The History of the Book: The Game

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Description

The year is 1450. Johannes Gutenberg is printing a book, one of the first in the world. When he is finished, the printed book is born. Follow the history of the book through the next six centuries, through technological advancements, scientific breakthroughs, artistic triumphs, shifts in the socio-political climate, and the fluctuating financial market.

Each player represents a national library aiming to collect the most valuable printed books of Western civilization. Choose to be:

- England
- Germany
- France
- Spain
- Italy
- Americas

As each century passes, your country will gain and lose power. When you gain power, you will be issued more credits with which to build your collection. When you lose power, you will lose credits – and you might even have to sell your books to stay financially afloat. So be strategic when you decide to buy and sell.

Your objective is to create one of the following collections:

- National Canon: Collect six books from a country;
- Most Valuable Books: Collect four of the most valuable books in the game;
- Specialty: Collect six books within a single genre.

The first player to amass one of these collections before the end of the twentieth century, or who holds the most valuable collection as designated by the amount of credits their collection cost at the end of the twentieth century, wins!

To Play

Example of Set Up

Set Up

Each player chooses a country (or region, in the case of the Americas) to represent. The game can be played with a minimum of three and a maximum of six players. Players can also be groups, with a group representing one player.

All EVENTS should be sorted according to their country first and then their century.

Each player places their country's EVENTS in front of them face down in six piles: the 15th, 16th, 17th, 18th, 19th, and 20th century. Players should shuffle each century's EVENTS for their own countries.

All BOOKS should be organized by their century.

Shuffle each century's BOOK cards.

Lay out the BOOK cards in a circle in the center of the playing space. Centuries should go clockwise from 15th to the 20th century.

Shuffle the CHANCE cards. They do not have a designated order. Place the shuffled CHANCE cards face down on the side of the playing space within easy reach.

CREDITS stay in their designated bag. Credits are distributed as each player takes a turn at the dice.

Rules

This game can be played with a minimum of three players or up to the recommended six.

Countries then take their turn in the following order: Germany, Italy, Spain, France, England, Americas.

Germany always takes the first turn, because Johannes Gutenberg was from Germany.

The game begins in the 15th century.

Players can choose either a quick play or long play option: quick play requires one round per century; long play mandates two rounds per century.

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Grow Your Economy

A country rolls the dice. The number on the dice corresponds to the amount of credits the country gets in order to start its collection, so that country can receive anywhere from 1 to 5 credits.

Note: on the first turn, a roll of 6 requires a re-roll to achieve a number between 1 and 5. After the first turn, a roll of 6 requires selecting a CHANCE card. See the subheading *Gamble with Chance*.

Cope with World Events

Once a country learns the amount of credits they will receive following rolling the dice, they must select an EVENT from their country's century.

EVENTS correlate to the relative power of that country during this particular century.

Each EVENT has positive, negative, or both positive and negative signs. Positive signs indicate that country can gain that number of CREDITS from the market. Negative signs mean that country must either give that amount of CREDITS or that credit amount of BOOKS to the country listed as positive.

The victorious (positive) country can specify whether to accept CREDIT or BOOKS from the losing (negative) country. If the winning country wishes to accept books from the losing country, they also get to choose which BOOK or BOOKS they would like to acquire.

If the specified BOOK or BOOKS exceed the amount of debt owed to the victor, the victor must compensate the loser with change: either the equivalent amount of CREDITS or BOOKS. The victor gets to determine how to compensate the loser with change.

Once EVENTS have been used, they should be placed face down in a shared discard EVENTS stack.

Collect Books

At the start of each century, the stack of BOOKS associated with that century are turned over. As the game moves through time, remaining stacks of BOOKS from earlier centuries remain turned face-up to indicate they are still available on the market. Future centuries should have their BOOK stacks remain face-down.

After the dice lands on a number between 1 and 5 and the corresponding number of credits are withdrawn from the bag, a country can choose either to purchase a BOOK with their available credits or save their credits for future use.

Countries can buy as many BOOKS as they want, as long as they have enough CREDITS to make the purchase.

