

WORKER PLACEMENT WITH CARDS

LISBOA**AFTER A DISASTROUS EARTHQUAKE, LISBON IS REBUILT**

On November 1st, 1755, the town of Lisbon was hit by a tremendous earthquake that destroyed almost all the buildings and caused a series of fires. But after just one month, a great plan to rebuild the town was designed and accepted by the King. It was an orderly plan to take out all the rubble and to build a series of new shops and public buildings right in the center of the town. The game is based on this "plan" and players are the nobles of that Country who contributed to win this incredible economic and engineering challenge.

From the graphic point of view, it is certain the map and the cards will not please everybody, as both are based on paintings of that time, and the pastel colors are not so strong. But the box is a perfect example of "how to edit a game": as it happened with **"The Gallerist"**, it is composed of fixed and mobile thermoformed "boxes" that will easily store all the components, completed by a transparent lid, provided to avoid any dispersion of pieces. Very, very nice.

As it already happened in other games of

Vital Lacerda, components are plentiful and well done. I will not list them as we will discuss their use later, but the board is not the best example of this kind of components, especially on the right side, where the buildings will be placed: pale colors, ordinary buildings - it seems that it was graphically designed twenty years ago, but it works all the same, so we did not have any problem during play. The players boards, on the other hand, are particularly well done and we need to detail them a little better (see also Picture 2): they are formed from different layers of cardboards glued together, but one of them is cut with different "windows" to host the colored cubes without t them slipping away (similar to the boards of "Scythe"). Under the top and bottom, in parts of those boards there are also some "empty" spaces used to insert the cards. Very practical and interesting: it could be a good idea for other games in the future. See Picture 2.

The rules are in English, and they have many pictures and samples that facilitate the study, but Lisboa is not an easy game,

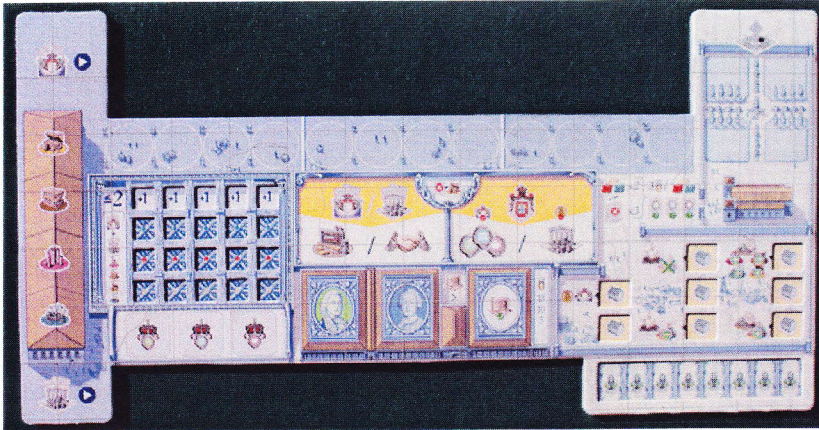
so Lacerda also provided four "summary" booklets where all the important components (cards, icons, etc.) are presented and explained in detail. Be prepared to spend the first game just to learn the rules, the mechanics, the many icons and to understand the possible strategies. It took about four hours to play our first game, but the second lasted only three hours and the following ones 120-150 minutes.

Pietro Cremona

A very interesting but complex game on an argument that obliged me to make an historical research on that earthquake. You need a couple of games to be certain to have learned all the rules. For expert games that do not mind some planning ahead.

Set-up is quite laborious, we suggest leaving it to the person hosting the game: consider about 30 minutes to put everything on the table. Again, I will not go into details, as we will touch them later. You start the game with ten reis (local money), one "architect", one "clergy" and one "royal favor" tile, eight meeple (courtiers), eight houses and five cubes of one color for the personal board. About 60 cubes (red, blue and white) are randomly sorted and placed on the board in the related cases to simulate the rubble after the earthquake. "Action" and "Objective" cards are also placed on their own spaces. Action cards (also called "political cards") are divided into four different





decks: five cards of the blue deck are distributed to each player, while the red ones are placed on the board. Each player sends one courtier to "Court" on the left of the board: we may finally start the game.

The real "heart" of Lisboa are the "political cards" (see Picture 3 for an example) because they are used for different kinds of actions. The players will get five "blue" cards at the set-up, while the red ones are placed face down on the table in four different "reserve" stacks, each one bearing identical symbols on the back. The first card of each stack is then revealed.



