

POLITEIA



A GAME OF INTERNAL AND
EXTERNAL STRIVES BETWEEN THE
GREEK CITY STATES AND PERSIA

FOR 3-5 PLAYERS
(PLAYING TIME 60 MINUTES)

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NOVA SUECIA GAMES
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VERSION 2.0

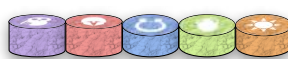
1. INTRODUCTION

It is the sixth century BC and the conflict between the independent-minded Greek city states and the mighty Persian empire is escalating. The Persian King Cyrus the Great has conquered the Greek-inhabited region of Ionia and appointed tyrants to rule them. However, the Greeks do not look kindly upon foreign rulers.









At the same time the Greek poleis (plural for polis or city-state) are locked into an internal strife for hegemony over Hellas. This is sometimes expressed peacefully, through trade with domestic and colonial resources or erection of buildings and monuments, and sometimes violently, through battles and revolts. Will the Greeks manage to unite against their common enemy or will they embrace each other in a fight to the death? Only history can tell...

2. GAME COMPONENTS

- 1) 1 game board with 3 regions; Megale Hellas, Hellas, Ionia
- 2) 12 action tiles; Battle, Build, Colonize, Import, Intrigue, Levy, Produce, Revolt, Sacrifice, Support, Tax, Trade
- 3) 1 Hades/Elysion mat
- 4) 10 grain cubes (tan)
- 5) 25 resource cubes; 5 oil (teal), 5 wine (pink), 5 pottery (brown), 5 marble (white), 5 metal (grey)
- 6) 10 Persian discs (black)
- 7) 120 Greek polis discs; 24 per polis (purple, red, blue, green, yellow)
- 8) 5 private action cylinders; 1 per polis (purple, red, blue, green, yellow)
- 9) 15 public action cylinders (white)



3. GAME OBJECT

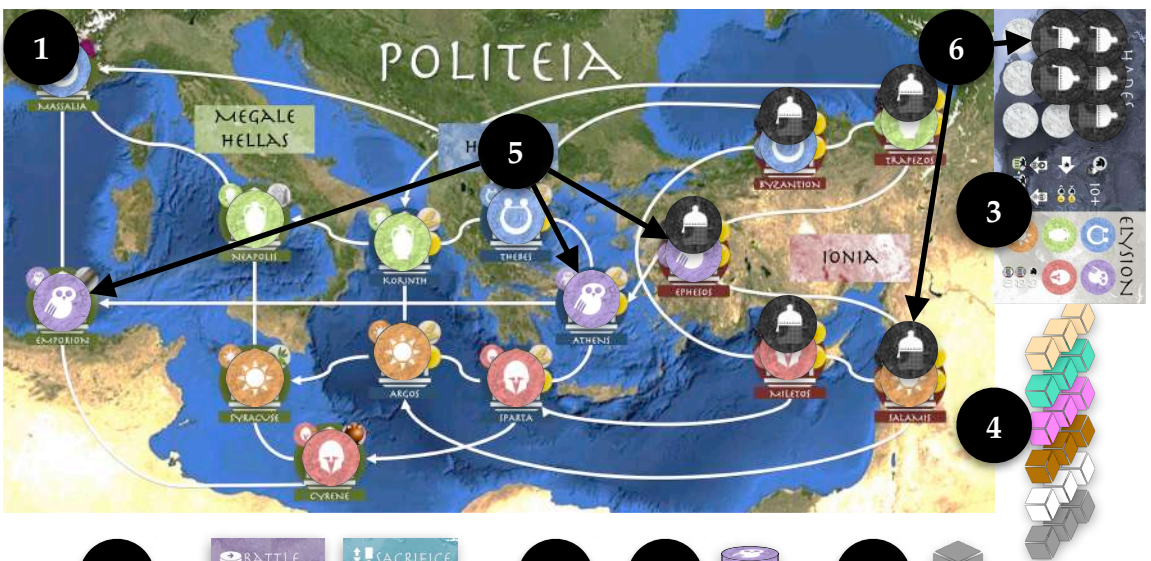
You play a leader of a *polis* (city-state) in Ancient Greece. Each turn, you select and pay for *actions*  in the struggle for hegemony over all the Greeks. The actions let you acquire *talents* (money)  or *resources* , *sacrifice* to the gods for glory , allocate *citizens*  to *cities* , or fight opponents . But beware, the threat of a war with the *Persians*  hangs over your head like the sword of Damocles.