If the country chooses to purchase BOOK or BOOKS, they must select from among the BOOKS available in the current century. As the game moves through times, players can choose from either the current century's BOOKS or from any BOOKS left in the market from previous centuries.

BOOKS are marked with their title, country of origin, cost, if they are considered a most valuable book (MVB), author, year of printing, genre, and significance.

If a country purchases a book, he or she must read the title, genre, country of origin, and price out loud so that the other players can hear what is bought.

Gamble with Chance

After the first round, if a country rolls a 6, that country must choose a CHANCE card.

Follow the CHANCE card's instructions completely before moving to the next country's turn.

Chance cards may be either positive or negative; they represent ahistorical events that can occur to libraries at any place, at any time.

Become a Creditor or a Debtor

If the losing country cannot compensate the winning country according to their preference, the loser goes into debt.

The losing country must balance their debt through one of the following means:

- Compensating the winning country in a subsequent turn. (Debt must be paid off immediately)
- Trading with a third party country for the benefit of the winning country. These trades can be in the winning country's preferred currency, so victors may receive either CREDITS or BOOKS. Note that trades also permit clearing debt with one country and gaining it with another.

Trade with Other Countries

Trading can occur between the country currently taking a turn and any other country.

Trades are most likely to occur when a country goes into debt. However, trades can originate for any reason.

Trades may involve exchanging either CREDITS or BOOKS or both.

When BOOKS are exchanged between countries, the owning country now determines the CREDIT value of that BOOK; the BOOK may be worth the same, less, or more than its original market value.

But, if BOOKS are to be sold back to the market, they retain their original value.

Compete to Create a Collection

Countries take turns in the following order: Germany, Italy, Spain, France, England, and the Americas.

If a country is not present in the game, skip that country and move on to the next with a representative player.

Build a World-Class Collection Over Time

The game continues until one of the three winning types of collections is created or through the end of the 20th century.

If the game continues to the present day, whoever has the most valuable collection of BOOKS, measured by the total number of CREDITS required to purchase the collection, wins.

Countries with CREDITS remaining at the end of the game must complete their collections by buying BOOKS left on the market before collections are compared. Countries with credits remaining get to go in the order of their respective BOOK collections' value. In other words, the richest country goes first, then the next richest country, on down. If two countries have collections of BOOKS of equal value, roll the die to determine who goes first (highest die result wins).

Cards

DICE

The dice is used to distribute CREDITS or determine the use of a CHANCE card. The dice used is a standard, 6-sided die. If the dice lands on a number between 1 and 5, countries get the according number of CREDITS. If the dice lands on a 6, the country must choose a card from the CHANCE pile.

CREDITS

CREDITS function as a replacement for money. The number of CREDITS each country holds is dependent on their roll of the dice as well as the dictates of the EVENT cards. Every country begins with zero CREDITS and must build their economy over time as they take turns rolling the dice and choosing EVENT cards.

CHANCE

CHANCE cards are reshuffled after each draw and remain continually at play throughout the game.

Countries can force one another to gamble at CHANCE by spending either five CREDITS, or an equivalent value in BOOKS, which go back on the market.

EVENTS

Each country gets its own EVENTS deck, which should be split and placed face down by century in front of the country's representative player. The EVENTS cards are not in date order, only in country and century order. Each card awards CREDITS to a country or countries.

If the card represents war or colonization, the victorious country receives CREDITS while the losing country loses CREDITS. The losing country must give their lost credits (or an equivalent CREDIT amount of BOOKS) to the winning country.

Each country receives the same number of EVENTS cards per century. However, EVENTS are not equally weighted between countries in terms of their likelihood to produce positive/negative outcomes. After all, some centuries favor certain countries above others.

If a country does not have enough CREDITS in their holdings to tolerate losses, then that country goes into debt and has to sell CREDITS or BOOKS and/or trade CREDITS or BOOKS in order to compensate the victor of an EVENT.

BOOKS

Each century gets its own stack of BOOKS that include two BOOKS per century per country. Each BOOK is marked with its value, the number of CREDITS required to purchase and/or trade it.