

# *Christina Regina The Queen's Path*®



A Game of Politics and Intrigues at the Court of  
Queen Christina 1633-1654

for 2-5 players (playing time 30 minutes)

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## 1. Introduction

Gustavus II Adolphus is dead and the kingdom is without a King. A heavy responsibility lies on the shoulders of the young Queen Christina, only six years old. Sweden is engaged in the Thirty Years' War, the Estates are dissatisfied with Chancellor Axel Oxenstierna's influence, the breach between Protestants and Catholics is wider than ever and the exploratory spirit of the age gives rise to new art and science. As a representative of one of the many factions around the Queen, it is your duty to enlighten Christina and show her the true path. But beware, the other factions will not shrink from using any means to stop you!

## 2. Game Components

The game consists of the following components:

- 1 Queen piece, symbolizing Queen Christina of Sweden
- 20 faction cards; 4 blue, 4 red, 4 green, 4 black, and 4 purple
- 10 score cards; 5 iron/copper and 5 silver/gold (**gold variant** only)
- 10 action cards
- 10 dagger cards; 1 blue, 1 red, 1 green, 1 black and 1 purple
- 8 White court tiles marked 0
- 16 Iron court tiles marked 1, of which 10 has a faction color
- 24 Copper court tiles marked 2, of which 10 has a faction color
- 16 Silver court tiles marked 3, of which 10 has a faction color
- 16 Gold court tiles marked 4, of which 10 has a faction color

## 3. Game Preparation

- 1) Choose whether to play the "silver variant" or the "gold variant".

Sort the faction cards in 4 piles by **number**, place face down and shuffle. Each player draws 1 faction card from each pile (4 cards of the **same** or **different** color).



Sort the faction cards in 5 piles by **color**, place face down and move around. Each player picks 1 faction card pile (4 cards of the **same** color) and 1 pair of score cards.



Any remaining cards are discarded without being disclosed.

- 2) Sort the court tiles by number and randomly arrange them according to the images below with an empty square in the middle surrounded first by White tiles (0), then Iron tiles (1), then Copper tiles (2), and last Silver/Gold tiles (3/4). Ensure that all the 40 faction colors and all the 8 negative values are face up. This is referred to as the **Queen's court**.



*Queen Christina had a strong will. When her father, King Gustavus II Adolphus, learned that he had got a daughter instead of a son, he stated that "she will be good, she has fooled us all."*

*Ambassador Chanut praised her energy and spirituality and wrote about the young Queen's will to rule the country herself. But Christina herself said that "nobody has known my destiny, and nobody does even today."*

- 3) Shuffle the **action cards** and place them in a pile face down.
- 4) Put aside the **dagger cards**.

**Action cards**

**Daggers**





- The **faction cards** are always kept **hidden** from the other players.
- The **action cards** are always kept **open** to the other players.
- The **dagger cards** are only used in **assassinations**.

## 5. Object of the Game

The Queen's passage through the court symbolizes the influence she encounters and the life decisions she makes. The players' objective is to move the Queen and conduct actions so that she picks up court tiles of their own factions. The more and the later court tiles of a faction she picks up, the more point does that faction score at the end of the game.

## 6. Course of the Game

Faction cards and court tiles both belongs to a faction (color) and a court (number). The Queen's movement to a court tile represents an encounter with an influencer of that color and number.

-  **Art and Science (blue scroll):** René Descartes, George Stiernhielm, Olof Rudbeck, and Carlo Fontana
-  **Politics (green shield):** Gustav II Adolf, Axel Oxenstierna, Johan Adler Salvius, and Cardinal Mazarin
-  **Love (red heart):** Fredrik Vilhelm, Magnus Gabriel De la Gardie, Karl Gustav, and Decio Azzolino
-  **Religion (black cross):** Johannes Matthiæ Gothus, Paolo Casati, Don Antonio Pimentel, and Alexander VII
-  **Family (purple house):** Maria Eleonora, Ebba Lewenhaupt, Ebba Sparre, and Christina Alexandra (the Queen after the abdication)