When the game ends, the player who has performed the most heroic deeds, as measured by **citizens** in **Elysion**, wins. There is also a bigger game where a Greek victory or loss against Persia in your turn will be your victory or loss in the history books.

4. GAME SETUP

- 1) Place the **game board** on the table.
- 2) Randomly lay out the 12 **action tiles** in the shape of a "fat cross" to form the *action board*.
- 3) Place the **Elysion/Hades** mat next to the board.
- 4) Sort the **grain** and **resource cubes** and place them next to the board.
- 5) Place 1 **Greek polis disc** on each of the cities with a matching Greek color (3 purple, 3 red, 3 blue, 3 green, 3 yellow; 15 in total). Place them with the **citizen face up**.
- 6) Place 1 **Persian disc** on each of the cities with a matching Persian color (5 black in total), on top of any Greek citizens there. Place the remaining 5 Persian discs on Hades tile spaces
- 7) Choose a **polis** and take its 1 **private action cylinder** and remaining 21 **polis discs**.

- i) Place the 1 private action cylinder and 1 polis disc in front of you. They form your *hand*.
 - ii) Place the remaining 20 polis discs aside but within reach. They form your *supply* and should be kept separated from the discs on your hand.
 - iii) Take 1 resource cube matching the symbol of your green city, e.g. "Metal" for "Emporion".
 - iv) *If less than 5 players play, place a 2nd non-player polis disc at the bottom of each green and blue city with a matching symbol and 1 on a Hades tile space. In this way, each non-player polis has 6 polis discs in play. Return unused action cylinders & polis discs to the box.*
- 8) Place 1 public action cylinder on the **leftmost black space** (label " +1") of each of the 12 action tiles. Place a 2nd cylinder on the middle black space (label "0") on each of the 3 purple action tiles.
- 9) The player who last visited Greece starts the game.



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8

7i

7ii

7iii

Athens 20 x

Sparta 20 x

Thebes 20 x

Korinth 20 x

Argos 20 x

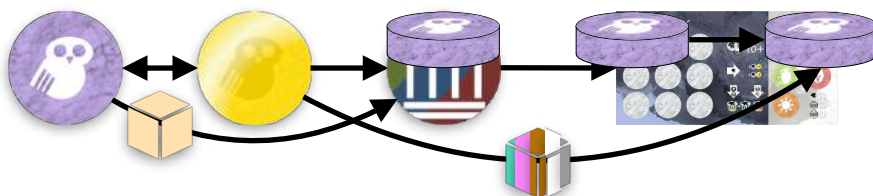
5. GAME OVERVIEW

The players take actions to acquire talents and populate Greece. Turns go clockwise and consists of 4 phases:

- 1) **Planning Phase:** Select actions on the action board.
- 2) **Action Phase:** Pay for and execute actions in any order.
- 3) **Politeia Phase:** Check city majorities after each action.
- 4) **War Phase:** Check and resolve wars after each action.

Each player has an own set of polis discs, which flow from the supply via the hand to the board. On the hand they are referred to as *talents* and on the board as *citizens*.

Supply ↔ **Hand** → **City** → **Hades** → **Elysiion**



- 1) To *receive* a talent, take a polis disc from your supply to your **hand**.
- 2) To *pay* a talent, return a polis disc from your hand to your **supply**.
- 3) To *place* a citizen, take a talent from your hand to a **city**. (One action lets you return 1 grain cube to place a citizen directly from your supply.)
- 4) To *move* a citizen, **reposition** a citizen in a city or **relocate** it to another city.
- 5) To *remove* a citizen, take a citizen from a city. Such a citizen first go to *Hades*, representing instability. This may cause a Greco-Persian war to break out, after which the Greek citizens go to *Elysiion*, representing heroism. Citizens removed by Persians go directly to Elysiion. (One action lets you return a resource to remove a citizen directly from your hand.)

5.1 PLANNING PHASE



In your first turn, choose any action tile for your first action. Place your action cylinder in the tile's **white space**. Your action cylinder gives you 1 action in the next phase (5.2 Action Phase).



In your following turns, pick up your action cylinder and all public action cylinders on the same tile. Move them onto adjacent tiles, dropping 1 cylinder on each tile as you pass through, until you run out of cylinders. Drop your action cylinder last. Each dropped cylinder gives you 1 action in the next phase.

- Place all cylinders in the tile's **white space**, to distinguish them from other cylinders.
- From the 4 **central** action tiles, drop **orthogonally**.
- From the 8 **edge** action tiles, drop **orthogonally** or **diagonally**.
- You may not immediately return to a previous tile
- You may not drop more than 1 cylinder per tile.

Alternatively, pass your entire turn and receive 1 talent.

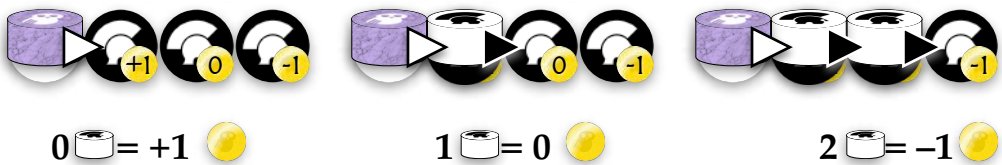
Example: Athens is the first player and chose Levy as her first action. In her second turn, she picks up her action cylinder together with the 1 public action cylinder. She drops the public action cylinder on the Produce action and her own action cylinder on the Grow action. Athens may now Produce and Grow in any order.



Example: Sparta chose Produce as her first action and since it now has 2 public action cylinders, she can take 3 actions. She drops 1 public action cylinder on the Support action, 1 public action cylinder on the Tax action and her own action cylinder on the Revolt action. Sparta may now Support, Tax and Revolt in any order.

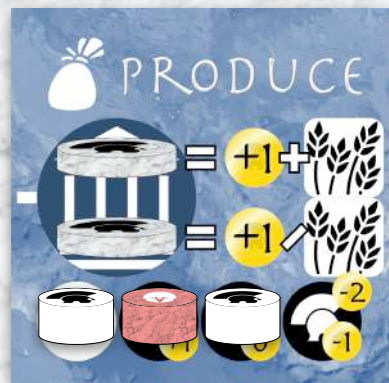
5.2 ACTION PHASE

Execute the actions in any order, ending one before starting the next. Before each action, receive (+1) or pay (-1) talents according to the **visible talent symbol**. If all talent symbols are covered, pay 2 talents. If you cannot pay, return any 1 citizen (from the board, Hades or Elysion) to your supply for each talent that you are missing.



Slide all action cylinders one space to the right so that the white space is uncovered and only black spaces covered. If all the black spaces are covered, stack additional cylinders in the rightmost black space.

Example: In the example above, Athens dropped an action cylinder on the action Produce. There are two action cylinders there already, covering the +1 and the 0 symbols so Athens must pay -1. Afterwards, the cylinders slide to the right, covering the -1 symbol as well and increasing the cost to -2 until Sparta moves with the public action cylinders.



The 12 actions can be grouped into 4 types. (See chapter 7 for action details.)



1) **Receive:** 7.1 Import, 7.2 Produce, 7.3 Tax



2) **Pay:** 7.4 Grow, 7.5 Sacrifice, 7.6 Trade



3) **Place:** 7.7 Colonize, 7.8 Levy, 7.9 Support

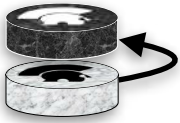
4) **Move:** 7.10 Battle, 7.11 Intrigue, 7.12 Revolt

5.3 POLITEIA PHASE

For each city where the citizens have changed, check if the majority has changed. Ties are resolved in favor of the highest placed citizen.



- If **Persia** has lost her **absolute majority**, remove the Persian citizen to **Hades**.
- If a **Greek polis** has lost her **relative majority**, move all the citizens of the new polis with relative majority to the top.



Example 1: Athens has placed a citizen in Salamis. The 2 Greeks have an absolute majority against the 1 Persian. The Persian citizen is removed to Hades. Sparta now has a relative majority against Athens.



Example 2: Argos and Athens have placed additional citizens into Salamis. The 2 Athenians have a relative majority against both the 1 Spartan and the 1 Argonaut. Both Athenians move to the top.

5.4 GRECO-PERSIAN WAR PHASE

If, after an action, Hades contains 10 or more citizens (Greek or Persian), the Persians attack from East to West.

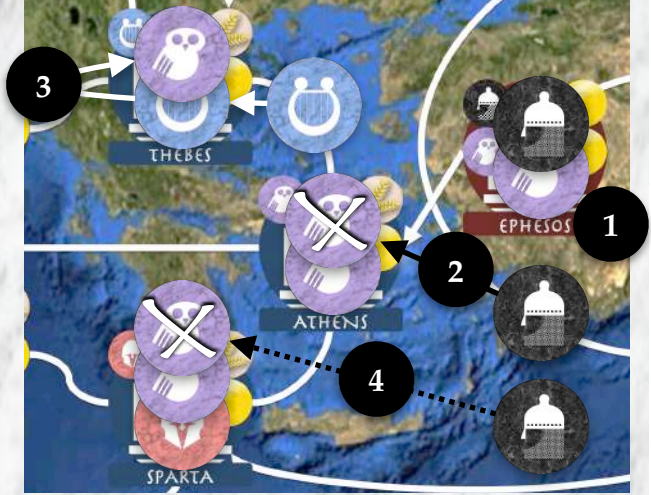
- 1) Start at each of the 5 **Ionian cities** and follow its white arrow to its adjacent **Hellas city** and on to its adjacent **Megale Hellas city**.
- 2) Stop when you reach a city without a **Persian citizen**. Move any **Greek top citizen** there to **Hades**. If less than 2 Greek citizens remain in the city, place a **Persian citizen** from Hades on **top** (i.e. Persia will have absolute majority).
- 3) Move all Greek citizens in Hades to ElySION. Persian citizens stay in Hades.
- 4) Players with the most citizens in ElySION receive 1 talent. Players with the least citizens in ElySION pay 1 talent (if they have any).
- 5) *If less than 5 players play, move 1 non-player citizen from ElySION to the bottom of each city with a matching symbol and less than 2 such citizens, i.e. a city can have up to 2 non-player citizens.*
- 6) Repeat the Politeia phase and check if the majority has changed in any city.



Example: In a 4 player game (without Thebes), Sparta's action ends with 5 Persians and 5 Greeks (of which 1 Thebian) in Hades and a war breaks out.



- 1) The Ionia city Ephesos is already Persian so Persia proceeds to the Hellas city Athens.
- 2) The top Athenian in Athens moves to Hades and 1 Persian from Hades takes its place.
- 3) Persia does not reach Thebes but 1 non-player Thebian moves there from Hades so Thebes gains the relative majority in the Politeia phase.
- 4) Persia does reach Sparta so the top Athenian moves to Hades. However, the 2 remaining citizens deny Persia absolute majority so no Persian citizen is placed there.



6. END OF GAME

The game ends if a player is entitled to take a disc from the supply and has none left. Finish the **action** (not the whole turn), including a Greco-Persian War if any, but forego any missing discs or remaining actions. Move player citizens in Hades to Elysiion and count victory points (VP) per citizen.



Citizens in Elysiion: 3 VP



Citizens in top of cities: 2 VP



Other citizens in cities: 1 VP

The player with the most **VP** has brought glory to his or her polis and wins. In case of a tie, count **talents** on the hand. If the tie still remains, the victory is shared.

The game ends immediately in the following two cases:

- After a Greco-Persian War if **all Persians** are in **Hades**. Greece conquers Persia. The player who ended the game gets +5 VP.
- At any time if **no Persians** are in **Hades**. Persia conquers Greece. The player who ended the game gets -5 VP. (If you run out of Persians to place, use other means.)

Example: Athens exports a resource for 3 talents but has only 2 left in her supply. This does not cause a war to break out so the game ends immediately.



1) Athens has 10 citizens in Elysiion, 3 top citizens and 5 other citizens. She scores $10 \times 3 + 3 \times 2 + 5 \times 1 = 41$ VP (same as Sparta).

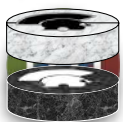
2) Athens has 2 talents and Sparta has only 1 so Athens wins!

7. ACTION DETAILS AND EXAMPLES

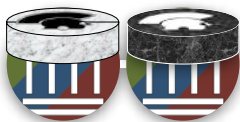
The following pages provide action details and examples. but first there are some key concepts regarding actions.



Own and Other Citizens: *Own* citizens are citizens of your polis. *Other* citizens are citizens of opponent poleis or Persians.



Leaders and Followers: *Leaders* are citizens with no opponent citizens above them. *Followers* will become leaders if the current leaders disappear.



Populated and Adjacent Cities: *Populated* cities have at least 1 of your citizens. *Adjacent* cities are unpopulated cities linked to populated cities. Unpopulated starting cities count as adjacent cities even if not linked. You may only take actions in populated or adjacent cities.

Example: Athens has no citizens on the board so her only adjacent city in Hellas is her starting city Sparta on the other hand populates Sparta and Thebes and thanks to them she has adjacency to all the other Hellas cities.

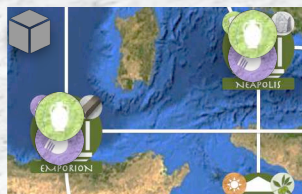


7.1 IMPORT

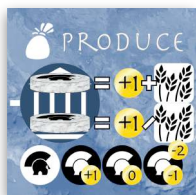


For each **Megale Hellas city**, take **1 resource cube** if you are the **leader**. If you are the follower, choose half of the cities rounded up and take 1 resource cube for each of them. The city symbol tells which resource to take.

Example: Athens imports and is the follower of Emporion (metal) and Neapolis (marble). She may take a resource cube for 1 of the 2 cities and chooses to take a metal cube for Emporion.



7.2 PRODUCE



For each **Hellas city**, take **1 grain cube** and receive **1 talent** if you are the **leader**. If you are the follower, choose 1 grain cube or 1 talent.

Example: Athens produces and taxes in the same turn. She takes 1 grain cube and 1 talent for Athens. She takes another 2 talents for Ephesos.

7.3 TAX



For each **Ionia city**, receive **2 talents** if you are the **leader**. If you are the follower, receive 1 talent.



7.4 GROW



Return **1 grain cube** and place **1 citizen** from the **supply** at the **bottom** of a **populated city**. You may grow in 1 city per region.

Example: Athens grows and returns 2 grain cubes to place citizens in Athens and Ephesos. She may not grow in Thebes, since she has already grown in Hellas.



7.5 SACRIFICE



Return **1 resource cube** to place **1 citizen** from your hand in **ElySION**. You may only sacrifice once per resource type.

Example: Athens sacrifices and returns 1 wine cube to place a citizen from her hand in ElySION.

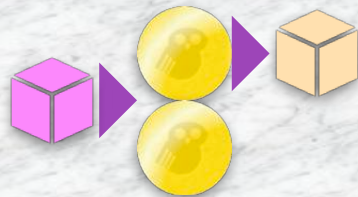


7.6 TRADE



Trade **1 resource cube** for **2 talents** or **1 grain cube** for **1 talent**. You may trade in any direction but you may only trade once per resource type. (There is no limit for grain).

Example: Athens trades and returns 1 wine cube to receive 2 talents. She then pays 1 talent to take 1 grain. She could have traded a 2nd grain but not a 2nd wine.



7.7 COLONIZE



Place **1 citizen** from the **hand** at the **bottom** of an **adjacent Megale Hellas city**. You may colonize any number of cities.

Example: Argos colonizes and has a citizen in Syracuse. She places 2 talents from her hand as citizens at the bottom of the the adjacent Neapolis and Cyrene. She may not colonize Hellas cities, nor other Megale Hellas cities.



7.8 LEVY



Place **1 citizen** from the hand at the **bottom** of an **adjacent Hellas city**. You may levy any number of cities.

Example: Athens levies but has no citizens at all on the board. Thus, only her starting city Athens is adjacent and she may only levy there. She places 1 talent from her hand as 1 citizen at the bottom of Athens.



7.9 SUPPORT



Place **1 citizen** from the hand at the **bottom** of an **adjacent Ionia city**. You may support any number of cities.

Example: Athens supports but has no citizens in Ionia. However, thanks to her citizen in Sparta, Miletos is adjacent. Thus, Athens may place 1 talent as 1 citizen at the bottom of her starting city Ephesos and another 1 at Miletos.



7.10 BATTLE



Move **any number of own leaders** to the **top** of an **adjacent or populated city**. If you get **relative majority**, remove 1 previous leader to Hades. You may battle in 1 city per region but not with the same leaders.

