HAN

The anniversary game:
25 years games
by Michael Schacht

A tactical power struggle for 2 to 5 players, 10 years and up

It is approximately 2200 years ago. China is in the middle of a period of political Instability and on the brink of a change of power. The imperial government has been severely weakened by the peasant uprisings – its demise is sealed. Who will manage to reunite the provinces and initiate the beginning of a new dynasty?

GAME MATERIALS

57 **province cards** in 5 colors
(10 in violet, 11 in yellow, 11 in orange, 12 in green, 13 in red)



100 **houses** in 5 colors
(20 each in blue, green, violet, red and yellow)



45 **emissaries** in 5 colors
(9 each in blue, green, violet, red and yellow)



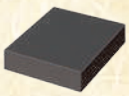
1 **Emperor**



9 **scoring disks**



5 **markers**
for the variants



5 **point cards**



1 **gameboard** with 2 playing maps

Border Disputes (China, consisting of 9 provinces)



Ways of Diplomacy (the capital, consisting of 9 districts)



OBJECT OF THE GAME

By playing cards, players erect their governing houses and get emissaries to the courts of the provinces. In doing so, they obtain power points for skillful house placement and for successful alliances among their emissaries. At the end of the game, the player with the most power points wins.

SET-UP OF THE GAME

- The front side of the gameboard shows the **Border Disputes** playing map, which is suited for 3 to 5 players. The back side contains the **Ways of Diplomacy** playing map, for 2 to 4 players. Depending on the number of participants, you play on the appropriate side; if you are 3 or 4 players, you can choose either of the two maps. Put the gameboard in the middle of the table.



***Border Disputes** playing map, for 3-5 players*



***Ways of Diplomacy** playing map, for 2-4 players*

- Each player gets all playing pieces – houses and emissaries – of one color as his supply. Put one emissary as a counter on space "0" of the scoring track, which is located at the upper edge of the playing map in the form of the Great Wall of China. If you reach 50 points, you set your counter back on space "0" and continue counting; additionally, you get a point card and put it down in front of you. If you exceed even 100 points, you get a second point card.

  Important: The colors of the playing pieces have nothing to do with the colors of the provinces or districts.

- Depending on the side of the gameboard chosen and the number of players, remove the following province cards and put them back into the box:

Border Disputes
5 players: remove no cards
4 players: remove 1 card of each color
3 players: remove 2 cards of each color

Ways of Diplomacy
4 players: remove 3 cards of each color
3 players: remove 4 cards of each color
2 players: remove 5 cards of each color

- Shuffle the remaining province cards. Each player gets 3 cards, face down, and takes them into his hand. Put the rest of the cards next to the board as a face-down draw pile.

  If you play on the **Border Disputes** map, reveal the top 4 cards of the draw pile and lay them as a face-up display next to the pile.

  In **Ways of Diplomacy**, the face-up display consists of only 3 cards.

- Put the point cards and the scoring disks next to the gameboard. The 5 markers are only used for the variants; for the basic game, leave them in the box.
- Players agree on who begins. The starting player receives the Emperor; he places the figure in front of him and keeps it until the final scoring.

COURSE OF THE GAME

Important: Wherever provinces are mentioned below, it means districts for the **Ways of Diplomacy** map.

The starting player begins. Play proceeds clockwise. On your turn, you carry out either "A" or "B":

A) You play 1, 2, or 3 cards from your hand and place playing pieces from your supply in the province of the appropriate color. After that, you draw new cards until you have 3 cards in your hand again.

B) Or you can discard one card and draw another card instead.

A) PLACING PLAYING PIECES

The color of a province card determines in what province you may place a playing piece. With 4 of the 5 colors, you can choose between 2 provinces of the same color.

The following rules apply for the placement of playing pieces:

- You may place playing pieces only in one province during your turn.
- You may place only one piece in a province in which there are no playing pieces yet. If there is at least one playing piece – no matter what color – in a province, you may place up to 2 pieces there.
- You may place only one playing piece per province card.
- You can play 2 cards of the same color as wild cards, which act as any one card of a different color.