*Axel Oxenstierna was Chancellor of Sweden and in essence the leader after the death of King Gustav II Adolf. When Christina reached the age of 12, he began to teach her politics, but as Christina assumed the power, he was more and more neglected. Instead, Queen Christina appointed Johan Adler Salvius, a noble of low birth, to Privy Council 1648. He represented Sweden in the Westphalian peace negotiations.*

Starting with the player who last saw a Queen and continuing in clockwise order, the players take turns to do the following in any order:

- 1) **Movement:** Mandatory move the Queen onto 1 orthogonally adjacent court tile.
- 2) **Action:** Optionally play any number of action cards.
- 3) **Assassination:** Optionally attempt 1 assassination on 1 other players' faction.

Each action is described below. If the Queen cannot be moved and all players refrain from playing action cards or attempting assassinations, the game ends.

### 6.1 Movement

The Queen may be moved onto 1 orthogonally adjacent tile. Put aside the tile moved onto. The Queen may not be moved onto empty spaces (i.e. she cannot return the same path).



The white court tiles (0) are simply discarded.



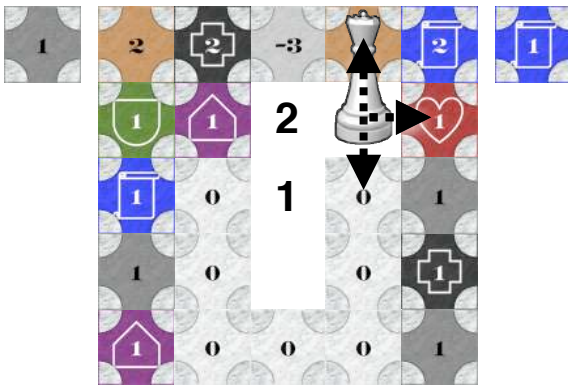
The court tiles **without faction colors** are stacked to the left of the board in **action stacks**; one for Iron (1), one for Copper (2), one for Silver (3), one for Gold (4). They reflect encounters and may affect the Queen's path. (See Chapter 6.2.)



The removed court tiles **with faction colors** are stacked to the right of the board in **influence stacks**; one for Iron (1), one for Copper (2), one for Silver (3), one for Gold (4). They reflect influencers and determine the winner. (See Chapter 7.)

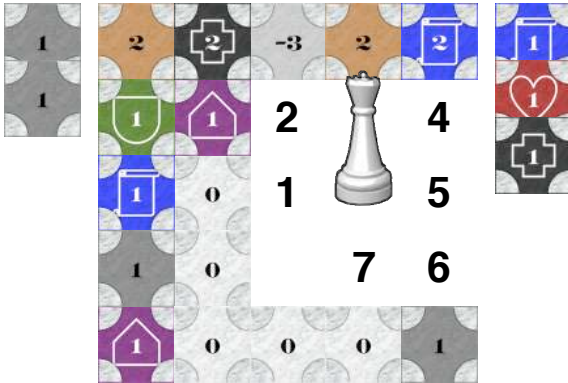
Stack them so that the latest stacked tile partly covers the previously stacked one.

***The later the court tile is placed the more important it is for the final score so plan your movements carefully.***

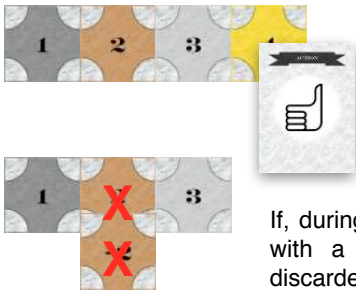


*Example: In a game, the Queen has moved 3 tiles (up to discard the 0-tile, further up to put aside a non-faction 1-tile and right to put aside a blue 1-tile). The current player may move her up, down or right but not left.*

*Johannes Matthiæ Gothus was the court priest and teacher. He worked for an atonement between the Churches and opened the young Queen's eyes for alternative views, although he claimed on his death bed that he had always meant to teach Christina the true Protestant faith.*



*Example: In the same game, the Queen has moved another 5 tiles to put aside a red 1-tile, a non-faction 1-tile and a black 1-tile. The black tile covers the red tile to show that it was placed later. Since the Queen has no adjacent tiles, the current player may play action cards and/or assassinate or pass.*



If, during a player's turn, a stacked non-faction court tile completes a set, the set is discarded. The player then draws the top action card and places it in front of herself face up. The action card may be played in the same turn.

