry from the shared pool to the Bahmani Kingdom box). The Mongol Invasion turn is then complete. Draw the next card *without changing the eligibility of any Faction.*

Turn 3 – Rally and Conspire

The next card is UPRISING IN DAULATABAD, with the Bahmani Kingdom first eligible. They decide to perform a **Rally** Command with a **Conspire** Decree – place their cylinder in the 'Command & Decree' space. They Rally first, which may be used to select any Provinces that already have a Bahmani piece (or Maharashtra even without any pieces). They select Madhyadesh, Gujarat, and Maharashtra, paying 3 Resources total to place one Amir in each of the first two spaces, and two Amirs in Maharashtra (which gets a Rally bonus as the Bahmani 'home' Province). Then, they Conspire in Bengal and Gujarat, replacing the Governor in each Province with another Amir. They choose to place these Amirs as Obedient (embossed side down), but could instead have placed them as Rebelling (embossed side up) if desired. The Bahmani Kingdom's turn is complete.

The Bahmani Kingdom executes the Rally Command to add Amirs in Provinces already containing Bahmani pieces, then the Conspire Decree to replace Governors with Amirs.

The Vijayanagara Empire could decide to perform the Event or a full Command in any number of spaces, but instead decides to perform a Limited Command so that they can stay eligible for the next turn. Place their cylinder in the 'Limited Command' box. They decide to **Migrate** into Maharashtra for a cost of 1 Resource, and move in one Raja from Andhra and two from Karnataka (for the maximum three allowed per Migrate destination). They then opt to pay 1 additional Resource to decrease Bahmani Influence (which is already at 0 so cannot be decreased any further) and increase their own Influence by one step to 2, unlocking two additional Rajas and also enhancing their Compel Decree again – adjust the Deccan Influence track and Vijayanagara score and Resources now. The turn is complete – move both the Vijayanagara and Delhi Sultanate cylinders to Eligible and the Bahmani cylinder to Ineligible, then draw the next card.
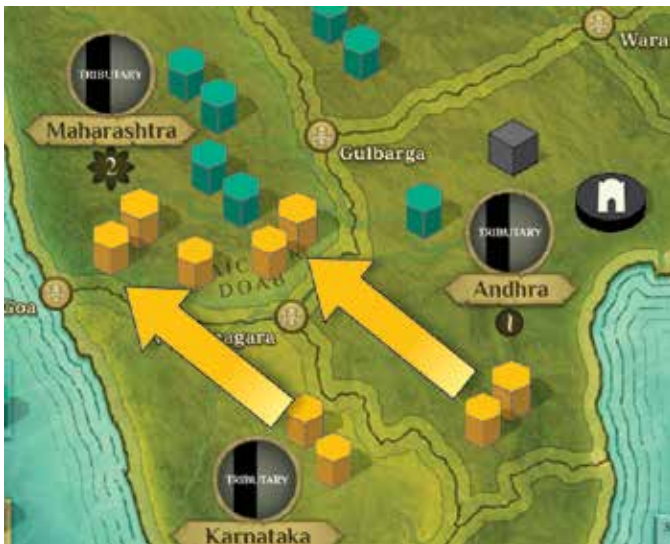
The Vijayanagara Empire carries out a Limited Migrate Command, spending one Resource to draw three Rajas into Maharashtra from adjacent Provinces, then another Resource to shift its Deccan Influence up.

Mongol Invasion 2 – Amass Twice

Another Mongol Invasion! This time the Vijayanagara Empire is in control of the Mongols, and they decide to **Amass** twice, first placing three more Mongol Invaders in Mountain Passes, and then placing an additional three, but these are immediately moved over to Punjab, as Amass results in an overflow into the next space if an Invasion Region contains more than four Mongols (however, no such overflow occurs during a Mongol Advance Command). The Vijayanagara Empire does not choose to accept Compromising Gifts, as they are enjoying their rapidly increasing Deccan Influence. Discard the Mongol Invasion card, and draw the next card without adjusting eligibility.