There are two different kind of cards: the "Nobles" (with the picture of the King -pink, the Prime Minister- blue, and the Chief Engineer - green) and the "Treasury" (with the drawing of some "objects" or "actions").

- The top of the cards shows the number of "Influence Points" (IP) granted by the Nobles. Alternatively, they show the variations of the State Treasury created by the Treasury cards.
- In the middle there are the drawing of

the Noble or of the "Objects"

- In the bottom part is showed the instant "bonus" granted by a Noble or the permanent bonus of the Treasury cards if they are placed on the personal board.

Each player, on his turn, should do the following:

- Play a card from his hand
- Execute the action related to that card
- Draw the top most card of one of the four reserve decks

I will try to describe in a simplified way all the possible actions allowed by the political cards, without entering too much in details because the goal of this review is just to let you to understand the flow of the game.

The **FIRST POSSIBILITY** is to place the selected card under your personal board: on top if it is a Noble, or on the bottom if it is a Treasury (please look at Picture 4 to have a better idea)

Each added Noble card will grant the spe-

cial bonus printed on its bottom, while each Treasury card will assign the bonus printed on its top: a discount on the construction of the building, a discount on the cleaning of the rubbles, money, etc. Immediately after having inserted a card under his board the player may execute also one or two extra actions: (1) loading resources on a ship (if already built) in order to gain money and/or Victory Points, or (2) execute one of the two "complementary" actions connected to one of the "Big" nobles (each noble has two alternatives). In this case it will be also necessary to pay some resources and use one of the following: sending courtiers to the court, purchasing a ship, produce resources from your shops, purchase objective cards, etc. See Picture 5.

The **SECOND POSSIBILITY** is to go to the "Court": you play a card of one of the three nobles and pay a number of "Influence Points" (IP) equal to the number of enemy supporters already in the related section. Let's say, for example, that you are the Green player and you wish to play Manuel de Maia (The Chief Engineer): looking at the that part of the Court you note that there are 2 red, 1 green and 1 yellow "courtiers" (meeples), so you need to spend 3 IP in order to play your card. (NOTE: all the court-

iers are placed in the court using one of the "complementary actions").

Now you have the right to use the "primary" action for Manuel de Maia (building a magazine) AND one of his two "complementary actions" (this time for free). Going to the Marquis de Pombal will let you to take one of the "Decree" cards (they show different objectives to accomplish by the end of the game) and the King José Primo will allow you to open a "Public" building.

The **THIRD POSSIBILITY** is to finance an "Event": you play a Treasury card in

the Court, you pay a certain number of reis and you may immediately take the related action (the same that we have seen on each noble and some extra ones that allow you to get resources). In this case no "complementary" actions are permitted.

The **FOURTH POSSIBILITY** is to simply discard a card and take a "gold" resource.

Finally, you select one of the four top cards of the reserve decks and the turn goes to



the following player. When three of the four "red" stacks are exhausted the second "Era should start. "Violet" cards are distributed to the players (they all must have 5 cards in hand) and the "Brown" cards are placed on the table, again in four stacks with only the top one visible.

When three of the "brown" stacks are exhausted the game proceeds to end of the current turn and then stops: the victory points are calculated, and the winner is decided.

This is "in short" how the game works: if you wish more information please go on reading, otherwise pass... to the following review. What follows, in effect, is a series of

detailed information on all the actions and may be boring if you think that Lisboa is not the game for you.

More information on the main actions.

Building Shops or Public Buildings on the right side of the board are probably the less "spontaneous" actions. Please look at Picture 6 to better understand the description:

The town's center is a grid of four main streets (yellow, pink, brown and blue) and Public Buildings (all around). All the colored cubes that you see on the picture are "rubbles" of different "weight": the blue ones are the "lighters" and cost 1 real to be removed; the red ones are the "medium" and

need two reis, while the white ones are very heavy and need 3 reis to be transported.

The "Shops" are those "ugly" tiles on the right of the picture: when you decide to build one of them you place a Manuel de Maia card in the Court, take a shop and select the downtown case where you wish to install it. Now you must look at the cubes on the far right of the selected case and on the bottom of the related main street: you may get one of them for free for your personal board, but you must add the value of the remaining ones and pay the total in reis. An example: see Picture 6: For a shop on the second case of row "B" you must consider 4 rubble cubes: 1 white (on the right side), 1 red and 2 blue cubes (on the bottom, between main streets yellow and pink). They cost a total of 7 reis. If you decide to take out the white cube (placing it on your board) then you need to pay only 4 reis: the shop may now be placed on the board with the entrance on the pink or on yellow street (your choice).