If, during a player's turn, a non-faction court tile with a negative number is put aside, it is discarded together with 1 previously put aside non-faction court tile of the same color (if any).

*The Estates pressed Queen Christina to marry and secure the succession and negotiations were held with the Great Elector Frederick William of Brandenburg. However, no man ever won her heart. Her cousin, Karl Gustav, fought hard for it but was finally rejected. However, Christina did appoint him as her successor.*

**6.2 Action**

A player may play any number of action cards from the hand. Each action card has a unique effect and may only be played once, after which it is discarded. Actions may not affect court tiles in influence stacks. Note that some action cards are played out of turn.

**6.2.1 Agitation**



Agitation reflects vilifying an influencer and having him or her banished from court. Agitation lets the player discard 1 court tile (faction or non-faction) from the Queen's court.

**6.2.2 Confidence**



Confidence reflects winning the Queen's trust and having a private audience. Confidence lets the player move the Queen 2 times in the turn and hence put aside 2 court tiles in the same turn.

**6.2.3 Intrigue**



Intrigue reflects using contacts at the court to get closer to the Queen. Intrigue lets the player exchange the action card with any 1 action card from another player's hand. The exchanged card may be played in the same turn.

#### 6.2.4 Invitation



Invitation reflects attracting the Queen to another part of the Court.

Invitation lets the player move the Queen any distance, even over empty spaces. The Queen must still be moved orthogonally.

#### 6.2.5 Manipulation



Manipulation reflects an attempt to promote one influencer and have him or her appointed instead of another.

Manipulation lets the player switch any 2 court tiles in the Queen's court. The tiles may be of different types (i.e. they may have different colors and/or numbers).

#### 6.2.6 Persuasion



Persuasion reflects an attempt to persuade the Queen to forgive a banished influencer.

Persuasion lets the player return 1 previously discarded court tile (see 6.2.1 Agitation) to any empty space in the Queen's court except the Queen's starting space.

#### 6.2.7 Protection (out of turn)



Protection reflects a body guard's defence against an assassination attempt.

Protection must be played immediately when another player attempts an assassination on any player. The assassination attempt is cancelled and the action card is placed on top of the protected faction card.

The faction card (silver variant) or the entire faction (gold variant) is protected against future assassinations from the same player. However, it does not protect against other players. **This card is not used in the 2 player game.**

#### 6.2.8 Slander



Slander reflects an attempt to discredit factions.

Slander lets the player select any players. The selected players may not move the Queen in their next turns.

#### 6.2.9 Veto (out of turn)



Veto reflects an attempt to object decisions at the court.

Veto must be played immediately when another player attempts to move the Queen. The move is cancelled and the other player must move the Queen elsewhere instead.

#### 6.2.10 Warning



Warning reflects an attempt to tell the Queen about imminent dangers.

Warning lets the player move the Queen directly to the starting space, irrespective of distance or empty spaces.

#### 6.2.11 Bribery, Blackmailing and Backstabbing (optional)

The court of Queen Christina bubbled of bribery, blackmailing and backstabbing. To give the game a more thematic feeling, the players may agree to negotiate how to move the Queen and use (unplayed) action cards as a currency for bribes and blackmailing. A player may give or demand a reward in exchange for doing or not doing movements or actions. Of course, the player may choose to backstab instead and ignore the agreement...