Mongol Invaders continue to Amass in the Mountain Passes, pushing any Invaders above four into Punjab.

Turn 4 – Conscript and Campaign

Delhi is first eligible on the next card (Taghi the Elusive), and they decide to **Conscript** and then **Campaign** (place their cylinder in the Command & Decree space now). They pay 2 Resources total to Conscript five Troops in Delhi and two in Malwa (where there is a Qasbah), then use Campaign to move six Troops from Delhi to Punjab, then five of those Troops again from Punjab to Mountain Passes (Campaign allows them to move units along a path of four spaces, picking up and dropping off any units along the way).
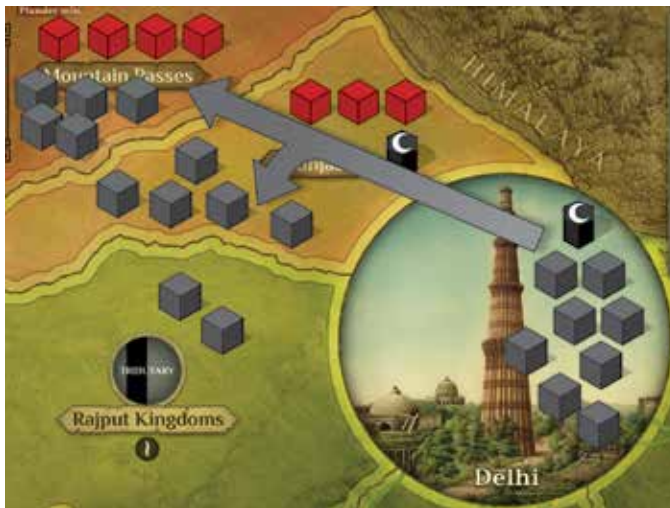
Delhi sends a large force to face the Mongol threat.

The Vijayanagara attack collapses under the weight of superior Bahmani cavalry.

Next, Vijayanagara decides to pay 1 Resource to perform another Limited Command, this time an **Attack** targeting the Bahmani Kingdom in Maharashtra. They are attacking and roll four dice, while the defending Bahmanis roll two dice. Vijayanagara rolls a 1, 2, 4, and 6, while the Bahmanis roll a 3 and a 4. If unmodified by Cavalry tokens, Vijayanagara would score three hits (as they have 5 units), the Bahmanis would score two hits, and each player would remove their own pieces back to their own holding box. Vijayanagara as the attacker considers spending Cavalry tokens first, but it has none. The Bahmani Kingdom, however, uses two of its Cavalry tokens for Screening to remove Vijayanagara's dice showing a 2 and 4, thereby reducing Vijayanagara's hits to just one. Vijayanagara removes two of its Rajas from Maharashtra, while the Bahmanis remove just one Amir.

Any time that either Vijayanagara or the Bahmanis Attack one another, Deccan Influence will shift if one removes more pieces than the other. In this case Vijayanagara lost two units while the Bahmanis lost only one, so Vijayanagara loses 1 Influence (placing their two bonus Rajas back on the track from their holding box) and the Bahmanis gain 1 Influence – adjust both Faction's victory markers as well. The turn is complete, so adjust eligibility (Delhi to Ineligible and both Bahmani and Vijayanagra to Eligible) and draw the next card.

Turn 5 – Build and Attack

The Bahmani Kingdom is first eligible on Malik Kafur, and they decide to first **Build** and then **Attack**. Build allows them to place a Fort in any Province where they already have an Amir – each Province can only ever hold up to a single Fort, a single Temple, and a single Qasbah. They decide to place a Fort in Madhyadesh, to provide some defense against the Sultanate's forces there. This also increases their score by one – shift the Bahmani victory marker from '1' to '2'. Next, they pay 2 Resources to Attack in Gujarat and Maharashtra. They first Attack Vijayanagara in Maharashtra, rolling two 3s, a 5, and a 6, which only removes two enemy pieces as they have only three Amirs there. However, Vijayanagara rolls a 1 and a 4, removing only one Bahmani unit, which again means Vijayanagara will lose Influence (down to 0, replacing another two Rajas on the track), and Bahmani will gain Influence (up to 2, this time gaining two bonus Amirs and also enhancing their Conspire Decree). Finally, adjust the Victory markers for both Factions to account for the change in Deccan Influence – the Vijayanagara Empire's to '0' and the Bahmani Kingdom's to '3'.