As a general reminder, **the 3-2-1-rule** might prove useful: You may use up to 3 cards to place up to 2 pieces in 1 province.

Add the cards you have played to a face-up discard pile next to the gameboard.

If you don't have any pieces of a certain type left in your supply, you can no longer use them for placement.

***Example 1**: Barbara has 1 violet and 2 red cards in her hand. She chooses the red province of Wei and plays 1 red card. This province doesn't contain any playing piece yet; therefore, she may place only 1 piece there on her turn. After that, she has to finish her turn since she is only allowed to place playing pieces in one province.*

Alex has 1 red and 2 green cards. He chooses the red province of Wei as well. Since there is already 1 piece standing there (from Barbara), he may now place 2 playing pieces. He places the first piece using his red card. Then he uses the two green cards as wild cards, which allows him to place the second playing piece there.

Doris has 3 yellow cards in her hand. The yellow provinces of Qi and Ch'in already contain playing pieces. Since a player may place no more than 2 pieces in one turn, she can use 2 yellow cards to place 2 pieces either in Qi or in Ch'in or, instead, use the two cards as wild cards in order to place 1 piece in a province other than Qi or Ch'in.

There are also special rules for the types of playing pieces you may place:

HOUSES

A **house** is always placed on an unoccupied house space of a province. House spaces are connected by roads, which are important in the final scoring. Each house space may contain only one house. If all house spaces of a province are occupied, you may no longer place any house there.



The **Border Disputes** playing map has two additional types of house spaces, with special rules:

Port spaces: There are 7 house spaces with an anchor symbol. On such a port space, you can place a house, following the usual rules. The house is handled like any other house. At the end of the game, a port scoring takes place that can give you additional points.



Border spaces: There are 6 house spaces that are located on the border between provinces. In order to place a house on such a border space, you have to play 2 cards, observing the following rules:

You play **either 1 card** of each of the two bordering provinces



or

2 cards of **the same color** of one of the bordering provinces.





A house on a border space belongs to both of the bordering provinces; other than that, however, it is handled like any other house.

It is possible to place one more playing piece on the same turn, provided you use an appropriate card to place it in one of the two provinces of the border space. For this, you have to observe the usual placement rules.

EMISSARIES

An **emissary** is always placed on the dragon space of a province. A dragon space can contain several emissaries, as described below.

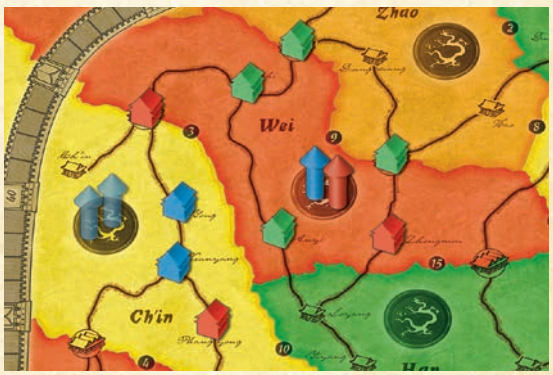


<u>The fundamental rule</u>: The majority of houses in a province determines the maximum number of emissaries allowed on the dragon space of that province. You may not place any emissary in a province without houses.

If, for example, the province of Wei contains 4 green and 2 red houses, there may not be more than 4 emissaries on its dragon space.

Important: You may place emissaries in a province even if you haven't placed any of your own houses there.

***Example 2**: Doris (blue) is thinking of placing additional emissaries in the red province of Wei. Alex (green) has the most houses in Wei. Since he currently has 4 houses there, there may be no more than 4 emissaries in Wei at the moment. Since only 2 emissaries are present there, Doris could place 2 more emissaries. To this end, she could play her 2 red cards.*



***Example 3**: Instead, Doris (blue) chooses to place emissaries in the yellow province of Ch'in. Together with Barbara (red), she has the majority of houses there. Each of these two players has 2 houses there, so there may be no more than 2 emissaries in Ch'in at the moment. Since there is no emissary present there yet, Doris plays 2 red cards as wild cards and 1 yellow card, and places 2 emissaries. It would also have been possible for her to place 2 houses or 1 emissary plus 1 house.*

Important: When all house spaces of a province are occupied with houses, the active player's turn is briefly interrupted, and a **house scoring** takes place <u>in that province</u>.

HOUSE SCORING

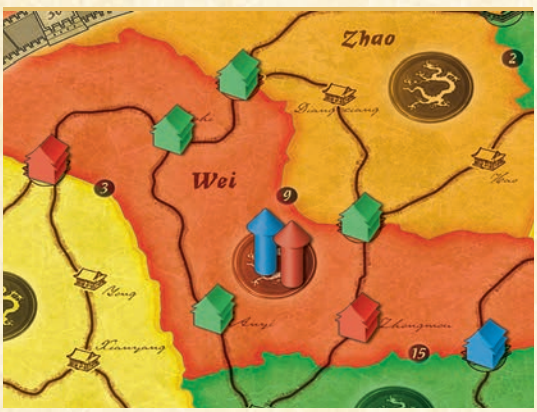
- The player with the **most** houses in the province gets 1 point for each house in that province, regardless of their color.
- The player with the **second most** houses in the province gets 1 point for each house belonging to the player with the most houses.
- The player with the **third most** houses in the province gets 1 point for each house belonging to the player with the second most houses.
- The player with the **fourth most** houses in the province gets 1 point for each house belonging to the player with the third most houses.
- The player with the **fifth most** houses in the province gets 1 point for each house belonging to the player with the fourth most houses.

If a player owns no house in a province, he doesn't score points there. In the case of a tie, all players involved score the same number of points for that position. The next players score according to their positions directly after that.

The players move their counters forward on the scoring track according to the number of points they received.

After the houses in a province have been scored, that province is marked with a scoring disk.

Example 4: *In Wei, Alex (green) has 4 houses, Barbara (red) has 2, and Doris (blue) has 1. Alex owns the most houses and scores 7 points (4+2+1). Barbara has the second most; she gets 1 point for each house belonging to Alex, the player with the most houses (i.e., 4 points). Doris owns 1 house in Wei; she owns the third most houses there and scores 1 point for each house belonging to Barbara, the player with the second most houses (= 2).*



Example 5: *In Qi, Barbara (red) and Chris (violet) have 2 houses each, and Doris (blue) owns 1 house there. Barbara and Chris both have the most houses in Qi; so each of them scores 5 points (2+2+1). In this case, Doris owns the second most houses and gets the points for each house of one of the players with the most houses (= 2).*



Important: Even if the houses of a province have already been scored, you may continue placing emissaries there, provided you observe the placement rules.

B) DISCARDING A CARD

If you are not able or willing to place any piece, you discard one card instead.

DRAWING NEW CARDS

After you have finished your turn, you replenish your hand back to 3 cards. You may draw new cards from the face-up display and/or from the face-down draw pile in any order or combination you want.

Only after you have replenished your hand cards to 3 is the face-up display refilled, if applicable.

Now, it's the left neighbor's turn.

DRAW PILE DEPLETED

When the draw pile has been used up for the first time, shuffle the discard pile and put it next to the board as the new draw pile.

If there are still face-up cards on display next to the pile, they remain on the table and are not shuffled into the new draw pile. If the player whose turn it is hasn't replenished his hand back to 3 cards, he does so now. After that, the face-up display is refilled, if necessary.

END OF THE GAME

When the draw pile is depleted for the second time, the game ends. The current round is still completed, ending with the right neighbor of the player with the Emperor. In this final round, players no longer draw new cards.

The game also ends if no playing piece can be placed any more. In this case, the game ends immediately.

FINAL SCORING

In the final scoring, players get points for the houses that haven't been scored yet, and for the emissaries and the roads.

1) HOUSE SCORING

Now, the houses in the provinces that have no scoring disk are scored. The scoring is done as described above.

2) ALLIANCE SCORING

Here, it's not the emissaries themselves that are scored, but the alliances between the emissaries of two neighboring provinces. There are 15 possible alliances, numbered from "1" to "15," on the gameboard. The alliances are scored in numerical order.

Important: On the "Ways of Diplomacy" playing map, alliances are not possible between all the neighboring districts.

For a better overview, put the Emperor on the number of the alliance that is being scored. Then the scoring is done as described below; and after that, the Emperor is moved to the next number.

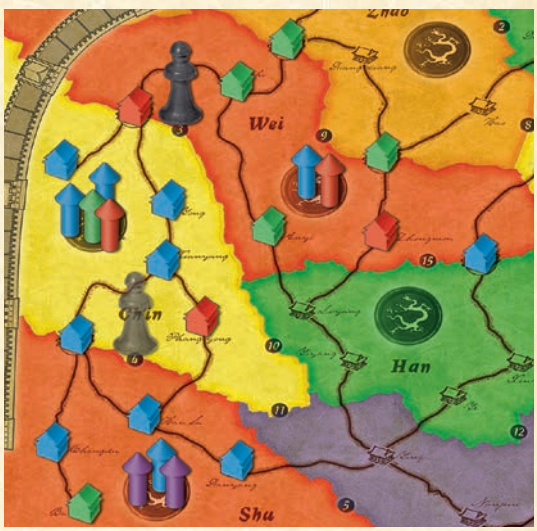
An alliance gives you points only if you have the majority of emissaries in both of the provinces involved. If several players have the most emissaries in a province, all of them have the majority there.

If you have a majority of emissaries in a province, you can even score points for several alliances, provided you have a majority of emissaries in the neighboring provinces as well.

The player with the majority of emissaries in the two neighboring provinces scores 1 point for each emissary in these two provinces, regardless of the color. If more than one player fulfills this condition, each of them gets the points. The other players don't score points for this.

Example 6: *The Emperor is placed on the "3." Now, the alliance between Wei and Ch'in is scored. In Wei, there are 2 emissaries, 1 in blue and 1 in red. Ch'in contains 4 emissaries, 2 in blue, 1 in red, and 1 in green. With this, Doris (blue) has a majority in Wei as well as in Ch'in and scores 6 (4+2) points. The other players go away empty-handed.*

After that, the Emperor is moved to the "4." Now, the alliance between Ch'in and Shu is scored. In Shu, there are 3 emissaries, 2 in violet and 1 in blue. Since only Doris (blue) has a majority of emissaries in Ch'in and only Chris (violet) has such in Shu, there is no alliance, and nobody gets points.



3) ROAD SCORING

For this scoring, a player needs to have 4 or more houses in a continuous row along a road. Branches are not included in the count.

Such a row of houses may also extend across province borders.

The player gets 1 point for each house in the row; each house may be scored only once

Example 7: *In the illustration example above, Doris (blue) has an uninterrupted row of 5 houses in Ch'in and Shu. The house on the bottom left in Shu is a branch of the row and therefore doesn't count. So Doris gets 5 points for this row*

4) PORT SCORING (ONLY FOR THE "BORDER DISPUTES" PLAYING MAP)

Here, the houses on the 7 port spaces are scored in addition. In this context, they are handled like a province.
The scoring is the same as with the normal house scoring.

Example 8: *Six of the 7 port spaces are occupied. Doris has 4 houses on port spaces, Alex has 2. Doris owns the most houses on port spaces and scores 6 points (4+2). Alex has the second most houses there and gets 1 point for each house owned by Doris, the player with the most houses (= 4).*

THE NEW EMPEROR

After all scorings have been finished, the player who has the most points wins the game.

In case of a tie, the player who has the most playing pieces (houses, emissaries) left in his supply wins. If there is still a tie, all players involved share the win.

VARIANT FOR BORDER DISPUTES: FORTIFICATIONS



In the set-up of the game, each player gets 1 marker for his supply. In this variant, the markers are considered fortifications and count as playing pieces. A fortification is always placed on an unoccupied house space, but never on a border space. To place a fortification, you have to play 2 cards in the color of the respective province. After that, you additionally place 1 house on top of the fortification, without having to play another card for this.

Important: You must place a house on the fortification. If you don't have any house left in your supply, you may not place a fortification.

- In the house scoring, a player scores twice as many points for a province in which he has a house with a fortification.
- In the road scoring, a player scores twice as many points for a row of houses in which he has a house with a fortification.
- n the port scoring, a player scores twice as many points if he has a house with a fortification on a port space.

Example 9: *Doris has 3 yellow hand cards. She plays 2 of them and places her fortification on an unoccupied house space in Qi. Then she places 1 house on top of the fortification. Even though she still has another yellow card, she has to end her turn now, because she may place no more than 2 playing pieces on one turn.*

VARIANT FOR WAYS OF DIPLOMACY: MARKET PLACES



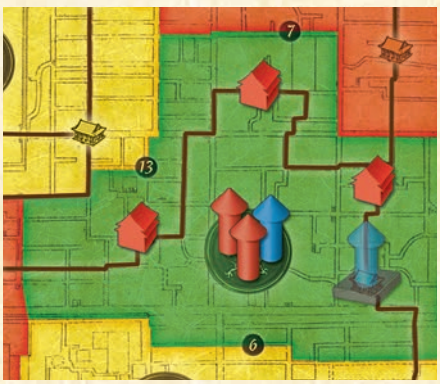
In the set-up of the game, each player gets 1 marker for his supply; in the two-player game, each player gets 2 markers. In this variant, the markers are considered market places and count as playing pieces. A market place is always placed on an unoccupied house space. To place a market place, you have to play 2 cards in the color of the respective district. After that, you additionally place 1 emissary on the market place, without having to play another card for this. The rule regarding the maximum number of emissaries on the dragon space of a province doesn't play a role here. Market places are not included in the house scoring.

Important: You must place an emissary on the market place. If you don't have any emissary left in your supply, you may not place a market place.

Important: Emissaries on market places are not counted among the emissaries on the respective dragon space during the game.

- Before the final scoring, all emissaries on market places are put on the dragon spaces of the respective districts and are included in the alliance scoring.

Example 10: *Doris (blue) can't place any emissary on the dragon space of the green district, since no more than 3 emissaries are allowed to be there at the moment. It seems that nobody can take the majority away from Barbara (red) any more. Nevertheless, in order to keep her chance of scoring for neighboring districts in the alliance scoring, Doris decides to place her market place. To this end, she plays 2 green cards and additionally places one of her emissaries on the market place. Before the final scoring, this emissary is put on the respective dragon space. Now, together with Barbara, Doris has the majority of emissaries in this district.*



Find more information on the author's website: www.michaelschacht.net

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HAN, the double anniversary game! For 25 years, Michael Schacht has been working as a game author; and exactly 25 years ago, ***ABACUSSPIELE*** *was founded. This period – for all of us in the company – has been characterized by an extremely good, cordial and successful collaboration. I thank you very much for this, dear Michael, and wish you all the best for the future!*

Joe Nikisch

25 YEARS OF GAMES BY MICHAEL SCHACHT

Everything started with a self-programmed build-up game as a freeware for the Commodore Amiga ("Nach der Flut"). The first board game followed in 1992, as a make-it-yourself sheet in Spielerei magazine ("Taxi"). Since 2005, Michael Schacht has been inventing games full-time; to now, he has achieved more than 200 publications.

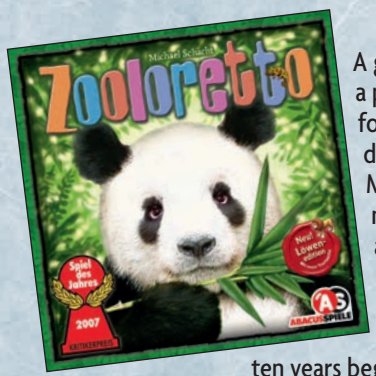


His characteristic feature is the accomplishment of a high degree of fun and excitement using simple means. Besides the "Game of the Year" award in 2007 ("Zooloretto"), other big successes were the "Family Game of the Year" in Denmark and in Norway ("Mondo" and "Tohuwabohu"), as well as the "Best Card Game" ("Coloretto").

DESIGN FINDS A PLACE EVERYWHERE

Michael Schacht thinks up games. Therefore, in Germany he is called a "game author" or "game inventor." But the English term fits much better: In that language, he is a "game designer." This expression is reminiscent of his roots as a graphic designer. He pursued that profession for 15 years before he was able to make developing games his main profession.

A new key idea takes center stage in any design. This applies to games, too. For instance, how about sorting one's cards in a trick-taking game but then only being allowed to play the leftmost or the rightmost card? The jurors of the game designer competition organized by the Hippodice Spieleclub e.V. were so enthused about this clever idea that they selected "Blindes Huhn" as the winner in 1997.



A good design provides a perfect starting point for a further creative development. Michael Schacht has managed time and again to establish new game families. A success story that has already lasted for more than ten years began in 2003 with the card game "Coloretto." The essence of the playing appeal is the dilemma:
Do I select from an existing display of color cards, or do I add a randomly drawn card to the display? If I wait too long, I might have to collect undesirable cards also!

The transferring of this central idea to a zoo with animals instead of the color cards delighted the "Spiel des Jahres e.V." jury so that it awarded "Zooloretto" the main prize in 2007.
Since then, more and more new animals have entered the successful zoo, be it in a small expansion or as an independent game.

Many drafts and approaches are required to create a good design. Some need to ripen and are revisited only later. Others gain new pace by combining them with a second idea. A few of Michael Schacht's early ideas were released in his "Spiele aus Timbuktu" anthology. This way, stand-alone games as well as expansions and sequels found their place in make-it-yourself sheets for cutting out.

If you browse through the early "Spiele aus Timbuktu," you will find, for example, the roots of "Mondo" (2010). The simultaneous, frantic search for suitable tiles from a common supply already challenged players in "Zock" (1999). In "Contra" (2001), two players compete in placing fitting square tiles with different landscapes. The combination of frenzied activity and landscape building constituted the game family around "Mondo."



Design finds its place everywhere. Michael Schacht's versatile ideas are not only contained on a large scale in his games, but also on a small scale in giveaways at fairs, in variants in catalogs and magazines, as well as online in the game offerings on his own website, Boardgames-online.net.

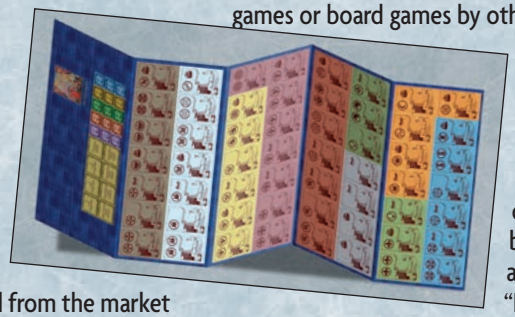
We players congratulate Michael Schacht on his author's anniversary and look forward to the next 25 years full of ideas rich in design.

Kathrin Nos

ONCE AROUND THE WORLD

Towards the end of the 1990s, I took note of his name for the first time. With "Kontor," if not before, the name Michael Schacht became permanently established as a game author in my memory. The reason for this was his richness of ideas. "Kontor" wasn't just a one-dimensional game, it was an entire compilation of games with variants and scenarios. And that publication was far from all, since Michael Schacht continued working on his game and developed additional ideas. Curiously enough, his publisher wasn't having much of it and released only one expansion ("Das Exportlager"). At that time, expansions were not yet discovered as marketing ideas. However, they were really worth playing. The author took the business into his own hands by self-publishing the expansions under his label Spiele aus Timbuktu and selling them at a knocked-down price: The Event cards for "Kontor," for example, cost no more than 95 German Pfennige; that is, just under 50 euro cents.

He was even more inventive when he came up with „Kardinal & König," published one year later. This time also, Goldsieber could not be persuaded to publish more than a single expansion („Der Vatikan"). In this case, Michael Schacht had even more ideas up his sleeve. Maybe the most interesting one was a card game version, which he offered on a cardboard cut-out sheet containing the complete game materials, including the game box. Interestingly enough, two years later, this version made it into Ravensburger's product line as an independent game: „Richelieu und die Königin." Interesting also because the multi-player game had now turned into a pure two-player game.



After "Kardinal & König" had disappeared from the market and was re-published as "China," Michael Schacht even went one better. He changed the setting and also tweaked the game flow. And then he came up with the fascinating idea of developing new playing maps for the online version of the game: Every month, he provided new settings. Players could play in the Arctic, on Mars, and in the London tube system, for example. The playing fun was boundless.

Only one thing was denied to "China": an award. This success had been reserved for the original version of the game. "Kardinal & König" made it on the "Spiel des Jahres" selection list as well as to place 8 of the "Deutscher Spielepreis."

Knut-Michael Wolf

SPIELE AUS TIMBUKTU

In the early 1990s, game author Michael Schacht came into the world of play. And with a bit of pride, I'd like to point out that his first published "board game," "Taxi," was released in Spielerei magazine as a "make-it-yourself" game. Even back then, Michael Schacht was a straightforward and helpful person, a virtue that has been characteristic of him over all the years.



There are numerous gameboards, variants, and expansions for „Kardinal & König" and „China," the two predecessors of „HAN":

AD 850, America, Arctica, Big in Japan, Das Duell, Influence cards, Embassies, Going Underground, Border Disputes, Hellenia, Life On Mars, a mini expansion, Priest & Emperor, Scandinavia, Soviet Union, Starmania, Venezia (all for „China").

App (Web of Power), Duell, a card game, a PC game, Richelieu, Der Vatikan, a pewter figure (all for „Kardinal & König").

In 1999, he took up the idea of manufacturing games made of cardboard, which players then had to make into playable games by using scissors, and he produced "Zock!," his first self-published game under the label Spiele aus Timbuktu. In the following years, many more games were released in this series; later on, some of them were also published as card games or board games by other companies.

What followed was the so-called Railroad Trilogy, with the much-noticed "Mogul." Besides the 11 make-it-yourself games, numerous expansions of the games published by other companies, such as "Kontor," "Knatsch," and "Kardinal & König," were released as well. Within four years, a collection box was needed to accommodate all the games and expansions. In 2005, the same box format was used for the game "Gods."

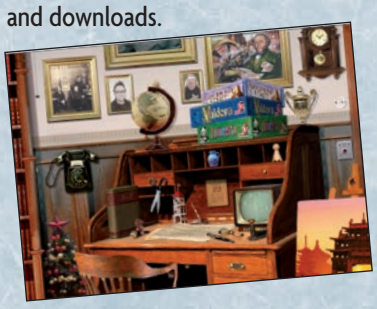
Two years later, the last make-it-yourself sheet was released, on the occasion of the 22nd Spielerei anniversary. "Gondoliere" was a further development of the game "InterUrban," published by Winsome Games. And again, he was immediately willing to collaborate. Since then, numerous games by him have been released in Germany and abroad every year, and there are only very few companies nowadays that haven't yet published a game by Michael Schacht. He covers all types of games, from children's games to casual family games to strategy games.

Michael and I became acquainted in 1991 at "Frankfurt spielt" and since then never lost contact. And I'm glad that he has always remained the cheerful, baseball-cap-wearing companion over all the years and his successes.

Karsten Höser

THE VIRTUAL GAME AUTHOR

Michael Schacht counts among the most active game authors on the Internet. He runs elaborate websites for his success titles "Zooloretto" and "Mondo," studded with lots of information, variants, and downloads.



Boardgames-online.net provides a platform with many of his titles that you can play for free in solitaire mode or against other like-minded players. "China" and "Kardinal & König" are available there as well, and maybe also "HAN" will be in the near future.

The author's website www.michaelschacht.net bundles all online activities and comes over in an especially playful fashion. On the starting page (which changes with every visit), you can heartily poke around, find secret compartments, scare up spiders, or meet the author himself.