*Christina also had several favorites. The first and most rumored of them was the military officer Magnus Gabriel De la Gardie, of whom it was told that he had an affair with the Queen. He received many favors but was later subjected to a defamation campaign and was banished from court 1653.*

*Georg Stiernhielm was a Swedish poet and a civil servant. Christina appreciated his poems and he became Royal Keeper of the Archives 1649 but fell into disgrace shortly afterwards after he criticized one of the Queen's favorites.*

*Olof Rudbeck was a Swedish scientist and historian. He was world famous for his knowledge in anatomy and also founded a botanic garden.*

## 6.3 Assassination



A player (the "assassin") may attempt 1 assassination against 1 other player (the "victim") by guessing his or her color. This affects the scoring (see 7. End of Game)

The assassin and the victim resolve the assassination by exchanging hidden cards. **No other players may see the cards.**

An assassination is committed by 1 faction card against 1 victim faction card of the same number.

- A success removes the highest placed victim court tile of **that number** at the end of the game.
- A failure removes the highest placed own court tile of **that number** at the end of the game.

An assassination is committed by 1 faction card against all victim faction cards.

- A success removes the highest placed victim court tile of **all numbers** at the end of the game.
- A failure removes the highest placed own court tile of **that number** at the end of the game.

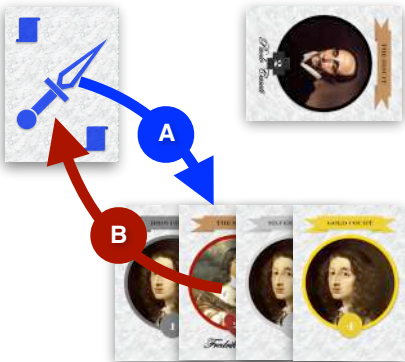
*Christina had a bad relation with her mother, Maria Eleonora, and welcomed the council's decision to banish the widow queen. Instead, she was given several tutors, of which one was Ebba Lewenhaupt.*

*Ebba Sparre was Christina's closest female friend. Some claim that they were more than friends but no evidence support this claim.*

1. The **assassin** names a **victim** and a faction card number to commit the assassination (silver variant: any number, **gold variant**: faction card number 1 for the 1st player to the left, faction card number 2 for the 2nd etc.). The cards must not be **tilted**, indicating that they have not failed/been assassinated already.
2. The **assassin** takes the **dagger cards** and gives the victim a dagger card of the guessed faction color to look at.
3. The **victim** gives the assassin the attacked **faction card** to look at.
4. The assassin and the victim openly tell the other players whether the assassination was successful (i.e. whether the dagger color and the faction color matched) **without revealing any cards or colors**.
  - a) If the assassination is **successful**, the victim must tilt the assassinated card or **cards**.
  - b) If the assassination is **failed**, the assassin must tilt the assassinating card.
5. Both players return the dagger cards **face down**.

Be careful to keep cards and colors hidden. The other players must only know whether the assassination was successful or not. The tilted faction cards will tell which court tiles to remove at the end of the game. They must not be revealed until then.

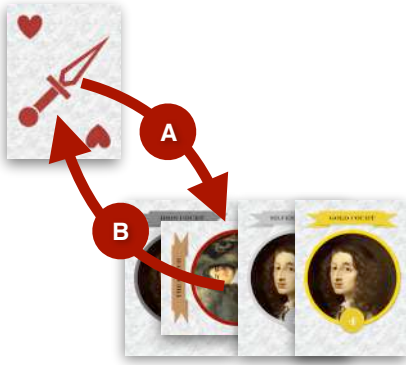
*Example of unsuccessful assassination: Player 1 chooses to assassinate Player 3's Copper court faction card with her own Copper court faction card.*



*She thinks the faction card belongs to Art (blue) and gives her a blue dagger (A) but is given a red faction card (B). The assassination is unsuccessful and Player 1 must tilt her Copper faction card (silver variant and **gold variant**).*

*Although Player 1 now knows that Player 3's Copper court faction card is red, she cannot use this knowledge since her own Copper court faction card is tilted.*

*René Descartes was a French mathematician, philosopher, scientist, priest and lawyer. He was invited to the court but was troubled by the cold winters and by having to stand up early to meet the Queen. Shortly after he died from the flu but some claim that he was murdered by a Catholic missionary, fearing that his radical theological ideas would undermine Christina's conversion to Catholicism.*



*Example of successful assassination: Instead of giving Player 3 a blue dagger, Player 1 gives her a red dagger (1).*

*The red dagger matches the red faction card (2). The assassination is successful and Player 3 must tilt her Copper faction card (silver variant) or all her faction cards (gold variant).*

## 7. End of Game

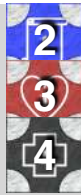
The game ends when all players pass consecutively. This happens when the players cannot do any more movements and cannot or do not want to do any more actions or assassinations. The Queen is then assumed to have chosen her path. The scoring is done in four steps:

- 1. Resolve assassinations:** Flip the tilted faction cards. For each tilted faction card, remove the corresponding topmost court tile (if any). This reflects the faction card having been either assassinated (successful assassination) or disgraced (failed assassination).
- 2. Reveal factions:** Flip the untilted faction cards.
- 3. Score factions:** Score one influence stack at the time. Use non-colored court tiles to keep track of the points.

Score 4 points to the top faction, 3 points to the second top faction and so on.

If a faction has both court tiles in a stack, ignore the bottommost when scoring.

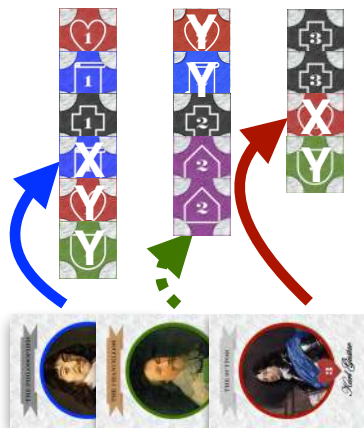
If a faction is not played by a player, score it anyway, i.e. lower placed court tiles get less points.



Score only the topmost faction according to the scorecards, e.g. Black Iron (1) scores 4 points to Black, 3 points to Purple etc.

			1		
4	3	2	1	0	
0	4	3	2	1	
1	0	4	3	2	
2	1	0	4	3	
3	2	1	0	4	

The player who scored the most has successfully influenced Queen Christina and wins the game. In case of a tie, tell players apart by checking who scored most 4 points, then most 3 points and so on. In the rare case where no player court tiles remain in any influence stacks, Queen Christina has avoided all influencers and wins herself!



*Example: The tilted cards remove the court tiles marked X in the silver variant and also the tiles marked Y in the gold variant.*

*In the silver variant, the Iron stack (1) scores 4 points to Green, 3 to Red, 2 to Black, 1 to Blue and none to Purple.*

*In the gold variant, the Iron stack (1) scores 4 points to Black, 3 to Purple, 2 to Blue, 1 to Red and none to Purple.*

Paolo Casati was an Italian Jesuit, who together with Malines was sent to the Queen in 1652 to gauge the sincerity of her intention to become Catholic.

The Spanish ambassador Don Antonio Pimentel was informed of her plans to abdicate and convert to the Catholic faith and helped her to obtain support from the Spanish King Philip IV.

In 1654, Queen Christina of Sweden abdicated and later same year, she converted to the Catholic faith.

After her abdication, the Queen was welcomed to Rome by Pope Alexander VII and took the name Christina Alexandra. She got acquainted with Cardinal Decio Azzolino and it is said that he was the only man she truly loved. She also negotiated with Cardinal Mazarin of France about an invasion of Naples but without success. Her patron activities were more successful and she founded a Royal Academy. When she died, Carlo Fontana sculptured a memorial monument for her in St. Peter's Basilica.

## Credits

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Game design: Nicholas Hjelmberg  
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Production: The Game Crafter  
Game testers: Hans Larsson, Fredrik Sergler, Joakim Sergler  
Special thanks: My wife Su-San Oh for having to listen to my endless historical and game-technical considerations

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