In Gujarat the Bahmani Attack will target the single Delhi Sultanate Troop present, which automatically flips the three Attacking Amirs to their embossed 'Rebelling' side (meaning they will now be vulnerable to counterattack from Delhi). The Bahmani Kingdom decides also to use the two Amirs in Madhyadesh to support the Attack (up to two units from an adjacent space with a friendly Fort or Qasbah may join an Attack, or one from an adjacent space with a Temple for Vijayanagara, but each unit may only be involved in one Attack per turn). These Amirs remain in Madhyadesh, but also flip to Rebelling and will be counted when calculating the results of the Attack (and could be removed as casualties if desired). The Bahmani Kingdom rolls two 2's, a 4, and a 5, easily enough to remove the single Delhi Troop, while Delhi rolls a 1 and a 6, sufficient to remove one Bahmani Amir (which the Bahmanis decide to remove from Gujarat rather than from supporting Madhyadesh). Neither Faction decides to use any Cavalry. The Bahmani turn is now complete.
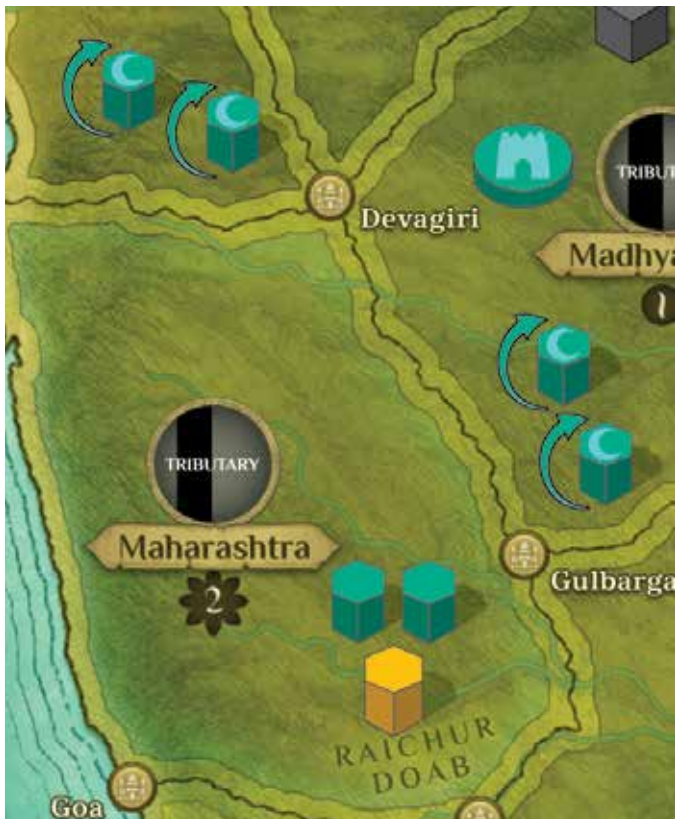
The Bahmani Kingdom attacks the Vijayanagara Empire in Maharashtra and the Delhi Sultanate in Gujarat, supported in Gujarat by the Amirs in adjacent Madhyadesh. Obedient units which attack the Sultanate immediately flip to their Rebelling state.

Vijayanagara now decides to play the **Event**, which is marked 'Stay Eligible', meaning that they will remain eligible to act on the next turn. Both the shaded and unshaded Events on a card with 'Stay Eligible' provide this bonus to whichever Faction selects the Event. They select the unshaded option, first moving all Governors on the map to Provinces adjacent to Delhi (they choose to place all three Governors in Rajput Kingdoms), and then performing a free Limited Rebel Command. Usually the Rebel Command is only possible during the Tughlaq dynasty (after the first Succession card), but this Event allows it to occur during either dynasty. The Rebel Command may target any Province where Vijayanagara pieces outnumber all others combined, which in this case is only Karnataka, so they select Karnataka. First, remove the Tributary marker there, lowering the Delhi Sultanate score by the Prosperity value of the Province (2, down to 16 total). As the Tributary marker has been removed the Province is now Independent, and will be Controlled by a Faction that has more pieces there than all others combined (or else be Uncontrolled, as indicated by the lack of a marker). Place

a Vijayanagara Control (yellow flag) marker there now, and increase the Vijayanagara score by the Prosperity of the Province (2, up to a total of '2'). All Rajas in a Vijayanagara-Controlled Province are immediately flipped to Rebelling, whether or not they gained control by a Rebel Command – flip the Rajas there to Rebelling now. The Vijayanagara turn is complete, adjust eligibility (Delhi and Vijayanagara to Eligible, the Bahmanis to Ineligible) and draw the next card.
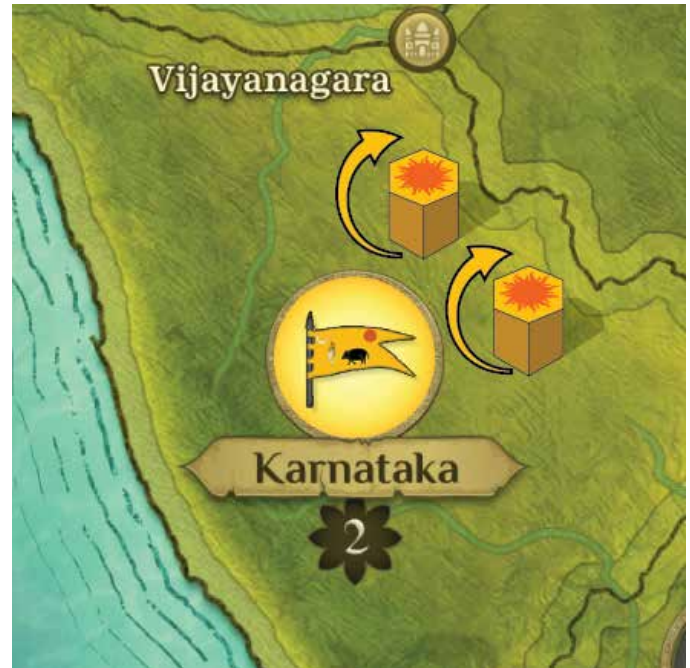
A Rebellious Vijayanagara Empire emerges in Karnataka. An Independent Province is Controlled by the Faction with a majority of pieces there. That Faction's marker is placed immediately, and its units are all flipped to Rebelling.

Turn 6 – March and Collect Tribute

The Delhi Sultanate is first eligible on Bengali Resistance and decides to perform **March** with **Collect Tribute**. First, they Collect Tribute to gain 8 Resources (half of their total Tributary Prosperity, recently reduced to 16) and two additional Cavalry from the pool. Then they pay 2 Resources to March into Malwa and Gujarat. To Malwa they move in three Governors from Rajput Kingdoms and three Troops from Delhi. To Gujarat they move in one Troop from Sindh, one from Rajput Kingdoms, and three from Malwa (note that the three Troops that just arrived into Malwa could not continue Marching in Gujarat, but the others that were already in Malwa could do so).

Vijayanagra then chooses to play the unshaded Event, adding two Rajas each to Jaunpur and Bengal, and removing the Tributary marker from Bengal (lowering Delhi's victory points to '14'). Bengal is now Uncontrolled, as the Bahmanis and Vijayanagara each have two pieces there, but if either can get the upper hand it will become Controlled by that Faction, adding to their total score. The turn is complete. Adjust eligibility (Bahmanis to Eligible and Delhi and Vijayanagara to Ineligible) and draw the next card.

Delhi Marches to respond to the emerging Bahmani threat,
while trouble stirs in Independent but Uncontrolled Bengal.

Succession

The next card, ZENITH OF THE DELHI SULTANATE, is a Succession card which interrupts the usual sequence of play while the instructions on it are executed. There are three Succession cards that will appear during the game – they can be perused in advance on the Faction Strategy sheets. First, we flip the Dynasty card to its Tughlaq Dynasty side, which allows the Bahmani Kingdom and Vijayanagara Empire to select the Rebel Command for the remainder of the game. Then, the Sultanate may perform a Campaign Decree using only Delhi and Provinces (this special 'Succession' Campaign may not enter or exit Mountain Passes or Punjab), but in this case chooses not to. Next, the Bahmanis gain Cavalry equal to their Deccan Influence plus Forts, in this case three (take these from the shared pool). Finally, the Vijayanagara Empire would gain Resources equal to their own Deccan Influence plus Temples, but as they have not planned well and have no Influence or Temples, they do not gain any Resources! If this were a normal game we would now draw the next event card and continue play without adjusting eligibility, but this brings us to the end of our example of play.

Next Steps

We have managed to cover most of the available Commands and Decrees in this example, but there are a few additional points worth mentioning. Any Faction **Attacking** in Delhi (Mongol Invaders only) or against a defending Bahmani Fort only rolls three dice, and die results of '6' never hit (but may still be reduced by using Cavalry to Charge). Delhi's **Demand Obedience** Decree allows them to restore Tributary status to all Independent Provinces that they Control and have a Governor present, and they also gain Resources equal to the Prosperity of the Tributaries thus restored. Vijayanagara's **Build** Decree simply places a Temple in a Province with a Raja (maximum 1 Temple per Province), while **Tax** gains them Resources equal to the Prosperity of Provinces they Control plus Temples in play, and **Compel** allows them to add two Rajas to a Province with or adjacent to their pieces (or instead move in two Rajas from adjacent if they prefer). Finally, both the **Conspire** and **Compel** Decrees can be enhanced by reaching Deccan Influence 2 for each Faction: enhanced Conspire allows Bahmani to replace either Governors *or Rajas* in two Provinces with *or adjacent to* Bahmani pieces, while enhanced Compel provides the Vijayanagara Empire with a Cavalry token and removes one enemy unit in addition to placing or moving two Rajas (if a Delhi unit is removed, the Rajas are flipped to their embossed Rebelling side).

Ending the game

How does the game end? The final stack of six Events is shuffled together with two Timurid Empire cards, instead of two Mongol Invasion cards. When the first of these is drawn, half of the remaining available Mongol Invaders (rounded down) are placed into Mountain Passes. When the second is drawn, the endgame 'Timur's Invasion of Delhi' sequence is triggered. The Mongols first Attack in Mountain Passes, and then all surviving units (including the Sultanate's) are moved from there to Punjab, where they Attack again, and finally all surviving units are moved to Delhi. In Delhi, the Mongols continue to Attack until all units from one side are eliminated (note that the Mongols roll one fewer die when Attacking in Delhi, so three total). Finally, the Delhi Sultanate gains additional victory points equal to 3 minus the number of surviving Mongols in Delhi, to a minimum of -3. The Faction with the most victory points wins the game, with ties going first to whoever has the most remaining Resources.

You have now learned all of the basics you need in order to play *Vijayanagara*. If you would like, you can continue this game by constructing the rest of the deck – shuffle together the remaining Event cards, form three piles of six Events each, add two random Mongol Invasion each to the first two piles and the two Timurid Empire cards to the final pile, shuffle each pile again, and stack them in order with the Timurid Empire pile on the bottom, then the Lords of the Deccan Succession card, then another pile, then the Rise of the Rebel Sultans Succession card, and the final pile on top. Alternatively, you could reset the game according to the setup instructions in section 2.1 of the Rules of Play.

4. Teaching Guide

Now that you know how to play the game, all that's left is to introduce it to your friends or gaming group. How best to do this will depend on how your group prefers to learn a new game – here we assume a group that likes to know most of the rules of a game before they begin playing, but if your group is comfortable with a 'rolling teach' that explains rules as they come up you could stop after point 5 and simply begin playing. Teaching the game according to the sequence below will take around 30 minutes, and the game itself should take around two hours to play, so budget at least three hours for your first game (with experience this should come down to well below two hours).

1. Set up the game before your group arrives, with all of the pieces out on the board and the deck constructed.

2. Introduce the topic of the game (warring states in medieval India) and the identities of the three player Factions (despotic Delhi Sultanate, renegade Bahmani Kingdom, and opportunistic Vijayanagara Empire). Assign a Faction to each player (remember that the Delhi Sultanate is likely to be the most challenging to play) and hand out the player aids, including the Faction Strategy sheets found on the reverse of each Non-Player aid sheet (these contain historical information and basic strategy considerations).

3. Explain that victory is determined by a direct comparison of victory points at the end of the game, and emphasize that the main source of victory points is Province Prosperity (Tributary Provinces for the Delhi Sultanate, Control of Independent Provinces for the other two Factions). Briefly mention the other possible sources of victory points (surviving Timur's invasion at the end of the game for the Delhi Sultanate, and Forts/Temples plus Deccan Influence for the other two Factions).

4. Indicate the different kinds of spaces (Mongol Invasion Regions, Delhi, Provinces, and the non-space Cities that connect some Provinces) and other features of the board (numbered edge track, Faction boxes, Deccan Influence track, sequence of play track).

5. Turn over the first card and describe the general sequence of play, explaining the difference between a Command, a Decree, and a Limited Command.

6. Review the available Commands and Decrees for each Faction, and summarize the Attack sequence (now would also be a good time to explain how Cavalry tokens work, perhaps by carrying out a quick example of a battle).

7. Finally, use one of the spare Mongol Invasion cards and the player aid to explain how Mongol Invasion turns work, then review the three Succession cards and the Timurid Empire endgame sequence. You should also explain the deck structure at this point, as it is important that players know how many Event cards there are (both in total and between each Succession card). The diagram on the back of this booklet and on the Sequence of Play aid sheet can be provided for visual reference.

Start playing, providing further details and clarifications as necessary. Ideally all players should understand that this is a learning game, and that mistakes will be made – the best way to learn is by getting involved!

The board at the end of the example of play.

Rules at a Glance

- **Every Amir in a Bahmani-Controlled Province is always Rebelling. Every Raja in a Vijayanagara-Controlled Province is always Rebelling.** If a Province becomes Bahmani-Controlled or Vijayagara-Controlled, immediately flip that Faction's Units there to Rebelling (1.4.5).

- Tributary Provinces are never Controlled or Uncontrolled. Mountain Passes, Punjab, and Delhi are not Provinces (1.6, 1.7).

- Each space may only ever hold up to one Qasbah, one Fort, and one Temple (1.4.4).

- Only one Event card is revealed at a time. All Eligible Factions may act on each Event card (2.2).

- Any number of Factions may select a Limited Command (or Pass) and remain Eligible for the next Event card (2.3.5, 2.3.6).

- Every Decree can be paired with any Command, but a Decree must come either before or after the Command is completed in all selected spaces (4.1).

- Units to be placed in a space must come from their holding box (1.4.3).

- Mongol Invasion cards and Succession cards do not affect Eligibility (2.4, 2.5).

- Cavalry tokens may be used after dice are rolled, attacker first then defender. Mongol Invaders use one Cavalry (to Charge) in every battle. If a Cavalry token is earned and the pool is empty, it may be taken from any other Faction (1.10).

- Resources and Cavalry tokens may be traded freely among Factions at any time (1.5.2). Negotiated agreements are binding only during the execution of an action, never for future turns.

Deck Construction