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Rattus Africanus

The 2nd Rattus Expansion

Artwork: alexandre-roche.com



Europe and Northern Africa, 1348. The Black Death spreads to even more regions, not only in Europe, but also in the Islamic regions of Northern Africa. But luckily for the players, the Islamic regions also provide useful personalities that can help them out in various ways. The Arabian Astronomer can provide the players



with more options to avoid the plague, the Caravaner and Explorer provide growth on the board, while maintaining strong diplomatic relations with the powerful Sultan may also prove valuable when the game ends. This expansion adds new exciting options into Rattus and contains additional game materials allowing up to six players to join the struggle against the black plague.

Game Components



1 game board
showing Northern Africa divided into 5 regions



4 class cards
(all belonging to the new class Islamic)



51 region cards, each showing a named region and either two different class symbols or «?»



40 small wooden cubes (20 in each of the two new player colors)



1 Caravan piece



15 diplomat tokens



10 «Move 3 steps»-tokens



65 rat tokens

The Islamic class cards

This expansion contains 4 new class cards, all of which belong to the new class Islamic . Including the class cards from the base game, there are now 10 different class cards. However, in each game only some of these cards are used. In a 2-4 player game, 6 class cards are used. In a 5-6 player game, 8 class cards should be used.

Before the game starts, the class cards that will be used in the game are selected:

- Draw a set of cards at random after shuffling all the class cards, or
- Select a set of cards that all players agree on.

If you have any other Rattus expansion(s), you can of course use class cards from these as well! If two or more cards belonging to the same class are in play, each symbol on a rat token will kill one cube for each card of this class a player holds.

Example: If both the Explorer card and the Sultan card are in play, and two different players hold these cards, they will lose one cube each for each Islamic symbol on the revealed rat when the plague has an outbreak. If both these cards are held by one player, this player will lose two cubes for each Islamic symbol on the revealed rat.

Preparations

To play this expansion, you need all components from the Rattus base game except for the rat tokens, which are replaced by the new rat tokens provided in this expansion. (The new rat tokens are marked with blue borders to distinguish them from the rats from the base game.)

① Place the board from the Rattus base game on the table, and place the new Northern Africa board below it.

The class cards to use in the game are laid out next to the game boards.

Note: In games with less than 6 players, some regions are not used:

- In a 5-player game, the dark colored regions of Europe (Russia and Tartaria) are not used.
- In a 4-player game, the Northern Africa board is not used, and with less than 4 players, some regions are not used (see the rules for the base game).

② Each player chooses a color, and receives all the wooden cubes of this color.

③ The 17 starting rat tokens (the ones marked with light blue borders) are mixed (face down), and one rat token is placed face down in each region of the board.

Note: With less than 6 players, some regions are not used, therefore some of the starting rat tokens will not be placed on the board. Add these to the other tokens.

④ The regular rat tokens are mixed (face down) and kept as a supply beside the board.

Note: With less than 6 players, some rat tokens are removed (unseen) from the game:

- Number of players: 2 3 4 5
- Rat tokens to remove: 24 20 16 8

⑤ The Plague Piece is placed in a randomly chosen region.

⑥ The region cards are shuffled, and each player is dealt a hand of 3 cards. The remaining region cards are placed as a face-down deck next to the board.

Note: With less than 6 players, some regions are not used. Before shuffling the region cards, remove the corresponding region cards from the game.

⑦ If the Sultan class card is in play, place the diplomat tokens next to the board.

⑧ If any class cards of the Chivalry class are in play, place one «Move 3 steps» token on each of them.

Note: With less than 5 players, the «Move 3 steps» tokens are not used.



⑨ The youngest player starts the game. Starting with him and going clockwise around the table, each player places two of his cubes in any region on the board. Thereafter, starting with the last player and going counter-clockwise around the table, each player places two more of his cubes in any region on the board. Finally, starting with the starting player and going clockwise around the table, each player places two more of his cubes in any region on the board. That is, each player starts the game with 6 cubes on the board, as opposed to 4 cubes in the base game.

Note: With less than 5 players, each player only starts with 4 cubes on the board as in the base game.

⑩ If the Caravaner class card is in play, the last player (that is, the player to the right of the starting player) places the Caravan piece in a region of his choice on the board.

⑪ Thereafter, the starting player takes the first turn, and the other players follow clockwise around the table.

Game play

The game is played according to the regular rules from the base game, with the following exceptions and additions:



Extended ability of Chivalry cards

In 5- and 6-player games, since the playing area has grown a bit larger, the Knight (and other Chivalry cards from other expansions) is allowed to move up to 3 steps, that is, one step further than when playing with 4 or fewer players. As a reminder, a «Move 3 steps» token is placed on each Chivalry card in play.



The Region Cards

Each player starts the game with 3 region cards. A player can use his region cards to help him survive the plague during the game, or, if he retains them until the end of the game, he may score a few additional points.

Using region cards to avoid the plague: A player may, at any time when resolving the plague on any player's turn (even just after a rat has been revealed), play a region card from his hand with a class symbol corresponding to a class card he holds. Place the played region card face up on top of the class card. For the remainder of the current plague resolution phase, the player is not considered to hold this class card for the purpose of evaluating rats. The region card is discarded when all the rats in the region have been resolved. Some of the region cards show a question mark («?») instead of class symbols. These region cards can be used to protect a class card of any class. Note that the region cards cannot protect your cubes against «M» and «A» symbols on the rats.

Example: The red player holds the Peasant card (Peasantry). One of the players moves the plague piece into a region containing some red cubes. He turns over a rat, which shows the number 1. The plague will now have an outbreak.

The rat shows a Peasantry symbol. However, to avoid being killed by the plague, the red player plays a region card with a Peasantry symbol and places it on his Peasant class card. Consequently, he does not lose any cubes due to the Peasantry symbol on the revealed rat, neither will he lose cubes due to Peasantry symbols on any subsequently revealed rats in the region. When no more rats remain in the region, the red player discards the played region card.

Using region cards during scoring: After the plague has ravaged all the regions at the end of the game, the players reveal all region cards remaining in their hands. For each region card a player now holds, he scores one point (that is, counts as one extra cube during scoring) if he has the majority of cubes (alone or shared with another player) in the region named on the card. He may however only score at most one point for each region in this way, even if he has more than one card of the same region.

Note: When a player plays a region card with two class symbols he can only protect one of these classes against a plague outbreak. The player chooses which symbol to use when he plays the card.

Note: A region card can only protect one class card. That is, if you hold multiple class cards of the same class (e.g., you hold both the Explorer and the Sultan cards), and play a region card with this symbol, you will still lose cubes due to the other class card(s) you hold of this class. You may however play several cards simultaneously on different class cards, if you want to protect more than one class card.

Note: When you have to discard a region card, place this card on a discard pile. When the deck of cards is exhausted, shuffle the discard pile and place these cards in a facedown deck next to the game board.

The new class cards

Note: Only the player whose turn it is may use the special abilities of his class card(s). He may use the abilities of each card only once each turn, and only before phase C (Move the plague piece) is played.



Astronomer (Islamic)

A player holding this card may draw three region cards from the deck, chooses one to keep and discards the other two.



Explorer (Islamic)

A player holding this card may draw and reveal three region cards from the deck and chooses one of the regions given by these cards to place one of his cubes in that region. Thereafter, the three region cards are discarded.



Sultan (Islamic)

A player holding this card may place one diplomat token under one of his cubes in a region on the board. At the end of the game the players with the most diplomat tokens earn extra points. Cubes with diplomat tokens are treated just like regular cubes, that is, they can be killed by the plague, they can be moved using the Merchant etc. However, a player can never have more than one diplomat token in each region. Different players can have cubes with diplomat tokens in the same region though. The diplomat token will stay with the cube until the cube is killed or the game ends.

Note: If a player loses one or more cubes in a plague outbreak in a region in which he has a cube with a cube with a diplomat token, he removes the regular cubes first. If he has to remove the cube with a diplomat token, the diplomat token is returned to the supply.

At the end of the game, after the plague has ravaged all the regions, the player with the most diplomat tokens under his cubes receives 4 points. The player with the second most diplomat tokens receives 2 points. If there is a tie for the most diplomat tokens, the tied players share 6 points (round down), and no points are awarded for second place. If there is a tie for the second most diplomat tokens, the tied players share 2 points (round down). If using the Sultan card in a 2-player game, only the 4 points for having the most diplomat tokens are awarded, and no points are awarded for second place.



Caravaner (Islamic)

A player holding this card may move the Caravan piece two steps. In the starting region of the Caravan, and in the region the Caravan moves through, the player currently having the most cubes may place an additional cube. If two or more players are tied for majority, they each place an additional cube. In the region in which the Caravan ends its movement, no additional cubes are placed. The Caravan piece will start its movement from this region the next time the Caravaner ability is used. The Caravan may not move back into the region from which it started its movement this turn.

Note: The player may not choose to move the Caravan only one step. He may however choose not to use the ability of the Caravaner card.

Note: Wall pieces (from the Pied Piper expansion) prevent the movement of the Caravan piece.

Game End

As in the base game, the game ends when the supply of rats or one of the players' supply of cubes is exhausted at the end of one of the players' turn. As usual, when the game ends there is a final counter-clockwise round in which all players, except the player having the last regular turn, may use the abilities of their class cards one last time. After the final round, the plague ravages all the regions. Players can still use region cards to avoid the plague. A region card played while the plague is evaluated in a region, will protect a class card in this region only. The player having the last regular turn chooses the order in which the regions are resolved (this may be important if the players have region cards that can affect the plague). Finally, the surviving cubes are counted, points for region cards and diplomats are awarded, and the winner is declared.



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