After having built a shop the players may get some Victory Points (VP): you multiply the number printed on the blue "arrow" on the bottom of the column (3-4-5) by the number of Public Buildings already existing that have the same color of the selected road (with a maximum of 3 buildings). In our example we selected the pink road to get 5 VP (because there is only a pink building on the right of line "B" and the value of the column is 5 as you see on the blue arrow tile).

If now you are a little confused ... ev-



everything is OK: that's exactly the sensation of every new player after the first few turns with Lisboa.

To build a "Public Building" you need to place a King card on the Court: you also need an architect in the color of your selected building (green or blue). Then you pay the number of courtiers indicated on the architect tile (2 to 5) that you must already have at Court: those nobles are sent back to your personal board, while the building is placed in one of the peripheral cases around downtown. Let's come back again to Picture 6 for another example. The "Violet" player wishes to build the pink building that you see in the very bottom-right of the picture: he needs a "blue" architect, pay the necessary number of officers and then he may place the building at the right of line "C". As you see in that case there are two blue cubes (he transfers both on his personal board) and he will get 2 new courtiers as a bonus (as printed on the case). He will also gain 10 VP because he has a shop in case C2 (basic value "5") and there are now two pink buildings (one on the left and the new one on the right).

At the beginning it is not easy to remember everything and to calculate the VP, but one game is enough to practice, and things become clear immediately after.

Visiting Marchese de Pombal will allow the players to get "objective" cards (decrees): they may freely select one of the 8 cards always available on the left side of the board: everyone shows a different "target" (and therefore the summary booklets become necessary to understand which target is best for you). You may get VP if you have certain buildings, or if you have a shop in every main street, or if you have more money than your opponents, etc. During

the game it is a good tactic to get as many decrees as you can in order to program the end game and to satisfy as many bonuses as you can.

It is not easy to give "strategy" suggestions to play Lisboa because the options are so many and very often the actions of your opponents may destroy your decisions. But after a couple of games every player understands that it is necessary to build some shops as early as possible and to select the best columns (those with 4 or 5 VP arrows). Then you need to build some Public building that will match your shops in order to maximize the VP: of course every shop may be supported by only 3 Public Buildings so if you play well (and are lucky because your opponents do not attack) you may get up to 30 VP with just one shop (5 VP when you place the first building, plus 10 VP with the second and plus 15 VP with the third public building). Not bad!

The "King's favor" tiles are used to "copy" an action made by an opponent, while the tiles on the Church path grant different bonus (immediate or permanent).

Collecting cubes of the three different colors (blue, red and white) allows you to fill 5 different columns on your personal board (each column need one cube per color): each newly filled column will allow the player to use more cards on his board (initially you may use only two cards). Also filling four columns immediately end the game and each completed column grants 3 VP extra.

When you already placed a couple of shops it will be time to search for some interesting "decree" and therefore to "address" your strategy: from that point on you will try to search for the right architects and the right

buildings, to get money from the commerce, to have always the right number of courtiers and enough Influence Points. If you succeed victory will be at hand.

Finally, do not forget the tiles of the Church circuit: players initially tend to skip this opportunity, but some of them are interesting, and it is worth the effort to keep an eye on them.

It was not easy for the writer to review this game (as it happens with all Vital Lacerda's games) without listing too many details, but I hope that the readers were able to understand the basics of LISBOA. It is a game for experienced gamers and they need to program in advance their turns in order to be competitive. Interactivity is also quite high but never fundamental because if a "path" is cut by aggressive competitors you may always take another one to get the necessary VP.

Lisboa may also be played "solo" against a virtual opponent named ... "Lacerda" that will do his moves with the aid of the cards and following a specific sequence: and it is a very strong opponent!

Pietro Cremona

INFORMATION

Designer: Vital Lacerda

Artist: Ian O'Toole

Price: ca. 100 Euro

Publisher: Eagle-Gryphon Games 2017

www.eaglegames.net

PLAYERS:

1-4

AGE:

12+

TIME:

180+

EVALUATION

Worker placement, development

Users: For experts

Version: it

Rules: en it pl pt

In-game text: no

Comments:

Planning is necessary * Long playing time
* Good interaction among players * Need some study to learn the rules * Age 12+ too low, 14+ recommended

Compares to:

Complex worker placement and development games

Other editions:

Giochix (it), hobby.eu (pl), Mandala Jogos (pt)



My rating: