**GURPS** 

Fourth Edition

# REALM MANAGEMENT<sup>™</sup>



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## CONTENTS

Introduction 3	Education Rating22	Do Nothing
My Own Kingdom	Management Skill23	<i>Who Rolls?</i>
by My Own Hand 3	Realms of Faith23	Nuanced Maneuvers
Publication History	Habitability23	Gather/Extract34
About the Author	Example of Realm Creation	Improve34
About GURPS	( <i>cont'd</i> )24	Optional Rule: Significant
	Reaction-Time Modifier24	Assistance Actions
1. BUILDING A REALM 4	Realm Modifiers24	Manufacture35
Designing the Realm 4	Realm Enhancements24	Marshal Manpower
Realm Size Table4	Realm Limitations26	Negotiate35
Glossary	Example of Realm Creation	The Wheel and <b>GURPS</b>
Resources 6	(cont'd)27	Boardroom and Curia 36
Resource Point	Finalizing the Realm 28	Plan36
Assignment Guidelines 6	Realm Description	Reconnoiter36
Example of Realm Creation:	<i>Off the Map</i>	Sabotage
The Necro-Kingdom	Social Resonance	Threaten
of Zarthus	Realms as Patrons	Trade
Priorities for	or Enemies28	Buying/Selling Resource
Resource Points	Starting Reaction Rolls	Points in Play3'
Optional Rule: Splitting	for Realms	Optional Rule: Non-Scaling
Орнонаі Rule: Spitting Agriculture Points	Income Resources	Resources
Agriculture Points  Optional Rule: Splitting	Realm Value	Wait
Workforce Points7	Military Resources	Managing a Realm 38
Agriculture Points7	Optional Rule: Characters	Happenings Within a Realm
Workforce Points 8	and Realm Value30	Disruptions Table
Natural Resources Points 8	Optional Rule: Time to	What Do Adventurers Do When
Natural Resources Points8  Nonhuman Labor and	Found a Realm	Not Running a Realm?39
Nonhuman Labor and Exotic Resources8	Optional Rule: PC-Founded	The Four Horseman
	Realms30	The Four Horseman Writ Large
Luxury/Precious Goods Points	Revenue	Writ Large
Goods Points		Windfalls Table4. Where the Black
Example of Realm Creation	Starting Revenue31 Inhabitants' Status31	Where the Black Swan Flies4
(cont'd)9		
Technology Level (TL)9	Example of Realm Creation	Expansion and Growth
Cultural Traits	(concluded)	Revolution and Dissolution4  Dissolution4
Realm Inhabitant	Inhabitants' Wealth	Dissolution
Racial Traits	2. The Wheel 32	Appendix: Examples 40
Population	Maneuvers for Realm	The Necro-Kingdom
Citizen Loyalty		of Zarthus
Infrastructure Rating11	RESOLUTION	The New Venetian Republic 4
Power and Privilege	Free Actions32	The New Venetian Republic 4  The Hegemony
Conformity Rating (ConR)13	Internal Maneuvers32	The negemony
Splitting Hairs:	Multiple Maneuvers	Index
Split Realm Ratings 13	Allocate Resources33	Realm Modifiers 5
Openness Rating (OR)	Bluff	
Government Types	Demolish	REALM DESIGN FORM 52
Example of Realm Creation		<del></del>
$(cont'd) \dots \dots$	· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·	- 44 4
New, Merged, Variant,	It is not what we	have that will make
and Weird		
Government Types16	us a great nation; it i	is the wav in which
Optional Rule: Non-Independent		
Realms	we use it.	I
Join the Revolution!20		<u> </u>
Economy Types20	-	– Theodore Roosevelt
Defense Bonus and Terrain22		1,000,000

## Introduction

GURPS already has rules for describing cities as adventuring locations (GURPS City Stats), and for organizations and how they relate to adventurers (GURPS Boardroom and Curia) – but what about for ruling a kingdom? Give the game's propensity for realism, gameability, and adaptability, that shouldn't be too hard . . . with the right rules. GURPS Realm Management provides such a system, with mechanics for running a realm, tables for disruptions and windfalls, new uses for skills, and much more.

It should be noted that this supplement estimates the statistics of certain modern-day polities to the best of the author's ability, as a way to help readers visualize fictional or historical realms. No offense is meant in pursuit of this goal!

#### My Own Kingdom by My Own Hand

Though this supplement presents a kind of a mini-game that one could, if so inclined, use to run simulations of kingdoms and nations, that isn't what it's for! It's meant for campaigns that emulate certain types of fiction and pop culture, and shouldn't be trotted out as yet another thing on the players' "to do" list. The easiest campaigns into which to insert this material are those centered on nation building and growth – but the PCs might run kingdoms between adventures in *GURPS Dungeon Fantasy*, build post-apocalyptic settlements in *GURPS After the End*, and so on. In short, as

with *GURPS Mass Combat*, think carefully about whether the added complication improves the entire campaign or merely fits the interests of a player or two.

#### **Publication History**

The system in *GURPS Realm Management* is the first of its kind, though it borrows heavily from concepts found in *GURPS Boardroom and Curia*, *GURPS City Stats*, and *GURPS Space*. *GURPS Mass Combat* is required to run large-scale battles, and this supplement references it frequently.

#### **ABOUT THE AUTHOR**

Christopher R. Rice has been published in *Pyramid* multiple times (including its newest iteration). He's also authored, co-authored, or contributed to eight *GURPS* supplements (and counting!) on a range of subjects. While Christopher doesn't have a kingdom to rule, he does like to write about such things. Of course, if he's not writing about *GURPS*, he's blogging about it. Visit his site, "Ravens N' Pennies" (www.ravensnpennies.com), for more *GURPS* goodies.

He wishes to thank L.A., for being the wonderful, amazing, inspiring woman that she is – not every man gets his muse personified in the flesh! He also wishes to thank his gaming group, the Headhunters, for alpha testing this system; his family (especially his mother); Elizabeth "Archangel Beth" McCoy, his Sith Editrix mentor; Trevor Sone; and Euan Hastie, John Dallman, and Michele Armellini.

#### ABOUT GURPS

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*Errata.* Everyone makes mistakes, including us – but we do our best to fix our errors. Errata pages for *GURPS* releases are available at **sjgames.com/errata/gurps**.

Rules and statistics in this book are specifically for the *GURPS Basic Set*, *Fourth Edition*. Page references that begin with B refer to that book, not this one.

#### CHAPTER ONE

## BUILDING A REALM

Most *GURPS* campaigns avoid putting the PCs in charge of kingdoms, nations, or empires – or limit such lofty (and bureaucratic) heights to *retired* adventurers. *GURPS Realm Management* enables GMs to continue with new challenges for rulers, or even to start campaigns *based* on high-stakes political negotiations – or outright conquest.

But first, a word of caution: *Realm Management* is *not* a "bean counting" system. It emulates running a kingdom in much the same sense that *GURPS Mass Combat* simulates running a battle or *GURPS Boardroom and Curia* describes an organization.

It does this by first creating the *realm* (kingdom, empire, duchy, etc.) to be managed. Optionally, for an increase in

Realm Value (pp. 29-30), the creator can purchase *realm enhancements* (pp. 24-26). These qualities should reflect the realm's geography or climate in some way. This doesn't require a map, but it's useful at least to sketch out the local area and its borders with neighboring realms. Realms may also have *realm limitations* (pp. 26-28) that hamper them in some way. "Realm enhancements" and "realm limitations" are usually referred to as "enhancements" or "limitations" in this work, save where the full terms make matters clearer.

Each realm also has a number of other traits (Resource Points, technology level, etc.) that define how it relates to the surrounding campaign world.

### DESIGNING THE REALM

A "realm" is the entire area that a particular person or group rules. A small city-state that includes the actual township and its surrounding lands is a realm . . . as is an entire nation, or even an empire. The realm's size – its *Realm Size Value* on

the *Realm Size Table* (below) – is determined by roughly how much area the realm occupies in square miles. Start with the "Typical Realm Size Value" listed on the table below for the value closest to the desired area, and then adjust it.

#### Realm Size Table

Typical Area	Area Knowledge Class	Typical Realm Size Value	Examples (with adjusted values)	Notes
All inhabited solar systems in a galaxy	Galaxy	+36	Milky Way Galaxy	[1]
100 planets	Interplanetary State	+30	United Federation of Planets	[1]
50 million square miles	Planet	+24	Earth (land area; +24); Mars (+24); Moon (+22); Krypton (+23)	[2]
500,000 square miles	Large Nation	+18	Russia (+21); United States (+21); France (+17); Ghana (+16)	[3]
5,000 square miles	Barony, County, Duchy, or Small Nation	+12	South Korea (+15); Denmark (+14); Jamaica (+12); Luxembourg (+10)	[3]
50 square miles	City-State, Micro-State, or Tribal Land	+6	Hong Kong (+9); Singapore (+8); Liechtenstein (+6)	[3]
0.5 square mile or smaller	Village and Surrounding Lands	0	Monaco (+1); Vatican City (-1); medieval knight's fief	[3]

#### Notes

[1] Realm Size Value for the whole galaxy, or the whole of inhabited space, depends on the number of inhabited planets and their total effective land area, and could be *much* larger than the table suggests! The same applies to a large interstellar state that isn't the whole of inhabited space.

- [2] The Earth's total area is about 200 million square miles, but only the land is densely habitable for humans.
- [3] Typical width (diameter) for a roughly circular realm: 800 miles for a large nation; 80 miles for a small nation; 8 miles for a city-state; 0.8 miles for a village and surrounds.

The table divides realms into types broadly corresponding to the area classes for the Area Knowledge skill (pp. B176-177), although the names are modified in some cases. Increase or decrease the typical Realm Size Value for comparatively large or small realms; for instance, a "large nation" has a Realm Size Value of +18, but the United States (about 3.8 million square miles) has +3,

for +21, while Ghana (about 92,000 square miles) has -2, for +16.

Usually, the upper and lower limits for the area of a given Area Knowledge class are 10× larger or smaller than the typical size, but exceptions can be made for realms of basically different types; e.g., Russia is treated as a large nation, not a small planet, even though its area is about 6.6 million square miles.

#### GLOSSARY

**Agriculture Points:** Total number of *Resource Points* representing surplus food, medicine, fuel, and so on.

**Carrying Capacity:** Average maximum number of people that can live within a certain number of square miles.

Citizen Loyalty: Measure of the average devotion that an inhabitant of the realm shows its government and their leaders.

**Conformity Rating (ConR):** Rates how closely connected the ideals of the realm's people and government are.

**Control Rating (CR):** Rates how heavily taxed and controlled substances, acts, or items are in the realm.

**cultural traits:** Traits common among the realm's people. Separate from *realm inhabitant racial traits* – the realm may have one, both, or neither.

**disruption:** Event with a negative effect on the realm.

**dissolution:** When the realm loses cohesion and no longer acts in a unified fashion – i.e., its "death."

**economy type:** How the realm interacts with goods and services distribution; see p. 20-22.

**Education Rating (ER):** Rates the general education of the realm's citizens.

**government type:** System that rules over the realm. Can vary greatly; see p. 14-20.

**Habitability:** Measure of how forgiving the realm's land is. The lower Habitability, the harsher the realm's lands are for its inhabitants.

**Infrastructure Rating (IR):** Rates the realm's transportation and communication capacities.

**inhabitants' Status:** Range of Status levels of the realm's inhabitants, including its rulers.

**inhabitants' Wealth:** Range of Wealth levels of the realm's inhabitants, including its rulers.

**Luxury/Precious Goods Points:** Total number of *Resource Points* representing pearls, spices, and the like.

**Management Skill:** Overall skill of those in charge when it comes to running the realm.

**maneuver:** One of the actions on pp. 34-37. Realms perform one or more actions per *turn*, and may also be "aggressive," "conservative," or "wary."

**Military Resources (MR):** Amount of money the realm gets to spend on more military units or to sustain those it already has.

**Natural Resources Points:** Total number of *Resource Points* representing forests, mines, wild edibles, etc.

**Openness Rating (OR):** Rates how welcoming the realm's people and government are to outsiders.

**population:** Total number of people in the realm, including its workers and their dependents.

**Reaction-Time Modifier (RTM):** Rates how fast the realm reacts to a given situation.

**realm enhancement:** Trait that give the realm as a whole positive or beneficial effects.

**realm inhabitant racial traits:** Racial template of the beings living within the realm.

**realm limitation:** Trait that give the realm as a whole negative or adverse effects.

**Realm Size Value:** Number used to determine the realm's *population,* area, etc.

**Realm Value:** Realm's total cost. Based on its *population* and then modified by the costs of *cultural traits, realm enhancements, realm inhabitant racial traits,* and *realm limitations.* The costs of military units and starting *Resource Points* are added after this.

**Resource Points (RP):** Assets the realm can bring to bear to accomplish things. Lose too many and you might lose the realm! Some points (*Agriculture Points* and *Natural Resources Points*) can be spent to stave off famines, others (e.g., *Workforce Points*) can be spent voluntarily to fuel maneuvers when using *the Wheel*, and yet others (e.g., *Luxury/Precious Goods Points*) mostly represent alternative wealth.

**Revenue:** Amount of money the realm receives every *turn*. This is extra money left over after paying all needed costs, and can be spent on other projects as the realm's controller decides.

**revolution:** The realm's populace revolting, possibly changing *economy type* and/or *government type*. Other changes are possible, at the GM's discretion (e.g., the loss of public schools might cause a drop in the realm's *Education Rating*).

**Social Resonance:** How other realms and characters perceive the realm as a whole. High Social Resonance produces a realm that's well-liked by outsiders; low Social Resonance produces one that's disliked or even hated.

**Starting Revenue:** Realm's "savings" when it starts a given game. Fluctuates after game play begins.

**technology level (TL):** As explained on p. B511.

**turn:** A month where realms interact with one another to trade, rattle sabers, etc.

**Wheel, the:** "Combat" system that allows realms to interact with one another.

windfall: Event that provides a positive benefit to the realm.

**Workforce Points:** Total number of *Resource Points* representing the realm's excess labor pool.

An interplanetary state occupying an entire spiral arm of a galaxy might include a million planets, giving Realm Size Value +42 by continuing the progression on the table, but it wouldn't be defined as a galaxy unless it were the whole of inhabited space in the campaign.

Some realms occupy complex or ill-defined spaces rather than simple blocks of territory. For instance, a tunnel complex may sprawl under thousands of square miles of land – some of which is accessible for occasional exploitation - but have a regularly inhabited area equal to that of the tunnel floors. Equally, an asteroid-mining base may have a small area of densely populated decks, but govern a population that includes many asteroid miners who spend much of their time in a vast volume of nearby space, working the rocks found within it. For such a realm, assign an effective Realm Size Value by comparing its population (p. 10) to sustainable population levels for typical realms at its technology level. For example, a tunnel complex with 60,000 inhabitants on the Moon would be comparable to a typical realm of 150 square miles at TL9, and be treated as a city-state with Realm Size Value +7, although it spreads across many hundreds of miles of lunar surface and controls mines even further afield.

#### Resources

Resource Points (RP) represent the realm's combined manpower, assets (tangible or otherwise), and general "power." The more RP it has, the bigger an impact it can make on its people and the world around it. Resource Points are allocated during a turn (a "round" of action and reaction using *The Wheel*, pp. 34-45). Once spent, RP are *gone* and must be reacquired using one of the methods in Chapter 2. A realm that overreaches itself to accomplish something – spending *all* of its RP on a maneuver (pp. 32-37) – risks dissolution if it fails, as it has nothing left for internal stability!

Realms can purchase any number of starting Resource Points at realm creation – but after play begins, RP must be purchased, traded for, earned, etc. The GM decides how many RP a realm starts with; in this case size doesn't matter! A realm's RP increases its final value, so don't go to crazy.

Resource Points are purchased separately from anything else (like Military Resources). Each Resource Point costs 0.5% of a realm's base Realm Value (pp. 29-30), before including any modifiers. For example, if a realm's base Realm Value were \$12,000,000, each starting Resource Point would cost \$60,000.

#### RESOURCE POINT ASSIGNMENT GUIDELINES

Resource Points are then distributed among four fields: Agriculture Points (pp. 7-8), Luxury/Precious Goods Points (p. 9), Natural Resources Points (pp. 8-9), and Workforce Points (p. 8). Each area can be positive (the realm has extra to trade or use elsewhere), negative (the realm must somehow acquire more), or zero (the realm is just meeting its needs). For example, Agriculture Points 3, Luxury/Precious Goods Points -1, Natural Resources Points 2, and Workforce Points 2 would mean the realm has abundant resources but few luxury exports.

A negative value in any category is *bad!* On any turn on which your realm has one or more negative RP values, roll your realm's Management Skill (p. 23), at -1 per 2 points you're negative (round in the positive direction). Failure means the realm loses *another* RP per three full points of margin of failure. Success means the realm is stable – for now. Critical success restores an RP to the lowest value; critical failure subtracts an additional RP from the highest value. Stay too long at negatives and you risk the people rising up or the realm dissolving (p. 45).

Realms are considered to be feeding themselves unless famine or drought breaks out. There's no need to "assign" Agriculture Points or Natural Resources Points to feed the realm's inhabitants.

A realm's Resource Points suggest its current priorities. In most cases, a value of 0 means the realm is scraping by in that respect – not enough excess is being generated to export or progress significantly, but it's holding steady.

#### Example of Realm Creation: The Necro-Kingdom of Zarthus

Here to illustrate realm creation is the Necro-Kingdom of Zarthus: a dire place full of necromancers, undead, and rocks. For the full write-up, see p. 46.

Having existed for the better part of 2,000 years, Zarthus is ruled by the Fell-King and his Nightmare Court of feudal necromancer-aristocrats. Its natural terrain and intimidating environment (the sun almost never shines, thanks to a spell gone wrong centuries before) make it incredibly difficult to attack by outside forces . . . and for farmers to grow crops. Most food and goods are imported, as Zarthus seems to have an unlimited supply of "black gold" (dark-colored gold) in its mountain mines. Since the last crusade against it – hundreds of years ago – Zarthus has slowly become more focused on its people. The current

Fell-King has decreed public education for all mages and non-mages alike, and has increased the warding around settlements to keep feral undead at bay.

The GM decides that Zarthus is a large nation. Typical area for such a realm is 500,000 square miles, but the GM prefers about 1/3 of that area and settles on 160,000 squares miles, reducing Realm Size Value from +18 to +16. This will be used in calculations later on.

The GM also decides on 25 starting Resource Points (cost to be calculated later). The GM splits these up as 9 Agriculture Points, 3 Luxury/Precious Goods Points, 3 Natural Resources Points, and 10 Workforce Points. This is for the first turn only, of course, but it gives Zarthus an edge to start.

#### Priorities for Resource Points

The priorities for realms tend to be *producing food* and *defending the realm*. An army marches on its stomach, whether it's invading or defending, and starving soldiers don't make good guards. Conversely, an unguarded food supply is at risk of being taken away.

Agriculture Points: Important to have when starting out, as they can be used to stave off famine or be traded away. A good bargain!

Luxury/Precious Goods Points: Most new realms don't need to worry about these Resource Points when starting out. They may become more important later on.

Military Resources: This is an important expense to keep in mind when considering the number of Resource Points to start with and how to distribute them. A realm without enemies might not need a large military – this could describe colonies on newly discovered planets, hard-to-access mountain valleys, islands, magically protected locations, or alternate dimensions where the gates are (theoretically) closed behind the settlers. There may be an internal policing force that can be repurposed as a defensive army or act to protect individual towns, but a hostile nation would view such a realm as ripe for plunder! If you're not naturally protected from your neighbors' applitions

rally protected from your neighbors' ambitions, it's advisable to purchase a few military elements for protection and to act as peace officers. See p. 30 for more details.

Natural Resources Points: A realm with no natural resources to exploit is in trouble, but not terribly so. Out of all the allocation priorities for Resource Points, this one is the second to last (with Luxury/Precious Goods Points coming last). New resources can be found and exploited, as long as food and labor hold out.

Starting Revenue: See p. 31 for more information on how to derive this value. More wealth may be purchased via realm enhancements (pp. 24-26). This could be in addition to or instead of buying more Resource Points. A larger Starting Revenue lets you pay for more mercenaries to defend against neighbors who covet the natural resources acquired with Resource Points. For that matter, you can hire armies to go out and covet someone else's stuff...

*Workforce Points:* Every realm needs workers to bring in crops, mine minerals and ores, etc. It's suggested that all realms start with at least 1 Workforce Point, as many of the maneuvers in Chapter 2 rely on them to *do* things.

The most versatile substance on the planet, and they used it to build a Frisbee.

- Ultron, in **Avengers: Age of Ultron** 

#### Optional Rule: Splitting Agriculture Points

The GM may want to split Agriculture Points into *Animal Husbandry Points* and *Farming Points*. If so, RP of either type can be used to feed a realm, but not to satisfy the requirements of some kinds of luxury goods; for instance, Animal Husbandry Points would count for cultivating silkworms for silk but not for selling something like beer. The GM must use their judgment!

When dividing Agriculture Points this way, note the split in parentheses; e.g., "Agriculture Points 10 (Animal Husbandry 4, Farming 6)."

#### Optional Rule: Splitting Workforce Points

Workforce Points can be further divided between *mental* labor (anything that focuses on IQ-, Will-, or Per-based skills) and *physical* labor (anything that requires ST-, DX-, or HT-focused work). Examples of mental labor range from wizards with years of training, through scribes, to a newly hired teen with an expert system helping them sell ration paste at a space station's grocery store. Examples of physical labor include gymnasts, masons, and gravediggers.

As with splitting Agriculture Points, the GM decides fuzzy cases! For example, architects use an IQ-based skill to design buildings – but depending on the campaign's TL and inclination, they may also physically heave stone or lumber.

When using this split, indicate it in parentheses; e.g., "Workforce Points 8 (Mental 5, Physical 3)."

#### Agriculture Points

Agriculture Points cover the surplus from anything grown or raised, and possibly processed, for the "four Fs": food, fiber, function, and/or fuel. This encompasses such things as brewing, vinting, and distilling (beer, wine, and spirits); sericulture (silk production); cash crops (like cocoa, spices, tobacco, and sugar cane); fiber plants (like cotton); fuel (like wood, corn, and peat); medicinal herbs and plants ("functional crops"); and animal husbandry (e.g., raising sheep, horses, or cattle). A realm may even raise *illegal* crops, like opium poppies, coca (for cocaine), or marijuana, and ship them elsewhere; legality is highly setting-dependent. And *fantastic* examples may exist in some campaigns; for example, illegal cockatrice husbandry or genetically engineered meat-beets.

Luxury/Precious Goods Points could cover some of these things as well. The GM decides which is which in their campaign.

#### **Examples of Agriculture**

Domesticated Animals: Horses, mules, cats, dogs, oxen, alpaca, camels, pigeons.

*Fiber Crops*: Flax, cotton, wood pulp (i.e., paper), hemp (for rope), straw (for bedding), wool (from sheep).

*Food Crops*: Wheat, rye, oats, beans, potatoes, carrots, coconuts, bananas, oranges, lemons, mushrooms, rice.

*Fuel Crops:* Charcoal (made from wood, but burns hotter and longer), beeswax (harvested from wild or domesticated hives), rendered animal fats/tallow.

*Function Crops:* Any number of spices (e.g. nutmeg and pepper), sugarcane, dyes from plants (such madder root, which produces a nice reddish dye).

*Livestock:* Cows, pigs, chickens, guinea pigs, Muricidae family sea snails (for dye), sheep.

Fantastic: Fantasy animals (for food, magical components, or steeds), herbal ingredients for alchemy, bioengineered building seeds, biological crystals for devices that open FTL gates.

#### Workforce Points

A realm's workforce is the means by which it produces finished products, protects itself, builds itself, and *runs* itself. Workforce Points represent what the realm can bring to bear on projects *not* related to keeping its essential functions running. Realistically, a realm would have multiple types of manpower, but that would be tricky to keep track of. For an optional rule that lets you split this value, see p. 7.

Handling the voluntary and temporary reallocation of foreign workers may be more complicated – but if it's an important factor in the relations between two realms, the GM might assess this possibility. Sending large numbers of skilled

Nonhuman Labor and Exotic Resources

Historical and modern realms can use the realm-creation rules as is . . . but where's the fun in excluding a thousand floating island-kingdoms, linked by airships and their harpy crews? Why would GMs want to forbid generation ships-turned-stations, squabbling with each other over the resources of a solar system? And then there's the option of undersea realms, peopled by merfolk and sapient cephalopods – and possibly gengineered amphibious colonists from the crashed starship, too. Most forms of ultra-tech and magic can be bundled into existing realm traits, but GMs may want to pay special attention to a couple of choices.

#### Exotic Workforce

Fantasy or science-fiction realms might have access to tireless nonhumans as part of their labor force – zombies, robots, AIs, steampunk automatons, and other beings that can work longer and harder than humans, and that aren't subject to all the hazards that threaten humans. Why send a valuable life into the hazards of an asteroid belt when you can send a *robot?* The GM can represent this with large Workforce Points values (Physical, if splitting the score) if most of the labor force is of this type, or alternatively add a special "Exotic Workforce Points" value if both traditional and extraordinary workers are available.

#### Exotic Resources

The GM may also want to separate out exotic resources, to represent such things as access to mana, psychic crystal augmenters, or stable portals to other planes of existence. These items (or locations) can be MacGuffins or add to other realm scores – but the GM can also treat them as just another form of Luxury/Precious Goods Points, to be sold for the highest price possible. For example, a forest realm of elves might have "Exotic Resource Points" in the form of abundant high-mana zones, enabling them to create magic items much faster than nearby realms.

workers abroad reduces the local manpower pool, but shifts part of the wages from the host realm to the realm of origin of the expatriates, which can be a factor worthy of note in that realm's economy.

Mercenaries are a special case. The GM might want to keep careful track of which realms mercenary units come from, because if the foreign realm they serve is decisively defeated, unable to pay, or dissolved, these troops may return home. There, they'll either provide the government with a body of trained, experienced troops to recruit, or – if not employed as soldiers – increase Workforce Points. Unemployed and (especially) *unpaid* mercenary units aren't great for stability, wherever they happen to be!

#### **Examples of Workforce**

Artists (dancers, musicians, sculptors, etc.), businesspeople (brokers, merchants, shopkeepers, etc.), educators (professors, teachers, trainers, etc.), officials (clerks, police officers, priests, etc.), professionals (doctors, engineers, lawyers, etc.),

resource workers (farmers, fishers, lumberjacks, miners, etc.), scientists, service personnel (hairdressers, housekeepers, waiters, etc.), technicians (pharmacists, programmers, etc.), tradesmen (carpenters, electricians, masons, etc.), transporters (drivers, longshoremen, teamsters, etc.), unskilled laborers, and more.

#### Natural Resources Points

Natural Resources Points represent a realm's access to raw materials such as lumber, metals, and stone – and even such odd (but gatherable) things as pearls from clam beds, or dragon scales at the base of a mountain where dragons lair. It also includes anything that can be hunted, foraged, gathered, or fished for.

Raw materials are vital for realms! It's a good idea to have Natural Resources Points 1+, in order to have enough for the realm's infrastructure *and* some to trade. Natural Resources Points can also represent certain luxury goods, such as gems, precious metals, and rare earths.

Higher values represent abundant or plentiful resources. Negative values represent some combination of scanty resources, low-quality resources, and resources that require substantial processing to become worthwhile. Values of -5 or worse mean the realm has *no* readily available resources, and will likely have to import a *lot* to have a significant infrastructure.

Spending Natural Resources Points doesn't *necessarily* mean access to such wealth has gone away entirely. It might instead mean that a mine has played out, a forest has been cut to the point where clear-cutting is the only remaining option (usually a bad idea!), and so on.

#### **Examples of Natural Resources**

Edible Resources: Fish (e.g., mackerel or salmon), honey, insects, shellfish, sea animals, wild edibles (e.g., blueberries, seaweed, or wild carrots), wild game (e.g., fowl or deer).

#### Example of Realm Creation (cont'd)

The fantasy world that Zarthus exists in is TL3<sup>^</sup>, the "superscience" being the various large-scale magics to which mages have access. The GM decides that Zarthus has no TL-related enhancements or limitations.

The inhabitants of Zarthus – the *intelligent* ones, anyway! – are human. While numerous sapient undead also reside in the realm, they're more a natural hazard than *subjects;* the GM skips realm inhabitant racial traits that would pertain to them. However, being steeped in necromancy for centuries has made the inhabitants mages, one and all – at least when it comes to the Necromantic college of spells (p. B251). This is bought as a cultural trait: All citizens have "Magery 0 (One College Only, Necromancy,

-40%) [3]." This will increase Realm Value (pp. 29-30) at the end of realm creation.

Next, the GM determines the population. Carrying Capacity (p. 10) at TL3 is 40 people/square mile – but the GM decides they'll be taking three levels of Lower Carrying Capacity (p. 25), reducing *effective* TL to 0 and thus Carrying Capacity to 12 people/square mile. As Zarthus has an area of 160,000 square miles, this puts the upper limit of its sustainable population at  $12 \times 160,000 = 1,920,000$ . The GM decides to go with 1/10 of that number, 192,000, as befits a less-crowded realm with plenty of wastelands and roving undead. That will also make it easier to keep everyone in Zarthus fed during times of famine!

*Mineral Resources:* Asteroids, clay (for building materials or pottery), coal, helium, hydrogen gas, mines or quarries (for gems, metals, or stone), natural gas, oil (for fuel and plastics), sand (for glass).

*Organic Resources:* Forests (for lumber and fuel), jungles (for natural rubber and drugs), wetlands (for thatching, fibers, papyrus, and peat).

Other Resources: Algae or dung (for fertilizers), clam or oyster beds (for pearls), mana crystals, murex snails, rare FTL-engine ores.

Many of these things (e.g., gems and pearls) may also be covered by Luxury/Precious Goods Points, if made into jewelry or used to otherwise decorate.

#### Luxury/Precious Goods Points

Luxury/Precious Goods Points represent *finished products* – usually processed goods – the realm has produced or has access to: artworks and other craft items that have no direct utility (jewelry, religious objects, clockwork toys, etc.), chocolate, silk, refined sugar, spices, tobacco products (e.g., cigars), *fine* wine (and other alcoholic drinks), and so on.

What's a "luxury" is highly subjective! The GM may decide that some realms (and especially the very wealthy of those realms) have an unexplainable soft spot that can be exploited – they might treasure tulip bulbs, fine pottery, magical crystals that hold memories, etc. Additionally, a realm's Luxury/Precious Goods Points could be tied up in services such as education, entertainment, leisure, and religion. *Star Trek*'s planet Risa is a good example of a leisure realm!

Some "raw" goods can be considered luxury goods as well, however. Truffles, for example, can cost up to \$10,000 per pound because they grow only in certain areas and take years of effort to cultivate. The GM decides what goods fall where. For instance, pearls could be considered a natural resource or luxury/precious goods, depending on whether they're raw or polished and strung.

#### TECHNOLOGY LEVEL (TL)

The TL for all realms starts at the campaign's base TL. It can be lowered as desired (see p. 25). *Raising* a realm's TL beyond the campaign's TL requires strict GM permission.

When the setting has realms of multiple TLs, a lower-TL realm can use immigration, trade, spying, or other methods to raise its TL in play by using the Improve maneuver (p. 34) to adjust its TL trait. This is also possible where the leadership is from a higher TL; for requirements, see *Building Up Local Technology* (p. B513).

Tech level cannot be increased beyond the campaign's maximum in play without the GM's permission – and the GM decides how long this takes. It could require hundreds or even thousands of turns to go from the campaign's starting TL to a higher TL! The time required varies with the current TL and the TL being sought. For example, it took around 40 years for Earth to go from TL7 to TL8 – that's 480 turns in **Realm Management!** The further back one goes, the more drastic the time requirement becomes; the Bronze Age lasted approximately 2,300 years, or 27,600 turns in **Realm Management.** 

For some useful rules for higher-TL progression, see *Technological Progression* (*GURPS Ultra-Tech*, p. 8).

#### **CULTURAL TRAITS**

A *cultural trait* is one that the people of a realm share, espouse, or embrace. This is what *GURPS Fantasy*, p. 46 calls an "emblematic trait" for monsters or creatures, and what *Fantasy*, p. 213 terms an "ethnic trait" when describing a people. When creating a realm, the GM can add one or more advantages, disadvantages, skills, or (if feeling adventurous) meta-traits that they feel the realm's inhabitants inherently have, select for, or rigorously train to acquire. These can increase the cost of founding a realm (if positive overall) or lower it (if negative); see p. 29 for details.

Realm inhabitants who lack these "universal" traits may suffer from a Social Stigma (p. B155) – pick one of Ignorant, Excommunicated, or Disowned, according to the realm's culture and how poorly the character fits in. For example, in the elven realm of Syl'glen, archery, sword-fighting, and magic are all prized, and most Syl'glenati elves have at least a point in all three areas. Lacking one might give Social Stigma (Ignorant), while lacking two or more results in Social Stigma (Disowned).

A realm's cultural traits are similar to racial traits for its nonhuman inhabitants; see *Realm Inhabitant Racial Traits* (p. 10).

## REALM INHABITANT RACIAL TRAITS

By default, realms are occupied by humans or similar 0-point races. Races of higher or lower racial cost increase or reduce Realm Value, respectively. Every full  $\pm 5$  points the racial template costs changes Realm Value by  $\pm 1\%$ .

This adjustment has no ceiling. Were a realm inhabited by demigods with a 500-point racial template, Realm Value would *double* – the realm would be more productive, better defended, etc., just because its citizens are more powerful than normal humans! As with limitations (p. B110), *reductions* to Realm Value can go no lower than -80%.

The GM may want realms with powerful races to have a minimum Management Skill equal to the race's average IQ. For example, a race that has a racial average IQ 14 would require a skill level of at least 14.

For multiple races, multiply the racial cost of each race by that race's fraction of the population, and add the values together to get the weighted average. Round the final value up. Record this in the "Notes" section of the realm write-up. For example, if the Hegemony is 75% Helot II (8 points), 20% Orion (70 points), and 5% Guardian (185 points), that gives  $0.75 \times 8 + 0.2 \times 70 + 0.05 \times 185 = 6 + 14 + 9.25 = 29.25$  points, rounded up to 30 points, for +6% to Realm Value.

Ultimately a great nation is a compassionate nation.

– Martin Luther King, Jr.

#### **POPULATION**

A realm's population counts the totality of sapient beings within the realm's borders. This includes citizens and slaves, both human and nonhuman – and perhaps even spirits, AIs, gods, and similar beings. For fictional realms, this number might be whatever the GM desires; see *Population and Carrying Capacity* (below) for guidelines. For modern-day or historical realms whose population is known, use real-world values.

A realm's population is affected by race (if nonhuman), and by the realm's Carrying Capacity and terrain. The calculation assumes perfect conditions.

The realm's creator (player or GM) decides the realm's actual starting population, with the understanding that if the populace starts to starve, there will be a revolt – or a mass exodus to other realms – within a turn or two. During play, realms with abundant resources may *attract* additional inhabitants (sometimes whether or not the realm's rulers want them!). Small, poor realms with harsh laws may have problems increasing their population if they discover they need a larger workforce to defend themselves or exploit their natural resources

The GM who wants firmer rules can *require* each realm start at its maximum Carrying Capacity (see below) and treat

a higher or lower population as a realm modifier. In that case, each  $\pm 10\%$  to population is worth  $\pm 5\%$ .

#### Population and Carrying Capacity

Carrying Capacity is the average number of people per square mile that a realm can house. It's an abstract value that factors in agricultural requirements (space allotted to producing food), building technology, and infrastructure (water and sewer pipes, roads, etc.), but doesn't tell the GM where the inhabitants are located. A science-fiction colony might pack five million people into a few scattered, towering dome-cities, get food from vast underground fungus farms, have robots mine the rest of the planet, and export biological waste as part of the terraforming efforts. A realm of centaurs could live in scattered, nomadic family groups, coming together only for equinox and solstice celebrations (and political decisions).

This abstract value allows for space for food production, while Agriculture Points represent the realm's *surplus* food production. The actual area needed to produce the food is beyond the scope of *Realm Management*, as it varies significantly by technology level, climate, and type of food produced. This abstraction speeds building and managing the realm, and is unlikely to matter unless the realm is mapped in extreme detail. (Those who want that level of detail should consider "Lord of the Manor" in *Pyramid* #3/52: *Low-Tech II*.)

The GM can use the following table to figure the largest number of people a realm of a given TL could support with its own resources, using agriculture.

TL	Maximum Sustainable Carrying Capacity (people/square mile)	TL	Maximum Sustainable Carrying Capacity (people/square mile)
0	12*	7	200
1	20	8	280
2	28	9	400
3	40	10	600
4	60	11	800
5	80	12	1,200
6	120		

<sup>\*</sup> For purely hunter/gatherer realms, divide by 10.

To find the realm's maximum population, multiply its maximum sustainable density by its area in square miles. Remember, this density is the *average* for the entire realm – portions may have significantly higher densities due to tightly packed cities. The average density for the United States is 93 people/square mile – but New York City has 27,012 people/square mile!

*Actual* population can be any number the player or GM chooses, up to this limit.

Example: Australia's land area is 3 million square miles. At TL8, maximum sustainable density is 280 people/square mile. Multiplying these two numbers gives an upper limit of 840 million inhabitants. Supporting that many people would strain Australia's resources to the limit! With an actual population of 25.6 million, it can use its agricultural land far less intensively and still be a major food-exporting nation.

#### CITIZEN LOYALTY

Citizen Loyalty rates the general attitude of the realm's inhabitants toward the realm's leadership and/or the realm as an institution. It uses steps from the Reaction Table (pp. B560-561): "Poor," "Neutral," "Good," etc. Each step has a range of numeric values associated with it. Record a single number within that range, which functions as a specific measurement of Citizen Loyalty, for later reference.

Disastrous (0 or less): The realm is in the process of coming apart. Corruption is commonplace. People will happily side against their fellows and actively sabotage those around them. Citizens and government argue frequently, obstruct one another out of malice, and sometimes come to blows – and if it's possible for rank-and-file citizens to seize control, revolution is imminent! Alternatively, the realm's citizens are mostly in agreement with each other: Down with the government, up with the guillotines, vive la révolution! Effective skill levels – if any effort can be brought to bear – are at -5. Time to perform any realm maneuver (recruit new soldiers, respond to inquiries, etc.) is quadrupled. Examples: Roman Empire during the Crisis of the Third Century; France during the French Revolution.

Very Bad (1 to 3): Citizens dislike the realm intensely; most are actively seeking a way out. They frequently argue, and work slowly and inefficiently; pilfering of the realm's resources is rife. Alternatively, the citizenry argues with the authorities, not among itself; people aren't sharpening their scythes yet, but if things don't improve . . . Effective skill levels are at -2. Time to perform any maneuver is doubled. Examples: Newly conquered nations or countries during wartime; Tsarist Russia around World War I.

Bad (4 to 6): Citizens dislike the realm and are passively seeking a way out, or look out solely for their own interests. Cooperation between them is poor, and few make their best effort. Alternatively, the populace bunches into small groups who cooperate, but who mistrust the government and allocate group resources accordingly. Time to perform any maneuver is increased by 50%. Examples: Deutsche Demokratische Republik (East Germany) just prior to its 1990 collapse; Qin Dynasty of China; England, Scotland, and Ireland under Charles I.

Poor (7 to 9): Citizens aren't particularly enthusiastic about the realm, but stay on out of inertia or simply lack of better opportunities (such as settling elsewhere). Many who stay are willing to advance themselves even if it leads to moderate harm for the realm as a whole. They won't take risks to allow others to carry out significant actions against the realm, but may be persuaded to participate in what they believe to be small violations of national policy. Example: The USSR, especially in its later days.

*Neutral (10 to 12):* Citizens like their realm, but in general feel no special attachment or patriotic pride. *Examples:* Canada; modern-day U.S.A or France.

Good (13 to 15): Citizens are well-inclined toward the realm. They are happy or proud to be citizens, and will make extra efforts to achieve the realm's goals, if asked. It's difficult to find people willing to betray the government. *Examples*: 20th-century Philippines; Germany during World War I.

Very Good (16 to 18): Citizens are very happy with the realm, making its success a high priority in their lives, and are

entirely willing to undertake extended, extraordinary efforts on its behalf. A significant number may have a Sense of Duty to the realm or its people, or similar traits. *Examples:* 20th-century Australia; Israel around 1950; contemporary Scotland.

Excellent (19 or more): Citizens are near-fanatical in their devotion to the realm and its ideals. Indeed, many may have the Fanaticism disadvantage! Examples: Thomas More's Utopia; Plato's ideal state.

Among other things, Citizen Loyalty gives the realm's inhabitants a Will modifier when resisting Influence rolls aimed at getting them to do something contrary to the realm's interests or laws:

Citizen Loyalty	Modifier	Citizen Loyalty	Modifier
Disastrous	-7	Neutral	0
Very Bad	-5	Good	+1
Bad	-3	Very Good	+3
Poor	-1	Excellent	+5

As well, add half of the realm's Control Rating (see p. 12 and p. B506), rounded *down*, to Will. Citizens in highly controlled realms are likely to be more intimidated by law enforcers – or literally too closely watched to get away with much! Record Citizen Loyalty level, its numeric value, and the *total* Will modifier on the same line; e.g., "Good (14; +2)."

Finally, subtract *half* the Citizen Loyalty modifier (round up) from any rolls when looking for black-market items, officials who will accept bribes, and similar criminal activities. This is a generalized form of a city's Corruption (*GURPS City Stats*, p. 9) – use the city's Corruption statistic instead, if available.

Citizen Loyalty starts at "Neutral." Having a higher or lower rating is an enhancement or a limitation, respectively; see p. 26. Optionally, the GM can find baseline Citizen Loyalty for the realm by rolling 3d for its numeric value.

#### INFRASTRUCTURE RATING

Infrastructure encompasses all the *physical* structures a realm needs to support its populace: homes, roads, public transportation, water supply, power grids (magical or electrical), communications lines (cables or towers for television, telephone, radio, Internet, FTL-comm, . . .), etc. Collectively, such things are the basis of *Infrastructure Rating* (IR), an abstract rating not unlike Control Rating (see p. 12 and p. B506). This doesn't cover *social* infrastructure – hospitals, schools, stores, law enforcement, and similar person-intensive services – though there may be significant overlap in some settings!

Infrastructure Rating gives a modifier to Management Skill rolls when it comes to moving troops, garnering information, or anything else the GM deems infrastructure would affect.

**IR0** – *None*. There's *no* infrastructure to speak of! Almost all travel is by foot or riding animals; travelers must break their own trails in many places, or find paths made by other people or animals (though some settings may have ancient roads); and travel is often dangerous. Communication is purely person-to-person, or by leaving physical signs in the surrounding area. Water is obtained from natural springs or streams, and privies are holes in the ground.

*Infrastructure Modifier:* -5 (effectively improvised equipment). *Examples:* A Stone Age or rural post-apocalypse realm; a newly founded colony.

**IR1** – *Very Loose.* The infrastructure of the realm is *either* old, crumbling, and not being maintained (if it was ever maintained) *or* extremely new but with limited resources for upkeep. Travel remains dangerous. Communication is done by outdated means for the campaign setting (e.g., Morse code at TL8). Wells supply water. *Infrastructure Modifier:* -3. *Examples:* A city-state in a post-apocalyptic landscape; a settlement or colony in the early stages of expanding its infrastructure.

**IR2** – *Loose*. The realm's infrastructure is behind the times or built with "archaic" materials, but being properly maintained. Travel by road is common, and most major cities have good roads leading to them; long-distance travel is expensive, and remains sketchy at best and dangerous at worst. Running water exists, and people know not to drink where the sewer system exits, but poorer folk still rely on public wells and chamber pots. Communication is a TL behind the campaign setting (e.g., in a TL8 world where everyone has cellular phones, the realm would have landlines for most and maybe heavy, brick-like cell phones for the wealthy). Alternatively, unreliable modern (or over-modern) technologies may be extant;

e.g., cell phones aren't reliable without

cell towers and TL8 satellite uplinks are vulnerable to bad weather. *Infrastructure Modifier:* -1. *Examples:* A recently settled area; British colonies in the 1910s.

IR3 – Average. The infrastructure is up-to-date for the campaign's TL, and properly maintained. Travel by road, ship, or air is common enough that most average people can afford to go long distances, and travel is generally safe. Public-transit systems are commonplace and accessible. Only the poorest citizens are likely to lack running water and indoor plumbing. Communication is at the campaign's TL. Infrastructure Modifier: 0. Example: 1970s United States; 20th-century China.

IR4 – Advanced. Infrastructure is modern, well maintained, and occasionally includes cutting-edge advances; e.g., Rome's aqueducts and sewage system were considered astounding for their era. Travel is common and cheap, and links all but the realm's most remote areas. Public transit allows for travel within urban areas. Communication is at the campaign's TL, even bordering on the next TL. Moreover, the realm has invested in infrastructure and has one or two examples of "cutting edge" technology (e.g., a sewage system in a TL2 Romanesque realm). Infrastructure Modifier: +1. Examples: 21st-century Iceland; ancient Rome.

**IR5** – *Very Advanced*. The realm has invested heavily in its infrastructure, which has "bleeding edge" technology that borders on the next TL. All citizens of the realm have access

to communication and travel, including low-cost (or free!) public transit to all points within the realm. *Infrastructure Modifier*: +2. *Examples*: A TL9 society that has prioritized its infrastructure; many science-fiction settings, such as Beta Colony (*Vorkosigan Saga Sourcebook and Roleplaying Game*, pp. 34-38).

**IR6** – *Futuristic*. The realm's infrastructure is a TL higher than the campaign setting (this is purchased as a realm enhancement; see p. 25). There's instantaneous communication at high TLs, and very reliable communication at lower TLs. Travel remains safe, dependable, and cheap enough that most citizens can get anywhere they wish, within reason

(e.g., a TL3 magi-tech setting where crystal globes allow for communication and teleportation). *Infrastructure Modifier:* +3 or better (GM's call). *Examples:* The Marvel Cinematic Universe's Wakanda.

A realm's Infrastructure Rating starts at 3. Higher or lower IR is an enhancement or a limitation, respectively; see *Advanced/Obsolete Infrastructure*, p. 25. Tech level 0 societies should buy IR down to 0 or 1, using the standard limitation.



Realm Management uses three different scales to help determine how a realm might behave in certain situations. One of these, Control Rating (CR), is described on p. B506. All realms start with a CR of 2

or 3 (creator's choice). Control Ratings of 3 + TL/2 or higher should require magic, superscience, or similar.

The other two scales are *Conformity Rating* (ConR) and *Openness Rating* (OR). These are about how the *people* of a realm treat, respectively, each other and outsiders – not how the *government* does. If the government treats different groups of citizens or folks from outside the realm differently, the realm has a split Citizen Loyalty and/or Control Rating; see *Splitting Hairs* (p. 12).

Conformity Rating is a scale of how traditional and restrictive the realm's culture is, and how well cultural differences between citizens or groups of citizens are tolerated, while Openness Rating is a measure of how receptive and welcoming the realm's inhabitants are to outside ideas, influences, and people. Don't assume that a society is closed because outside ideas take different form when they're adopted; different cultures inevitably treat ideas differently. As well, realms may claim to welcome new ideas - especially in tourist areas - while actually suppressing anything "non-traditional." A realm that *adapts* new ideas from outside, based on its existing culture, is open even if it's highly conformist. The GM might see it as unrealistic for both ConR and OR to be very high or very low. It may not suit the campaign world to have a society that tolerates no individualism among its own people yet tolerates outsiders, or one where people view most of their neighbors as dangerous heretics vet somehow see a difference between them and foreigners.

These three stats provide the GM with a good idea of how a realm might approach a situation, and how its citizens may react. These ratings also result in minor modifiers on certain actions when using *The Wheel* (pp. 32-45). Overall, they give *the realm itself* a personality.

#### Conformity Rating (ConR)

Conformity isn't always entirely willing! A culture that harshly punishes open dissidents may have a high Conformity Rating ... because the populace *fears punishment* for not behaving "appropriately." Other cultures may rely on social shunning of "disruptive elements," while yet others attract likeminded citizenry – and those who disagree move on without rancor.

**ConR0** – *No Conformity*. The citizens of the realm and their government are completely out of touch with one another, and people identify more with their social group (caste, clan, class, race, religion, species, etc.) than with the realm. Citizens react at -1 to anyone who isn't part of their group, and at -3 to members of any group in

conflict with their own (25% or more of the population). Reduce effective CR by 1 where it applies to citizens of the realm. *Examples:* Apartheid Africa; the rulers of a recently conquered land and its inhabitants; a realm with a sharp divide between nobility and peasantry.

ConR1 – Some Conformity. The realm's citizens still identify more with their own social groups than with the realm, but are tolerant of others unless they see them as outsiders or dangerous. Citizens react at -2 to groups in conflict with their own (about 25% of the population). Examples: Most early Latin American republics; the Second French Empire.

ConR2 – *Mild Conformity*. The citizens of the realm identify as part of the realm, but there are still deep conflicts between some groups or oppressed minorities (-1 reaction modifier toward 25% of the population, or -3 toward 5%). *Examples:* 20th-century China; Cold War USSR.

**ConR3** – *Moderate Conformity*. The citizens share a common set of ideals and pride in their realm. If travelers from the realm meet outside it, they'll react to one another at +2. *Examples:* Modern-day United States; the British Empire.

ConR4 – Abundant Conformity. The citizens of the realm share both a sense of identity and a vision for the future. In addition to the +2 reaction modifier between citizens who meet abroad, Sense of Duty to the realm or its citizens is common. Behavior outside of cultural norms is looked down upon: Increase effective CR by 1 for any action outside of normal behavior; in most cases, this includes criminal activity. Example: Star Trek's Federation; North Korea.

ConR5 – Near Total Conformity. The citizens of the realm are in near lockstep; Sense of Duty to fellow citizens and to the realm are both common. Citizens who speak out against the realm or behave outside of cultural norms are viewed with suspicion or pressured to conform; nonconforming citizens should have a Social Stigma that gives -2 to reactions. Propaganda rolls by the realm against its

own people are at +2 unless the propaganda blatantly violates cultural norms. Increase the effective CR by 2 for citizens. The government is your friend (especially if it's also a computer). *Examples:* Tokugawa-era Shogunate; Nazi Germany; *Star Wars'* First Order.

ConR6 – *Total Conformity*. The realm's citizens and government are effectively one. What the people want, the government wants, or vice versa. Propaganda rolls by the realm against its citizens succeed automatically. Effective CR for citizens is 6, but the GM should disallow any action by the realm that would upset the citizenry – they simply will not obey orders outside of cultural norms, even if the administrators can somehow give them. *Examples:* The inhabitants are part of a hive mind, or are programmed with loyalty; the citizens are biologically inclined to follow a single ruler; *The Smurfs*.

A realm's base Conformity Rating is 2 or 3 (creator's choice); see *Government Types* (pp. 14-20) for suggestions. Higher or lower ConR is an enhancement or a limitation, respectively; see *Conventional/Unconventional Populace*, p. 25.

## SPLITTING HAIRS: SPLIT REALM RATINGS

Like TL, some attributes of a realm may be split. For example, a given realm may be heavily taxed (CR4+), but have very few restrictions on what can be purchased (CR2 or less). The same could be said of a realm's infrastructure – a fantasy realm could have flying carpets for the wealthy, but otherwise people must walk or use riding animals. In that case, the Infrastructure Rating may be split: IR2/4. Record such split ratings normally, listing pertinent details about them in the "Notes" section of the realm write-up.

One notable split is for Citizen Loyalty: In some societies, not all citizens are treated the same way and thus not all react to the government in the same way. In such cases, record the split as, for instance, "Neutral (11; +1)/Good (14; +2)." The *first* rating is for the vast majority of citizens; any others are for other groups. Again, describe what the split means in the notes.

#### Openness Rating (OR)

The realm's NPCs react to outsiders at -4 for OR0, -2 for OR1, -1 for OR2, no modifier for OR3, +1 for OR4, +2 for OR5, or +4 for OR6. At the lowest OR values, many citizens may have traits such as Intolerance (Foreigners) or even Paranoia.

The same modifiers apply to realm-management rolls that would benefit another realm, but are *reversed* for actions showing hostility. Thus, there would be a penalty to muster manpower for foreign aid, but possibly a bonus to muster an army to defend the homeland. The GM may split OR to show that the populace has stronger feelings toward certain other realms in particular. The GM might also limit how large this split can be.

**OR0** – *Xenophobic*. The realm's citizens are actively hostile to strangers. Customs regarding outsiders (if visitors are allowed into the realm at all!) are unfair, harsh, and callous.

Citizens who display habits associated with foreigners, or who willingly have contact with outsiders, are treated with suspicion and scorn. Citizens who leave and return should be careful how they present foreign ideas – it's a large Odious Personal Habit even to discuss foreign ideas – but will be welcomed back into the fold as long as they present outsiders and foreign places in a negative light. Diplomacy is unpopular and may cause social unrest. *Examples:* 16th-century Japan; North Sentinel Islanders.

OR1 – Very Insular. The realm's citizens may not be actively hostile to non-citizens, but are unfriendly and prefer to be left to themselves. Customs regarding outsiders remain unfair. Citizens who want to leave the realm are seen as slightly odd at best; those who leave and return should display some scorn for foreign ideas or habits, or else suffer a negative Reputation among those who know of their travels. Displaying foreign habits or dress is an Odious Personal Habit. Using physical force and threats in dealing with other realms is more popular with the people than is diplomacy. Examples: People's Socialist Republic of Albania under Enver Hoxha, 1944 to 1985; North Korea.

**OR2** – *Moderately Insular.* The realm's citizens prefer to keep to their own, but are mostly indifferent to outsiders. Outside customs and dress will result in mild reaction penalties. If outsiders are granted citizenship, they'll still suffer reaction penalties any time they can be identified as a nonnative. Expatriates may attempt to return as well, but speaking fondly of their travels or outsiders would qualify them for an Odious Personal Habit. The people call for force over diplomacy, or for "diplomacy" via threats. *Examples:* Imperial China; East Germany.

**OR3** – *Neutral.* The realm's citizens are standoffish, but coolly diplomatic with outsiders. Outsiders aren't judged harshly for being outsiders, but are expected to adapt to local norms and language. Outsiders who fully integrate may be accepted by their neighbors, and discussing foreign ideas or even using foreign goods has no penalty. Expatriates may return and suffer no social penalties unless they picked up radical behaviors or beliefs in their travels. The people are indifferent to whether their government uses diplomacy or physical force to influence other realms. *Examples:* Byzantine Empire during its decline; modern Singapore; Victorian Britain.

**OR4** – *Mildly Open.* The realm's citizens are open-minded about outsiders and prefer to judge the individual rather than where they come from. Customs regarding outsiders are mild. The people of the realm welcome would-be citizens; regaining status after traveling abroad is trivial, and being able to speak a foreign language or discuss foreign ideas makes a person seem sophisticated (+1 to reactions). *Embracing* foreign customs or ideals may be another matter, depending on the realm's Conformity Rating. *Example:* 1990s European Union.

**OR5** – *Moderately Open.* The realm's citizens actively welcome outsiders. Locals are interested in visitors' customs, language, etc. Foreign goods and literature are in demand, and proudly used where they do not conflict with local customs. Diplomacy is more popular than physical force or threats, though violence isn't off the table *in extremis. Example:* 19th-century Argentina.

**OR6** – *Extremely Open.* As OR5, but more so. Citizens of the realm treat outsiders with respect and are eager to meet them and hear tales of their travels. The standards of behavior may very well be stricter for locals; see *Conformity Rating* (p. 13). Diplomacy is popular with the people, and violence or physical threats against other realms may cause the populace to resist. *Example:* An anarchy (below).

A realm's starting Openness Rating is 2-4 (creator's choice); see *Government Types* (below) for suggestions. Having a higher or lower OR is a disadvantage because it restricts how the realm may effectively treat with other realms; see p. 26.



#### Government Types

Even the smallest realm requires *some* form of government to function. This might be as simple as a sleepy little county's council of elders making decisions for the community, or as byzantine as the 10th-century Chinese empire. Even a theoretically anarchistic society will have *unofficial* leaders, based on who's most respected by their neighbors, and on social "laws" that everyone agrees are "just good sense."

A realm's type of government says as much about it as its other statistics – perhaps more, as a place's leaders are often mirrors of its people writ large. Government types also have different strengths and weaknesses, represented by a combination of enhancements or limitations in a "meta-trait" package. The following common types should suit most games with little to no modification, but some campaigns may need to invent special government types. The GM should check the list of realm enhancements and limitations on pp. 24-28, and pick what suits the desired feel for their setting.

Each entry notes *typical* value or range of values for Control Rating, Conformity Rating, and Openness Rating. These are not hard and fast – just suggestions. In all cases, ratings higher or lower than the free starting values must be attained by purchasing enhancements or limitations, as appropriate.

#### Anarchy

There is no official government! The will of the people comes from the people and is decided by the people – which *usually* means the *strongest*, *loudest*, *and most ruthless* of the people. Such a realm might be a group of frontiersmen trying to carve out a life in a faraway colony, or a rowdy mob of anarchists who "live away from the rules." Whatever the specifics, an anarchy's Control Rating is almost always 0 – though a peaceful "hippie commune" (elven settlement, pacifist alien enclave, etc.) might have CR1.

*Examples:* Tortuga and other Age of Sail pirate strongholds; Eric Frank Russell's Gands; L. Neil Smith's North American Confederacy; Travis Corcoran's Aristillus; Ursula Le Guin's Anarres.

Typical Control Rating: 0 (maybe 1). Typical Conformity Rating: 4 to 6.

*Typical Openness Rating:* 0 to 6 (groups may not let outsiders in, or may welcome anyone who wants to "stick it to The Man").

Benefits/Drawbacks: None.

#### Aristocracy

The realm is ruled by a small group of individuals who claim power due to having "noble blood" or "higher birth." Aristocracy can be similar to a feudal system (p. 18), but instead of the king owning and dispensing lands and titles, the aristocrats own them. Aristocracy is often hybridized with a monarchy or a feudal system – and the three are interlinked often enough to be interchangeable in popular conception – but there are political nuances the GM should take into account. For instance, a magi-tech feudal setting may permit anyone to ascend to the status of Wizard Lord (and thus isn't an aristocracy), while the Centaurian Empire's glass ceiling denies political power to those without enough of the Founding Family's genes.

A *thaumatocracy* is remarkably similar, except that magical power, not noble blood, decides who rules – though the two *could* be one in the same! Zarthus (pp. 46-47) is an example of a thaumatocracy.

*Examples:* Japan's shogunate; optimates of Rome; Glen Cook's Dread Empire (for thaumatocracy).

Typical Control Rating: 4 to 6.
Typical Conformity Rating: 0 to 3.
Typical Openness Rating: 0 to 4.

**Benefits:** -1 to final Reaction-Time Modifier (p. 24). **Drawbacks:** Treat as one level of Corrupt (p. 26).

#### **Athenian Democracy**

In an Athenian democracy, all eligible *citizens* vote on every action the realm takes, and have a voice in the society as a whole. The definition of "citizen" can include or exclude any gender, ethnicity, or species – and eligibility might further require military service, higher education, or some similar criterion. A Social Stigma is appropriate for residents who aren't citizens.

In fantasy settings where "citizen" means "somebody with magical talent," this could lead to a thaumatocracy. In science fiction, the eligibility criterion could be a psychological test indicating an appropriate Sense of Duty, and *wanting* to rule might disqualify someone!

Below TL9, consulting all citizens like this effectively limits this government type to realms with 75,000 or fewer citizens. AT TL9+, it becomes possible to cast secure votes electronically, allowing large populations to use this government type.

*Example:* The city of Athens and its surrounding region, 508 to 322 B.C.

Typical Control Rating: 2 to 4.
Typical Conformity Rating: 3 to 5.
Typical Openness Rating: 1 to 3.

**Benefits:** +2 on rolls that involve labor (e.g., Marshal Manpower and certain Allocate Resources).

*Drawbacks:* +1 to final Reaction-Time Modifier (p. 24).

#### Autocracy/Dictatorship

Autocracy is where supreme social and political power is concentrated in the hands of one person (or a small group) whose decisions aren't subject to legal restraints or regulations. The autocrat may be a benevolent dictator with the best interests of the people at heart ... or a tyrannical monster

who delights in cruelty. Most autocracies have mechanisms by which they retain power: military force, inherited titles, leadership for life, etc. Very rarely are autocrats elected by the people, with Republican Rome being a notable exception.

Autocracies go by several names, including *dictatorship* if power is in the hands of a single person, and *monarchy* for a hereditary family.

*Examples:* China under Qin Shi Huangdi; Terry Pratchett's Ankh-Morpork; Imperial Rome; the French monarchy.

Typical Control Rating: 5 or 6. Typical Conformity Rating: 4 to 6. Typical Openness Rating: 0 to 6.

**Benefits:** Increase Management Skill by one level without additional cost.

**Drawbacks:** Varies with the leader's personal eccentricities. Treat this as a -10-point disadvantage that affects the realm, or just assume the leader has Megalomania.

## Example of Realm Creation (cont'd)

Zarthus starts out with a Citizen Loyalty of "Neutral," which all realms get for free. Infrastructure Rating is 2 (archaic, but magic holds it together). Starting Conformity Rating is 2 – most inhabitants are necromancers to one degree or another. The GM decides that Zarthusians are fairly insular, and gives them an Openness Rating of 2. (Later, the GM will decide that Chauvinistic Populace, p. 26, is an appropriate realm limitation; that will modify OR.)

The government of Zarthus taxes its people moderately, restricts some magic to the upper classes, and keeps necromantic magic items out of the hands of the populace. The GM decides that Control Rating 3 is appropriate.

Zarthus is a nominally feudal kingdom: The Fell-King rules by dint of his sheer necromantic might over the dead – but members of the Nightmare Court own the lands and titles of the kingdom, giving them power beyond their magical abilities. The GM decides that this is a variant government (p. 16) that mixes *Aristocracy* (below) – more specifically, a thaumatocracy – with *Feudal* (p. 18). After looking through the lists of economies, only *Traditional* (p. 21) fits the GM's conception of how Zarthusian society functions.

#### **Bureaucracy**

The government is run by a self-perpetuating group of civil servants who handle the realm's day-to-day needs. These bureaucrats typically aren't elected, and are insulated from grumpy citizens who may not approve of what they are doing. Outwardly, the government runs as it's supposed to, but this may not actually be the case, as those running it need report only to themselves. Because of this, there may be tests, exams, etc. to determine whether someone is fit for civil service, and such assessments may take place on a regular basis to prevent corruption from within. Getting information on what the government is doing may not be possible, and the government itself might own the Fourth Estate outright.

Bureaucracies have much in common with meritocracies (p. 19). The two may be fused into a variant government (see below) in some realms.

Examples: Hong Kong under British rule; Qin Dynasty of China.

Typical Control Rating: 4 to 6.
Typical Conformity Rating: 4 to 6.
Typical Openness Rating: 1 to 6.

Benefits: Spend 1 fewer Workforce Points (minimum 1 point)

on Allocate Resources tasks.

*Drawbacks:* +1 to final Reaction-Time Modifier (p. 24).

rivals or threats. There can also be *internal* caste politics, such as between battalions of soldiers or among noble families!

Examples: Caste system of India; Krypton.

Typical Control Rating: 3 to 6.
Typical Conformity Rating: 3 to 6.
Typical Openness Rating: 0 to 3.

**Benefits:** Spend 1 fewer Workforce Points (minimum 1 point) on all tasks.

Drawbacks: Must succeed by 2+ on rolls when recruiting for more Workforce Points.

#### Clan/Tribal

Like caste (above), but instead of select families who reign over large groups of unrelated citizens, the government is made up of kin groups who live (or travel) together. In fantasy campaigns, centaurs (or werewolves!) might roam in small bands of extended family; e.g., those born into the tribe, those who've formed pair bonds with natural-born members, and the occasional lone 'taur adopted into the clan as a friend. Amphibious aliens might establish settlements around the small islands where they lay their eggs, guarding their territory fiercely and permitting no one without the right family markings to get too close; trade (and out-family mating) must be done in the deepwaters. The traditions and customs of the past are regarded as near sacred and inviolate.

Clan elders are typically the leaders, as they're parental figures to many and have proved their wisdom over the years. Younger members of a clan or tribe might rebel against their elders and chafe at their own lack of influence. Wise leaders distract restless members with sports, recreational combat, or important hunting duties – or just boot them out to go adventuring!

A realm with a clan/tribal government may have an overarching "council of elders" that meets occasionally or for emergencies (allowing group reactions to problems or threats), or might be composed entirely of family groups who may or may not be hostile to any other given clan, based on old history. Further, while clan/tribal government is

most distinguishable from other forms of government at the smaller "extended families" level (where every member can claim direct kinship to several other members), a clan *can* get very large. At low TLs, they may have to live in smaller groups much of the time due to limits on food production, but when they come together, they're still family. At higher TLs, small cities might correspond to kin groups, and science-fictional clans might form *empires*, with everyone's connection to their distant relatives reinforced by wrist-computers that calculate genealogy whenever two "strangers" shake hands (or touch antennae).

*Examples:* Mongol Khanates, pre-Genghis Khan; clan structure of *GURPS Aliens: Sparrials*.

Typical Control Rating: 3 or 4. Typical Conformity Rating: 4 to 6. Typical Openness Rating: 0 to 3.

## New, Merged, Variant, and Weird Government Types

The government types on pp. 14-20 are either historical or interesting enough to be included in this supplement. But what if a realm is *weird?* What if a god or dragon controls it? What if a council of dead elders makes the laws for the living? What if an empire is ruled by a heavenly emperor, not an earthly one? In most cases, it suffices to pick the closest conventional government type and tweak it; e.g., a small country ruled by its dead elders might resemble an Athenian democracy, except that only *dead* citizens can vote, while the living must abide by their decisions.

Some realms use merged or mixed types of government. For those, add up the benefits and drawbacks (even if they cancel one another out!) and record government type as, for instance, "Representative Democracy/Plutarchy."

The adventurous GM can create entirely new forms of government, or adapt those from historical records, fiction, or popular culture. They'll need to assign Control Rating, Conformity Rating, and Openness Rating, and assess benefits and drawbacks. The latter are "baked in" enhancements or limitations worth between -5% and +5%. Larger modifiers may require a special enhancement "Unusual Government," which increases the cost of the realm (see *Realm Value*, pp. 29-30) like any other realm enhancement. Price such an enhancement as if it were an Unusual Background (p. B96) for a character, reading the point cost as a percentage.

#### Caste

The society is one large group made up of allied groups and ruled by a council of elders. Each person in the society has a set role or profession (typically something they cannot change, ever). Failing to follow one's profession or act as one's role dictates could result in becoming casteless – a Social Stigma on par with Excommunicated – unless there's a way to join a new caste. Caste systems usually have stratified hierarchies that demand strict adherence. For example, merchants might outrank warriors, who outrank politicians, who outrank laborers of all kinds except artists, who are apart from but at the same level as warriors.

Usually, individuals are expected to socialize only within their own group. They may see other castes as stereotypes: fussy merchants; brash, hotheaded warriors; kind (fragile) and wise (arrogant) nobles; and so on. This can lead to conflicts between castes, where members of one see others as Benefits: -1 to final Reaction-Time Modifier (p. 24).Drawbacks: -1 to Openness Rating (minimum OR0) after all modifiers.

#### Colonialism

A system of rule wherein the realm is controlled by a more powerful realm. Typically, the more powerful realm conquered less powerful one and moved some of its citizens there. These citizens might have gone willingly (e.g., Canada), semi-willingly (e.g., Puritans), or under duress (e.g., Australia). In fantasy and science-fiction campaigns, it may be possible to find new territories *without* prior residents to drive out, kill, or subjugate – for instance,

magically created dimensions or newly terraformed planets. For other kinds of subordinate realms, see *Non-Independent Realms* (above).

While willing colonists may be happy to support their parent realm (see *Brand-New Settlement*, above), this relationship can sour as their children grow up thinking of the other realm as outsiders – or even more quickly, if the original realm is greedy for its colony's natural resources! (Historically, parent countries have thought of colonies as cash cows to be plundered; Spain and Britain were particularly noted for this.) Thus, established colonies – and *any* colonies composed of banished criminals – are ideal candidates for a split (and lower) Citizen Loyalty (p. 11).

#### OPTIONAL RULE: NON-INDEPENDENT REALMS

Many situations can result in one realm being subordinate to another. In all cases, the rules for colonialism (below) apply unless specified otherwise, but the government type of the subordinate realm could be *anything* – it needn't match that of the controlling realm! Generally speaking, a non-independent realm has a "Neutral" or worse starting reaction toward its controller.

Large fiefs within a feudal realm are best handled as vassal states, typically paying tribute in the form of military Workforce Points. In that case, government type is feudal (p. 18), *not* colonialism.

#### Tributary State

A *tributary state* rules itself and can chart its own course in international relations – but every turn, it pays a previously agreed tribute to a more powerful realm. This can be a token amount, exacted as a demonstration of superiority and patronage, or a serious burden, like the Danegeld.

*Examples:* England around 1000 A.D. (for a hefty tribute); the Order of St. John in Malta (for a token one).

#### Vassal State

Like a tributary state, a *vassal state* pays a tribute – but it must also obtain the controlling realm's consent on all matters of foreign policy. The tribute isn't necessarily in cash. It can be in resources, often Luxury/Precious Goods Points, Natural Resources Points, or even Workforce Points (like the hated *devshirme* that gave the Ottomans their Janissaries).

*Examples:* Many Balkan kingdoms under Ottoman hegemony; many Indian princely states under the British Raj.

#### **Protectorate**

A *protectorate* rules itself internally but has *no* foreign policy of its own, delegating such matters to the protecting realm. It relies on the protecting realm for defense, having only weak (if any) military forces of its own. Everything else is negotiable between protector and protectorate, which means that sometimes the relation is mutually

beneficial, and sometimes the more powerful partner shamelessly exploits the weaker. A protectorate might be meant as an interim measure, with full independence as a goal.

*Examples:* Early 20th-century Morocco and Philippines; U.S.-occupied Iraq.

#### Military Colony

A *military colony* is a military government (p. 19), but the army ruling it and benefiting from its resources is that of the controlling realm. This is common in wartime, when military necessity trumps everything else.

*Examples:* Military administrations ruling occupied enemy territories during WWII.

#### **Brand-New Settlement**

A special case of colonialism is when there are no natives (unruly or otherwise) to handle. The territory was empty and the entire initial population came from the homeland. This simplifies things initially, but eventually the colonists will likely want freedom anyway.

Examples: Many science-fiction space colonies; Bermuda.

#### **Territory**

Especially at high TLs, *territories* have a local administration, while the controlling realm handles foreign and defense policies. The local population may be content if the controlling realm invests in local welfare and security. The reaction of territories to their controlling realm can be better than "Neutral."

Examples: Falklands; Gibraltar; Guam; New Caledonia.

#### Colony but in Name

A realm, especially an autocracy (p. 15), may be nominally independent – but another realm actually calls all the shots, by controlling the small number of people who rule the realm. These cases are best left to the GM's judgment.

Usually, the controlling realm lays claim to colonial Natural Resources Points and other RP, seizing them without payment or "buying" them at terms unfavorable to the colony.

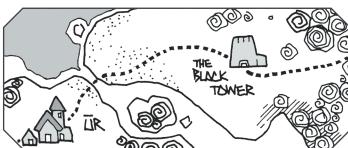
The realm normally counts as subjugated (p. B510), and any military forces present actually belong to the controlling realm.

*Examples:* Many modern-day nations started out as colonies of more powerful nations, including the United States of America, French Guinea, the Congo, Canada, and Australia.

Typical Control Rating: 4 to 6. Typical Conformity Rating: 0 to 4. Typical Openness Rating: 0 to 6.

**Benefits:** +2 on all Gather/Extract maneuvers.

Drawbacks: -1 to Infrastructure Rating (minimum IR0) after all modifiers.



