

The Great Zimbabwe

A game for 2-5 players by Jeroen Doumen and Joris Wiersinga. Condensed rules by Eric Postpischil, <https://edp.org>.

Introduction

Victory Points and Victory Requirement:

- Each player has a cube that marks their victory points (VP), the number of points they have.
- Each player has a disk that marks their victory requirement (VR), the points they must have to win, initially 20.
 - You may not perform any action that would push your VR over 40.
 - When moving your VR disk (in either direction), put it on top of any disks at its destination.
- VP and VR can always be recalculated from the current game state.

Gods are named in **purple** inside parentheses where they modify regular rules. God effects are listed on page 3.

Craftsmen:

- A primary craftsman requires a resource (raw material on the board) to make a primary good.
- A secondary craftsman requires a primary good and a resource to make a secondary good.

Transportation range:

- A destination is in range if it can be reached in at most 3 (**Eshu**) orthogonal or diagonal steps from the origin.
- Each land space is one step whether empty or not. Multiple spaces under a craftsman are multiple steps.
- Each orthogonally connected body of water is one step (one step in, one step out).

Hubs:

- Each monument (stack of disks) is a hub. Any player may use any player's monuments as hubs.
- Hubs may be used to extend range to a craftsman (not to a resource).
- Each hub is a new start point for a 3-step (**Eshu**) transportation range. Any number of hubs may be chained.
- A path to a craftsman can go by a hub but not through it without using it; a path to a resource can go through it.
- Hubs are considered when placing craftsmen but only paid for when raising monuments.

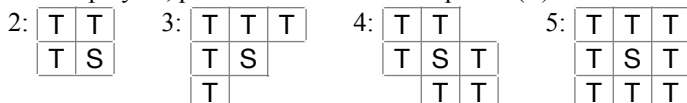
Payments:

- Payments are made using cattle (silver cattle tokens are 1, gold tokens are 3). Change may be made any time.
- Various payments in the game are played onto cards.
- Payment remains on those cards until the revenue phase (III), when the player owning the card takes the cattle.

Setup

Place the start map tile ("ab" on back instead of "The Great Zimbabwe") on the table.

For 2/3/4/5 players, place 3/5/6/8 random map tiles (T) in random orientations around the start tile (S):



Sort the technology cards into 7 face-up stacks by type (2 each) each with its cheaper card on top.

Put the craftsman tiles by or on their matching technology cards.

Display the 5 specialist cards on the table.

Randomly remove 4 god cards from the game. Display the remaining 8 god cards on the table.

Each player:

- receives an overview of play, all markers (cubes, disks, and shields) of one color, and 3 cattle;
- puts one cube on the "1" square of the VP track and one cube near the turn-order track; and
- gives one disk to mark VR and establish bidding order (per next line below).

Shuffle the player's VR disks and place them on the "20" square of the VP track.

In order from top VR disk down, each player puts a disk (a monument) on one of the 6 start spaces on the start tile.

Play

Phase I: The Generosity of Kings (Bidding for turn order)

Move the players' cubes off the turn-order track.

Sort the players' empire plaques in order of greater VR earlier (**Shadipinyi**). In ties, bottom VR disks are earlier.

In the same order as the plaques, players bid more cattle than the previous bid (more than 0 to start) or drop out.

- When a player bids, they pay the full amount of their bid (**Elegua**), even if they paid an earlier bid:
 - The first bid is paid one cattle to the first plaque, one to the next, and continuing in rotation.
 - Subsequent bids resume with the next plaque following the payment of the previous bid.
- When a player drops out, their turn-order cube is moved to the last empty spot of the turn-order track.

Continue bidding in rotation until all players have dropped out. Then each player takes the cattle on their plaque.

The Great Zimbabwe

Phase II: Religion and Culture (Actions)

Once around in turn order, each player may do each and all of the following (**Dziva**), once each, in any order:

- Choose 1 god or specialist.
- Use a specialist they possess and can afford. This can be done as separate actions once for each specialist.
- One of: Build 1 monument, place any number of craftsmen, or raise any number of monuments.

Choose a god: Take any god card. Adjust your VR as it shows. Each player may do this only once per game.

Note: Gu rebates VR of previous technology and may be taken if your net VR after this effect does not exceed 40.

Choose a specialist: Take any specialist card. Adjust your VR as it shows (**Gu**).

In the turn you take a specialist, you must pay it (thus activating its use, although you might gain no benefit).

Use a specialist: Pay one of your specialists (to their card) as shown on the card and obtain its benefits.

Builder (VR+2): For each craftsman you build this turn, receive 2 cattle placed on the builder card from the bank.

Herd (VR+6): Place 2/4/6 cattle on the herd card to receive 1/2/3 cattle placed on the card from bank.

Nomads (VR+1): When building a new monument, you may build adjacent to an existing one (on empty land).

Rain Ceremony (VR+1): Place 1 water tile for 3 cattle. Place only on fully empty land (start spaces are not empty).

- Use is limited to 8 tiles supplied with game. If this specialist is paid, you must place a tile.

Shaman (VR+3): Place 1 resource for 2 cattle. Place only on completely empty land (start spaces are not empty).

- Use is limited to 16 tiles supplied with game (3 diamond, 3 ivory, 4 clay, 6 wood). If paid, you must place a tile.

Build a monument:

Place one (**Obatala**) new monument (1 disk) on any empty land area (start spaces are not empty) not orthogonally or diagonally adjacent to another monument. Score 1 VP. (Any number may be built, over multiple turns.)

Place craftsmen:

When placing a craftsman of a type whose technology card you do not have, take the card and adjust your VR.

- If other players have already taken both cards of the type, you may not place the craftsman.
- You may take multiple technology cards in a turn, but never take a second technology card of the same type.

Place any number of craftsmen, subject to token availability (3 per type) and requirements below.

- To place a secondary craftsman, a corresponding primary craftsman had to exist before you started this turn.
- Take a craftsman tile and place it on completely empty land (start spaces are not empty).
- Put one of your ownership markers (truncated ovals representing shields) on the tile.
- The tile must be within transport range to at least one of its required resource (shown on card) that is not also within range of another of the same type of craftsman (primary and secondary are different) without using hubs.
- A secondary craftsman tile must also be within transport range to at least one of its required primary craftsman (shown on card). Any number of hubs may be used.
- Pay to the bank the number of cattle shown on the craftsman's technology card.
- Score 1-3 VP as shown by 1-3 laurel wreaths on the craftsman's technology card.

Set and/or raise prices. (You may use the place craftsmen action just for the purpose of raising prices.)

- If you acquired new technology cards, set the prices for their goods by putting a 1/2/3 price marker on each card.
- You may raise (not lower) prices of any or all of your previous technologies.

Raise monuments:

Raise any number of your monuments one level each, adding a disk to the monument (once per monument per turn).

Score 2/4/6/8 VP when raising a monument to 2/3/4/5 levels. (Cumulative 1/3/7/13/21 VP for 1/2/3/4/5 levels.)

You must provide ritual goods, all different (**Tsui-Goab**), 1 per monument level before raising, by paying craftsmen:

- Primary or secondary goods may be provided, but only the best available may be provided—a primary good may not be provided once there is a craftsman on the board producing a secondary good from that type of good.
- Pay a craftsman within hub transport range of the monument their asking price (**Anansi**) to their card and mark used an unused (**Atete**) resource they require that is within no-hub range of them by putting a wood cross on it.
- For a secondary good, also pay (**Anansi**) a required primary craftsman within hub range of the secondary craftsman and mark used an unused (**Atete**) resource the primary requires that is within no-hub range of them.
- Pay the bank (**Qamata**) 1 cattle for each use of a hub (multiple cattle for multiple uses of one hub).

Phase III: Revenues

Each player takes cattle from all their cards into their stock.

The bank gives each player 1 cattle per level in their highest monument (**Engai**).

Phase IV: Let Us Compare Mythologies

If any player's VP equals or exceeds their VR, the player who overshot the most wins.

- Break ties (**Xango**) in favor of most VP, and break further ties in favor of earlier player order.

If no player reached their VR, remove the used-resource markers from the board and continue with Phase I.

God Cards

Anansi, The Trickster (used in phase II, VR+5)

The player who adores Anansi pays 1 cattle per good regardless of set price (still pays both primary and secondary).

Atete, Goddess of Fertility (used in phase II, VR+5)

The player who adores Atete may use each resource a second time (placing a second used marker on the first).

Dziva, Who Changes Her Mind (used in phase II, VR+2)

The player who adores Dziva may raise and/or lower each of their technology prices at the start of their turn.

Elegua, God of Beginnings (used in phase I, VR+4)

The player who adores Elegua may use up to 3 cattle from the bank when paying their first bid of the phase.

Engai, Provider of Cattle (used in phase III, VR+5)

The player who adores Engai receives 2 additional cattle in each revenue phase.

Eshu, God of Connections (used in phase II, VR+4)

The player who adores Eshu has a transportation range of 6 instead of 3 (for all purposes on their turn).

Gu, The Master Craftsman (used in phase II, VR+4)

The player who adores Gu pays only 1 VR for each acquired technology card. Rebate technology acquired earlier.

Obatala, Creator of Mankind (used in phase II, VR+7)

The player who adores Obatala may build 2 monuments during each build-monument action.

Qamata, God of Trade (used in phase II, VR+2)

After the Qamata card is taken, all players pay hub fees to it. The player who adores Qamata takes them in phase III.

Shadipinyi, God of Drunks (used in phase I, VR+4)

During turn-order bidding, insert Shadipinyi's plaque before the players' and include it in payment rotation. The player who adores Shadipinyi receives the money from this plaque as well as their own. (Shadipinyi does not bid.)

Tsui-Goab, The Shape Shifter (used in phase II, VR+3)

The player who adores Tsui-Goab may use the same type of good multiple times when raising each monument.

Xango, Lord of Drummers (used in phase IV, VR-2)

The player who adores Xango wins ties in the amount by which players overshoot their VR.

Suggestions

Player Aids That Do Not Alter Game Play

Show prices by putting 1/2/3 price markers directly on craftsmen instead of on their technology cards.

- If price markers run out, use 1-3 shields (instead of just the 1) or other tokens.
- Your craftsmen of the same type must show the same price.

Put some token (from outside the game supplies) on secondary craftsmen to make them easier to perceive.

Put some token (from outside the game supplies) on primary craftsmen that are superseded by secondary craftsmen.

Game Play Change

If you find Dziva underpowered, allow the player acquiring Dziva to use its power immediately instead of just at the beginnings of future turns.