Example: Sparta battles and moves 1 citizen from Sparta and 1 citizen from Ephesos to the top of Athens (2 Athenians).

The 2 Spartans have a relative majority so the top Athenian is removed to Hades. The 2 Spartans may not battle more in the same action.



7.11 INTRIGUE



Replace **1 opponent leader** with **1 Persian** from Hades in an **adjacent** or **populated** city. Remove replaced leaders directly to Elyasion. You may intrigue in 1 city per region.

Example: Athens intrigues in Athens. The Spartan leader is removed to Elyasion and replaced by 1 Persian from Hades. Athens may not intrigue in Sparta too, since the city is in the same region. Note that the Persian does not have absolute majority and will be removed in the Politeia phase.



7.12 REVOLT



Move **any number of own citizens** in a **populated city** to the **top**. If you get **relative majority**, remove 1 previous leader to Hades. You may revolt in 1 city per region.

Example: Athens revolts in Athens and moves her citizen to the top position. The top position wins the tie against the Spartan so it is removed to Hades.



8. ADVANCED RULES: ALLIES AND VASSALS

At the **start** of your turn, you may ally with **1 polis**. You must **pay 1 talent** and your ally **receives 1 talent**. For the rest of the turn, all the ally's citizens count as own citizens when determining **adjacent cities** (7. Action Details and Examples) and **majorities** (5.3 Politeia Phase). However, you may not act or count so that your ally loses a majority.

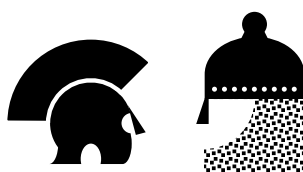
Once during your turn, you may turn **1 citizen** into a vassal of Persia (provided that there is no Persian in the city already). To do so, move **1 Persian citizen** from Hades to the position immediately beneath the yielded citizen. If the vassal was a leader, also receive **1 talent**.

- In the **Politeia phase**, the vassal counts as 2 citizens for majority.
- In the **Greco-Persian War phase**, the vassal counts as Persian and its city is not attacked.
- In **actions**, the vassal may not move in Move actions and receives **1 talent less** in Receive actions.
- In the **game end**, the vassal receives **1 VP less**.
- If you remove the vassal to **Hades**, remove the Persian too. (Place it aside to remember the 1 VP less.)

Example: Athens is not the leader in any city and pays 1 talent for an alliance with Sparta (who receives 1 talent).

Athens then levies in Athens and uses Spartan adjacency to levy in Argos and Thebes as well. Next, Athens yields the citizen in Thebes to Persia and moves 1 Persian from Hades to beneath her leader.

In the Politeia phase, Athens gains the relative majority in Argos (thanks to Sparta) and in Thebes (thanks to Persia) but not in Athens, since the Spartan citizen does not count against itself.

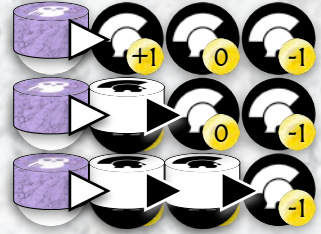


TURN SUMMARY

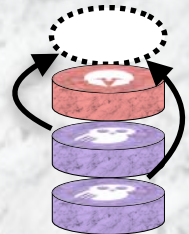
1) **Planning Phase:** Select actions on the action board.



2) **Action Phase:** Pay for and execute actions in any order.



3) **Politeia Phase:** Check city majorities. Move all majority citizen to the top. Remove Persians who lose absolute majority to Hades.



4) **Greco-Persian War Phase:**

- Check if wars break out (10+ citizens in Hades).
- Replace the first Greek leader along each Ionia→ Hellas→Megale Hellas path with a Persian.
- 2+ citizens to Hades receive 1 talent, 0 citizens to Hades pay 1 talent.



(Less than 5 players: 1 non-player citizen moves to the bottom of each starting city up to a maximum of 2 per city.)

Credits

Game design: Nicholas Hjelmberg
Artwork: Nicholas Hjelmberg
Production: The Game Crafter
Game testers: Stockholm Board Game Design Meetup
Special thanks: My wife Su-San Oh for having to listen to my endless historical and game-technical considerations
