

HOW TO IMPROVE LIFE IN COIMBRA

COIMBRA

COLORED DICE FOR FINDING COMBINATIONS

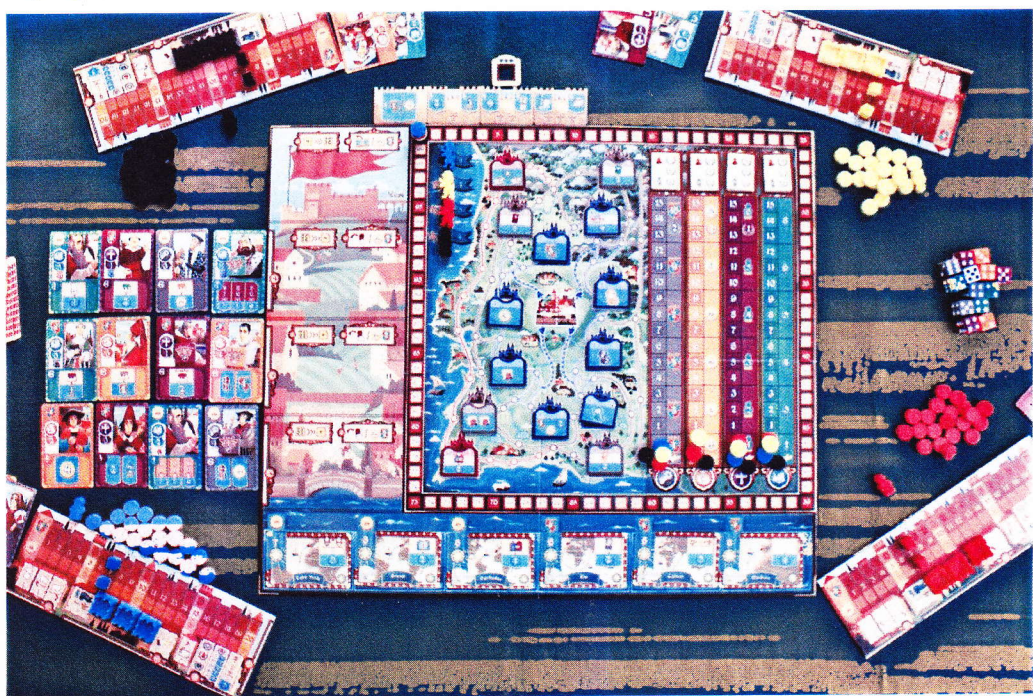
Introduction and set-up

Coimbra is the name of a Portuguese town of about 100.000 habitants, founded by the Ancient Romans (and called at that time Aeminium) and it is situated between Lisboa and Porto: it was also the Capital of that Country and still has a lot to offer to the tourists that every year come and see the small medieval streets going uphill and the beautiful palaces, the churches and the superb Cathedral. But **Coimbra** is also the name of a game designed by Virginio Gigli and Flaminia Brasini, an Italian couple already known for having produced games like *Comuni*, *Egizia*, *Grand Hotel Austria*, *Leonardo da Vinci* and their most successful, *Lorenzo il Magnifico*.

The colorful box (see Picture 1 below) contains the main board, four personal boards, 12 dice in four colors (plus one white), different kind of tiles, personality cards and a good quantity of wooden tokens in four colors. But the most curious components are 12 plastic supports (three per players, in their colors) for the dice: we will see later how they are used.

The set-up of Coimbra is a little bit labori-

ous as we have to place the monastery tiles on the cases of the "region" depicted on the middle of the board, to add the Victory Point Tiles on top of the four "Influence Tracks", randomly select six "Travel Cards" (bottom side of the board) and distribute 3 rows of "Personality Cards" on the left side of the board (Picture 2 shows the board after the set-up).



Each player takes one of the personal boards, 3 plastic supports and 2 cubes, to be placed on position "7" of the two tracks: Guards (a shield) and Money (a golden coin). Then a colored disk must be placed under each of the four "Influence Tracks" another one on the Victory Points (VP) track and a "monk" on the Coimbra case in the map. Before starting the game, eight "starting Cards" must be shuffled and positioned on the table in randomly generated couples: starting from the last player each takes one couple and uses the related actions.

The Game

The First player now takes the 13 dice and throw them on the table. In turn each player selects a die, insert it in one of his plastic supports and place in one of the four big cases of the left side of the board (see again picture 2).

Pietro Cremona

An interesting game of strategy and card combinations that needs a very tactical sense and an overall strategy to be really successful.

The top one is the "Castle": the dice here are inserted with increasing values and the first to play will be the one who placed the low-

est value (in case of tie the player who was first to place his die).

The other three cases represent the town of Coimbra and the most important personalities who lives there: the dice here are inserted in decreasing order and the first to play will therefore be the player with the highest number.

When all the dice (but one) have been selected the actions are resolved starting from the castle and going down:

At the castle, the players that uses a die here may select one of the four available special tiles that allow them to get extra money (or guards), gain Movement point in the map (or VP) or a discount to purchase Travel cards.

On the other three cases you may purchase one of the four personalities that were placed at the set-up. Each card may be played with Money or with Guards, depend-





ing on the symbol that they have. If you look at Picture 3 you see this symbol on the top left side of the cards.

While we are discussing about the cards, we may look deeper at the picture and notice that they have a central drawing that depicts the personality (not important for the game), a symbol with a number on the left (that indicate how many cases your token should advance on the Influence Track of that color) and an action on the bottom that can be "one shot" (lightning bolt) or permanent (those cards are placed under your personal board and will be used later). Some of the cards also have a small symbol of a "Diploma" that will be used to get extra VP at the game's end.

It is always allowed to refuse to pay the amount required by the dice value and avoid the purchase of a card: this will allow the player to take the "reserve action", getting 2 coins and 2 guards (and modifying the position of the cubes on the personal board accordingly).

Some cards also offer (as a gift to who will purchase them) a special tile with two "Crowns": Castle tiles also offer 1-2-3 "Crowns" towards the position of the tokens on the turn track. Before proceeding further, the players show how many crowns they collected to determine the new turn order for the following phases.

It is now time for getting some benefits, all based on the position on the Influence Track and the color (not the value) of the selected dice (see picture 4).

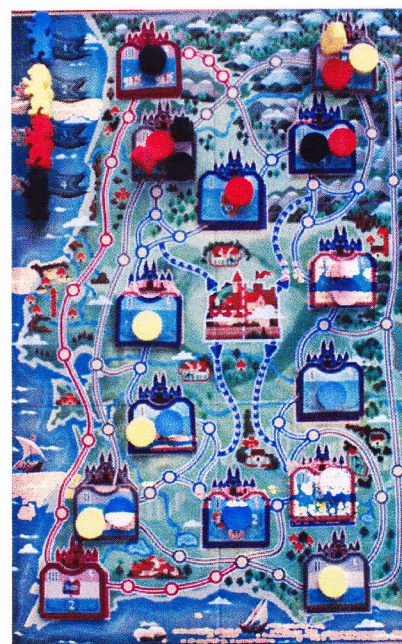
The first track (grey) gives you more guards for each grey die that you own: how many depends on the position of your disk. Looking at the picture, the yellow disk will receive five guards, while the black one will grant ten guards and 2 VP.

The second track (orange) gives Money for each orange die. In the picture the Yellow

player will get 9 coins, while the black will get only 3.

The third track (pink) let you move your monk on the map, visiting the different monasteries. In our example Blue may move 5 cases while Red and Black have only 3.

The fourth track (green) gives VP. Red, for example, for each green die will receive 6 VP, while Yellow and Blue will have 5 each and black only 4.



The central part of the board depicts a map of Portugal with 14 monasteries (see picture 5) and each player has a "monk"



meeples that starts his trip in Coimbra. Every time that a player gets some free "moves" (with the cards, the crown tiles or through the influence track) he will have the opportunity to displace his monk along the network of roads depicted on the map. And every monastery crossed by the monk gives special "gifts": money, guards, movement up the influence track, bonus to be calculated at the end of the game, etc. When a monk arrives (or pass through) a monastery case a colored disk is placed on that case, to mark the receipt of that bonus and to count towards objectives that give extra VP for each disk on the map.

If you remember I explained that at the set-up six "travel cards" should be placed on the bottom section of the board: every card has a "cost" varying from "6" to "8" and they are randomly sorted from a special deck. Three of them are placed on the first 3 cases, where they may be purchased paying Money while the other three are placed on the last 3 cases and must be purchased with Guards. After the purchase a colored disk is placed on the card as all players may select the same cards, if they have enough money and Guards.

Each of them is a real "Objective": looking at the picture we see, to make an example, that the first card on the top left position will grant 2 VP for each monastery of value "1" (look again at picture 5) while the top right one will give 9 VP, etc. One of the four Crown tiles (that you make take if you place a die in the Castle) also gives you the possibility to purchase a Travel Tile immediately AND to purchase a second card at the end of the turn with a discount of "2". This is a very powerful action, but you need to prepare it in advance and collect enough Money and Guards.

The game ends after four rounds, when all the personality cards have been used. Each player adds the following to the VP already gained on the VP track:

The VP for being first, second and third on each Influence track

The VP related to the "Travel Cards"

The VP related to the number of different "Diploma" collected by each player

The VP that are granted by some of the Personality cards

Finally, you add Money, Guards and Crowns and divide the total by 2: the resulting value is the number of VP to be added to your grand total. Of course, the player with the higher score wins the game.

Coimbra is not a difficult game; the rules area clearly explained and come with a lot of pictures and examples: it is also very interactive, especially in the "dice" competition to gain the personality cards, but also when you need to get a die with a specific color (in order to get the benefits of the Influence track) and ... it is taken by an opponent. Usually the first player of the round will take the "white" die, because it is a sort of Joker: its value is used normally on the Personality tracks, but the player has the opportunity to select its color during the Influence phase.

We tested the game with different groups and numbers and we found that it is very good both with 3 and 4 players, while with only two the game changes a lot and becomes more "brainstorm". What I really liked most is the possibility to spring up in some Influences purchasing the right personalities at the right moment (after having accumulated enough resources to be able to offer a lot of Money and/or Guards to get the cards that you really need). In the first two rounds you may also get Permanent

Personality cards (none of them is in the last deck for rounds 3-4) that will help you during the complete game, so be attentive and deeply examine all the displayed cards before deciding where to "bet".

A nice game that I will play again and again in the future. ☑

Pietro Cremona

INFORMATION

Designer: V. Gigli, F. Brasini

Artist: Chris Quilliams

Price: ca. 40 Euro

Publisher: eggertspiele2018

www.eggertspiele.com

PLAYERS:
2-4

AGE:
14+

TIME:
120+

EVALUATION

Drafting, dice placement

Users: For experts

Version: de

Rules: de en es fr it kr pl

In-game text: no

Comments:

Rules well done and illustrated * Planning ahead is necessary * Good interaction among players

Compares to:

Worker placement using dice, card drafting games

Other editions:

eggertspiele (en es fr), Galapagos Juegos (pt), Ghennos Games (it), Rebel (pl), sternenschimmermeer (kr)



My rating:

