

Pax Porfiriana, as she is played

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.. |paxpo| replace:: *PaxPo*

.. epigraph:: A rules summary for learning or teaching the game, intended to be comprehensible but not necessarily comprehensive, 80% of the game in 20% of the space.

.. This document now being written in restructuredText

.. Thus spelling, grammar and communication is more important than fonts

.. The resulting transformed PDF can be found at:

.. <http://boardgamegeek.com/filepage/85409/pax-porfiriana-she-played>

Overview

The players are influential landowners and power brokers in Mexico during a time of political turmoil. Their aim is to accumulate sufficient backers and justification (**Prestige**) to seize power during one of the periodic regime changes (**Topples**). As the game progresses, players will build **Enterprises** (businesses that earn money which can be spent on other efforts), recruit **Partners** (allies with useful powers or influence) and **Troops** (which can extort money from enterprises or protect them from extortion), foment **Unrest** (to paralyze enterprises), perform **Assassinations** (neutralizing partners) and capitalize upon **Headlines** (external and random events).

Components and layout

There are more than 200 cards in |paxpo|, but in any game only about a third of them will be used. There are broadly two types of cards: those used as markers:

* **Hacendados**: (white on the front) the “player” card, which shows your income and a special game ability

* **Regimes**: the current government type, with the prevailing economic conditions and what is required to successfully overthrow it

and the “deck” cards, being dealt from the deck, purchased, and held in your hand until played:

- * **Enterprises:** (tan) Your object is not to make money, but these businesses can be very useful for funding other activities.
- * **Partners:** (various colors) You can recruit these allies, who have useful abilities.
- * **Troops:** (various colors) Brute force can be used to subdue Unrest, extort money from an opponent's Enterprise, or to protect your own businesses from extortion.
- * **Unrest:** (orange) With a little encouragement, the workers at an Enterprise will act up and bring it to a grinding halt.
- * **Assassination:** (black) Bothersome partners can be disposed of for the right price.
- * **Headlines:** (yellow) You can take advantage of outside events that may change the government or shut down businesses. Also, four special headlines (Topples) are an opportunity to overthrow the government (and win!).

Tokens are primarily used for money: White, red, and blue tokens are 1, 5, and 10 "monies" respectively, but they are occasionally used to mark special status: red is placed on an Enterprise to indicate it has Unrest, while blue is used to show that a player is in Jail.

Finally, each player has a set of cubes in their own color that are placed on cards to indicate income or income generating activities. Basically, the number of cubes you have on top of cards is your income.

The Regimes, Topples, and going for the win

During the game, players will build a tableau of cards, accumulating influence of different types. This influence can be used to seize victory at critical points in the game. However, the type of influence needed depends upon the current **Regime** or mood of the country. This is marked by Regime cards. These show which one has power at the moment, which economic conditions hold during that regime, and what sort of influence is needed to seize power from that government – and win! The four regimes and their corresponding influence are:

- * **Pax Porfiriana:** the current leader steps down gracefully to be followed by a dutiful successor (which is determined by Loyalty)
- * **Military law:** the army steps in to restore order (the new leader being appointed by Command)

* **US Annexation:** rising disorder provokes the US to invade and appoint a new leader (who is justified by Outrage)

* **Anarchy:** the government breaks down and various movements grapple for control (the winner via Revolution)

When a Topleft is played, you aim to have enough of the correct type of influence to overwhelm "the Tripartite". The Tripartite is the incumbent Diaz -- who by default has 2 of every sort of influence -- and the two opposing players with the least of that type of influence. If you can defeat the Tripartite, you win! If no one has the necessary influence, the game continues.

.. admonition:: Example

A Topleft occurs while the Pax Porfiriana regime holds. There are four players with 5, 2, 1 and 0 loyalty each. The player with 5 wins as they have more than 3 (Diaz's 2 plus 1 plus 0).

During a Topleft, extra influence can be found by flipping your Hacendado. This represents your player declaring for a cause, and you can select either role drawn on the reverse of the Hacendado. Beware, you can never flip your Hacendado back and never change this new allegiance.

.. tip:: Play cards and buy headlines so as to set up a type of regime (with a type of influence) you can dominate and then trigger the Topleft.

Setup

#. Set the Regime cards aside, with the Pax Porfiriana card in front or on top to indicate the current regime.

#. Set aside the two special Partners (Teddie Roosevelt, the Church).

#. Equip players:

#. Deal each player a Hacendado.

#. Give the first player 4 money, the second 5, the third 6, and so on.

#. Each player should take the cubes of one color and place two on their Hacendado for their initial income.

#. Prepare the deck:

- #. Set aside the Topple cards.
- #. From the rest of the cards, form a deck of 50 plus 10 for each player.
- #. Split this deck into six piles and shuffle a Topple card into four of these.
- #. Stack the piles on top of each other, with the two empty (no Topple) piles on top.
- #. Deal 12 cards off the top of the deck in two rows of 6 to form the Market.

Play sequence

- #. The active player takes up to three of the following actions:
 - #. Buy a card from the market
 - #. Sell a card from your hand
 - #. Speculate on the market
 - #. Play a card from your hand to:
 - #. build an Enterprise
 - #. recruit a Partner
 - #. deploy Troops to an Enterprise
 - #. assassinate a Partner
 - #. create Unrest on an Enterprise
 - #. Carry out a police action
 - #. Improve an Enterprise by buying land
 - #. Build a connection to an Enterprise
- #. Adjust the market:
 - #. Any headlines in the front (0 cost) column of the Market are discarded.

#. The remainder of the Market moves up to fill any gaps and is replenished from the deck.

#. The active player takes his income.

#. Play advances to the next player clockwise.

Doing things with the market: buying, selling and speculating

You get cards into your hand by buying them from the market. You can take a second "buy" action, but it counts as two actions.

The market is laid out as two rows of six cards, with the two cards at the front of the Market costing 0 money, the two in the next column costing 1, and then 2, 4, 8, and 16. At the end of every turn, cards move forward to fill any cheaper spaces and the market is restocked at the expensive end.

Any card in your hand may be "sold" to the discard pile for money. The price is the Economy (coin) value for the current Regime.

.. tip:: If you're short of money, buying a card for 0 and immediately selling it is often a good move.

You can speculate on a market card by placing a cube on it. Should anyone subsequently buy that card, they will pay you, not the bank. But you can't speculate on a card that is already being speculated upon. And If you buy it yourself, the bank gets paid.

.. tip:: If you don't know what to do, speculating on a desirable card is always worthwhile. You might make money, and you might deter others from buying it.

Running Enterprises: income and improvement

While Enterprises can have useful abilities, mostly you will want to play them so as to make money for funding other activities. You build an Enterprise by playing it on the table in front of you and paying any associated costs.

Each Enterprise has an income, listed in the upper left of the card. These are of several types:

* **Fixed:** (unmarked cubes) These have an income equal to the number of

cubes.

* **Improvable:** (cubes labelled "start income") These are usually ranches or plantations with an initial income equal to the number of cubes that can be improved by buying more land.

* **Economy:** (cube and coin) These are usually banks, with an income equal to the Economy value of the current Regime.

* **Mines:** (cube and gold bar) The income of these is equal to the Mines value of the current regime.

When an Enterprise is played, place cubes on it equal to the current income. Should the income change (e.g. because the Regime changes), adjust the number of cubes.

How can you extract even more money out of an Enterprise? There are two ways:

* **Improve an Enterprise:** Buy "extra land" for an improvable Enterprise (ranch or plantation). This takes 2 actions, costs money equal to the cubes already on the card, and adds a cube to Enterprises income. An Enterprise can be improved multiple times, although due to the increasing number of cubes, for a greater price each time.

* **Improve connection:** If an Enterprise has a connection icon (a boot, burro, train, or boat), you can build better transport to it. This costs money as marked on the icon, which you get to place a cube on. It has two effects: income is earned from the cube, and now Troops being deployed to the Enterprise can (and must!) use the new and improved connection.

.. tip:: You can build connections to other players' Enterprises, thus making money and making it easier for you (or anyone!) to deploy Troops there.

Ruining an Enterprise: troops and unrest

Your opponent's Enterprise is making a lot of money. Time to wreck it! You can do this by playing Troops or Unrest cards on the business.

To play a Troop on an Enterprise, you have to transport it there. The cost of this is calculated by looking up the Enterprise's connection on the Troop card. Once there, the Troop extorts the business by swapping one of the cubes on the card with one of its own color. Thus, income is diverted from the owner of the Enterprise to the owner of the Troops ...

.. note:: Normally it's cheaper for Troops to use the better forms of transportation - trains and boats. But some Troops, notably Indians, dislike

using trains, so for them it's actually more expensive.

.. tip:: You can deploy a Troop to your own Enterprise as a defensive measure. Naturally, you don't extort money from yourself.

The workers at an Enterprise can be stirred to rebellion by playing an Unrest card and paying any costs listed on the card. The card will also list how much money is stolen from the owner and how many Unrest (red) tokens are placed on the business.

A business with Unrest is neutralized - it does not earn income or give any special ability. Unrest can be removed with a Police Action (costs 3 gold and removes 1 Unrest) or deploying Troops to the site (removes Unrest equal to the Troops firepower, which is the number of dots in the upper left weapon icon).

.. tip:: Playing Unrest is good for reducing an opponent's income, but it often also gives them influence like Outrage. Of course, you could always play Outrage on your own Enterprises ...

Partners and killing them

You may play Partner cards into your tableau by paying the costs listed on their card. These allies bring a variety of abilities, especially reduced prices for some cards in the market. There are also two special Partners, Teddy Roosevelt and the Church. These are not shuffled into the deck but can be bought for the price listed on their card and placed in your tableau. Note that they are doubled sided and may be placed either side up, for different effects.

Troublesome partners can be dispatched by playing an Assassination card on them and paying any listed costs.

.. tip:: Again, assassinating an opponent's partner can give that opponent unwanted influence. But nothing in the rules stops you from playing "bad" cards on yourself, for example assassinating one of your own Partners or playing unrest on your own Enterprises. This can be used to give yourself useful influence, while disposing of expensive assets that may have outlived their usefulness ...

Locations

Troops and Enterprises will almost always have a location. There are three of these in the game: the US and two in Mexico (Chihuahua and Sonora) . This

effects gameplay in two ways:

#. Several cards have effects that target enterprises of particular types or in particular locations (e.g. “nationalize a Mexican enterprise”, “income equal to Chihuahuan mines”).

#. Troops can only be deployed to Enterprises in their location.

Headlines & factions

Events in the wider world can affect all players. By buying and playing a Headline, a player can spin those events to their own advantage. Note that Headlines work differently to other deck cards:

* Buying a Headline and playing it is a single action

* Headlines will often have two orientations or choices as to how they are played (one is usually ‘status quo’, i.e. nothing happens). The purchasing player can choose which happens.

* After use, all headlines are discarded onto a single pile that determines the state of the economy.

* Should a Headline reach the end of the Market, i.e. be in the 0 cost column after a player's actions, it is discarded without effect.

Four Headlines are Topples that represent a chance to seize power (and win the game!) Look out for them!

Many of the Headlines effect cooperation between *Factions*. These are different alliances or ideologies that Troops, Partners and even flipped Hacendados may belong to, as indicated by their background color:

* Blue for US forces and interests

* Green for Mexican federal authorities

* White for local Mexican forces

* Pink for rebel groups

Headlines may indicate that a pair of factions is fighting, as shown by the fist icon, banded with factions colors. In that case, no player can have both factions in their tableau. All cards of one faction must be discarded.

.. tip:: triggering a Headline with the right factions fighting is a good way

to break up others forces.

The economy

Some income and costs depend upon the state of the economy: what mines and banks earn, what cards can be sold for. This is based upon what the current government is, with the relevant costs being given on the current regime card.

This can be further modified by a depression. All Headlines (including Topples) have a black 'bull' or red 'bear' icon in the corner. After being used or discarded, Headlines are placed upon a pile. Should two bears appear consecutively, the economy plunges into a depression, and the figures in black on the regime card should be used. Further, whenever in a depression, during the income phase players must pay 1 money for every card in their tableau except their Hacendado. Any card they cannot pay for must be discarded.

Depressions suck. The income of mines and economy value (the price you get for selling cards) nosedives to zero. Also, during the income phase, a player must pay one money for every Enterprise, Troop or Partner they have on the table. Ouch. Fortunately, the economy revives if two bulls are played in a row.

.. tip:: You can deliberately trigger a depression by buying the right Headlines in the right order. This can be useful if one of your opponents is making far too much money.

Last words

See the main rules for details on Jail, Unrest, Private Armies, Redeploying and Retreating Troops, Assassinating players, and much more. Thanks to all those making suggestions, corrections or proof-reading, especially Steven Harris and Tim Falkenberg.