#### Corporate State

The state is owned by the corporations, and the corporations run the state. Mostly seen in science fiction, especially in cyberpunk (though medieval Florence offers a historical example), corporate states are exactly what they sound like: societies run as if they were businesses – i.e., for profit – instead of (or *conceivably* as well as) for the welfare of the people. Otherwise, treat a corporate state as either an oligarchy (p. 19) with a board of directors instead of a council, and a CEO who enacts the board's will, or a feudal (below) society with many corporations vying for power within the framework of another (powerless) form of government.

*Examples:* Dutch East India Company; East India Trading Company; Hanseatic League; Poul Anderson's Polesotechnic League.

Typical Control Rating: 3 to 6.
Typical Conformity Rating: 3 to 6.
Typical Openness Rating: 3 to 6.

**Benefits:** Increase Management Skill by *two* levels without additional cost.

*Drawbacks:* Starting Social Resonance is at -1 *and* mimics the effects of one level of Corrupt (pp. 26-27) – money talks in the corporate state!

#### Cybercracy

The realm is ruled and maintained by a statewide computer system, which makes sure that citizens' needs are meet, laws are enforced, and borders are maintained. Exactly how much the system does depends on how smart the administrating artificial intelligence is. With TL10+ AI, it's possible that humans don't have to make *any decisions whatsoever*. This could be utopian or horrible – possibly both.

Examples: Iain M. Banks' Culture; Alpha Complex; Byte (GURPS Space Atlas, p. 20).

Typical Control Rating: 5 or 6.
Typical Conformity Rating: 1 to 3.
Typical Openness Rating: 0 to 6.
Benefits: Reduce time for all tasks by 10%.

*Drawbacks:* Each turn, roll 3d. On a roll of (10 - Citizen Loyalty modifiers) or less, the system has been temporarily hacked/crashed! *Increase* time for all tasks by 10%, or

increase penalties for rolls by -2 (GM's option). This lasts for 1d-1 turns (minimum 1).

#### Feudal

A feudal system is characterized by land ownership and by duties paid to the head of government (often an autocrat, p. 15). The land itself is owned by the ruler, who bestows it upon others as desired – maybe you amuse them, or per-

haps you've slain the dragon that's been eating the herds. Those who receive this boon become part of the nobility. Recipients can then parcel out their (literal!) turf to vassals, who promise their services to their lord. If there's enough land, these fief-holders might grant land to *their* vassals, and so on until one gets to the commoners, who must serve in order to have a place to live.

In a low-tech society, the commoners are usually farmers; in a high-tech one, they might be receptionists, janitors, cafeteria workers, or members of similar "low level" professions. Commoners might be serfs, with few rights (perhaps not even the right to leave their assigned land!) and many responsibilities, or they may be free to move between fiefdoms if job conditions are too harsh. Either way, their labor funds those above them, who then pay a portion to those above *them*, and so on until the realm's ruler's coffers are enriched.

*Examples:* Holy Roman Empire; Japan during the "samurai era"; much of Western and Central Europe from 500 to 1300.

Typical Control Rating: 5 or 6.
Typical Conformity Rating: 1 to 4.
Typical Openness Rating: 3 to 5.

**Benefits:** Increase Military Resources by 5% above normal.

*Drawbacks:* Each turn, roll 3d. On 6 or less, one or more lords have fallen to infighting, reducing the amount of available Military Resources by 30%. This lasts until a Bluff, Negotiate, or Threaten maneuver is used to quell the rebellious lords.

#### Kritarchy

The realm is governed by a large body of jurisprudence, with precedents and interpretation allowing it to evolve socially. Judges, magistrates, and arbiters of the law reign, administering laws and adjudicating issues based on prior cases. They also plan new laws to deal with emerging circumstances.

*Examples:* Somalian *xeer;* pre-monarchic Israel under the judges; Islamic Courts Union; the society in David D. Friedman's *The Machinery of Freedom;* the world of Judge Dredd (an extreme example!).

Typical Control Rating: 1 to 6.
Typical Conformity Rating: 1 to 3.
Typical Openness Rating: 0 to 3.

**Benefits:** Treat Citizen Loyalty as one step higher for determining the corruption of settlements (see p. 11). Those who hold the law dear react at +1 to the realm.

**Drawbacks:** Reduce Management Skill by one level; starting level cannot exceed 16.

#### Meritocracy

The government is made up of individuals who've passed stringent tests to prove they have what it takes to rule. A meritocracy with lots of oversight may be slightly cumbersome, but its leaders and officials will be the best the realm has to offer. Bureaucracies (pp. 15-16) and meritocracies have much in common.

Examples: Centrum from GURPS Infinite Worlds; the society in Gattaca.

Typical Control Rating: 4 to 6. Typical Conformity Rating: 2 to 6. Typical Openness Rating: 2 to 6.

**Benefits:** Rolls using Workforce Points are at +2.

*Drawbacks:* Rolls to check for rebellion are at -2 due to a large underclass of citizens.

#### **Military Government**

The military service rules the realm. Military officers enact laws and handle the realm's administration – generally from the lowest to the highest levels of government, with most or all political positions requiring current or former military standing. This often creates a civilian underclass, who gain at least a quirk-level Social Stigma (Cannot Hold Office).

A military *government* shouldn't be confused with a military *dictatorship* or a military *junta*, though it can turn into or arise from either. A military dictatorship is an autocracy (p. 15) ruled by someone who was or is in the military, and who seized power. A military junta is a group of people who did the same thing and act as an oligarchy (below).

Military governments fit warlike species, accidental colonists from military groups, and cultures that have been besieged by outside forces for many years.

*Examples:* Spartan city-state; Franco's rule during the Spanish Civil War; modern-day Thailand.

Typical Control Rating: 4 to 6.
Typical Conformity Rating: 3 to 6.
Typical Openness Rating: 0 to 6.

**Benefits:** Once per 12 turns, the realm can increase Military Budget Factor by one step *without* affecting any other scores.

**Drawbacks:** Every 1d turns, military spending reduces a realm's Revenue to effectively zero *without* increasing any military forces or military might.

#### Oligarchy

The realm is governed by a small group – the oligarchy – who select likeminded successors, maintaining power according to their (usually insular) requirements. Such people might be nobility, be independently wealthy, have important family ties, possess special knowledge or abilities, or belong to a specific religion. Since those who rule can help their own children become what the other rulers prize, the realm's power may rest in the hands of a few specific families (though genetic inheritance is not a requirement of oligarchies, unlike a typical aristocracy).

An oligarchy might rule openly – if it can justify this to the people – or be *secret*, with the populace believing they have some other form of government! It might also be a *junta* consisting of a small group of military officers, commonly generals or other high-ranking officials.

Examples: Modern Saudi Arabia; apartheid South Africa.

Typical Control Rating: 3 to 6.
Typical Conformity Rating: 0 to 4.
Typical Openness Rating: 0 to 4.

Benefits: +2 to rolls to avoid revolution or dissolution (p. 45).
Drawbacks: Treat as one level of Corrupt (pp. 26-27); oligarchic power structures are often more corrupt, but start with at least one level.

#### **Plutocracy**

The wealthy elite rule the realm, whether openly or by "buying" the nominal rulers. Governments merely "influenced" by the plutocrats are considered merged government types; use the rules in *New, Merged, Variant, and Weird Government Types* (p. 16). For example, a representative democracy might actually be ruled by plutocratic figures behind the scenes, while an open plutocracy might be ruled by its richest 1% and a governmental system that caters to them.

A plutocracy may have a lot in common with feudalism (p. 18), but the "serfs" are controlled by *money* rather than territory.

Examples: Carthage; Isaac Asimov's Foundation under Hober Mallow.

Typical Control Rating: 3 to 6.
Typical Conformity Rating: 1 to 3.
Typical Openness Rating: 3 to 5.

Benefits: +2 on all Trade and Negotiate rolls.

**Drawbacks:** Whenever a disruption causes loss of Luxury/ Precious Goods Points or Revenue, increase the loss by 20% (minimum 1 extra point, for Luxury/Precious Goods Points).

#### Representative Democracy

The realm's citizens elect representatives to a congress, senate, parliament, or similar body. These representatives pass laws, appoint non-elected officials, and otherwise run the government. In realms with uneducated citizens, representatives can become corrupt, elected for their charisma regardless of whether they will *actually* serve voters – or are even competent! If voters are apathetic, lobbyists and special interest groups can effectively puppet the government, making things much worse.

*Examples:* United States of America; modern-day United Kingdom.

Typical Control Rating: 2 to 4.
Typical Conformity Rating: 2 to 5.
Typical Openness Rating: 2 to 5.

Benefits: +2 to rolls to avoid revolution or dissolution (p. 45). Drawbacks: Other realms gain +2 to rolls to use propaganda against the realm.

#### **Technocracy**

The government is led by highly educated or technical experts who seek efficiency and technological superiority. Government officials are selected on the basis of how skilled they are in their field. The better the technocrats are at running things, the less oppressive they are; if they're incompetent, they're also dictatorial.

Example: The society in Kurt Vonnegut's Player Piano.

*Typical Control Rating:* 3 to 6. *Typical Conformity Rating:* 4 to 6. *Typical Openness Rating:* 3 to 5.

Benefits: +1 to starting Infrastructure Rating (maximum IR6).

*Drawbacks:* Reduce Revenue by 10%.

#### **Theocracy**

The government is run by religious officials, typically of the state religion. (Alternatively, the realm might have *multiple* religions that form political alliances similar to those seen in the Parliament of the modern U.K.) The realm's rulers tend to be the religion's most holy, wealthy, or elite members, but that isn't always the case.

#### Join the Revolution!

While every realm starts with a government, this comes with no guarantee that *another* government won't supplant it. Throughout history, coups, rebellions, and revolutions are as common as rainwater. However mighty your empire, you must eventually answer to the people!

Wherever there's politics, there's the possibility of someone getting sufficiently fed up with the status quo to organize a likeminded group into a force for change. This is as true of benevolent realms as it is of evil ones. In campaigns featuring realms – whether the PCs are running them or adventuring in them – creating or preventing an uprising can be a powerful motivation for the players.

Perhaps plucky underdog rebels (scum or not) seek to outwit the powerful forces of tyranny in order to restore justice to the land (planet, galaxy, dimension, . . .). Or maybe malcontent saboteurs are undermining the rightful government, striving to turn a peaceful utopia into their personal fiefdom. Such situations are full of opportunities for PCs "at ground level" to be members or leaders of the revolution, troubleshooters or law enforcers for the government, or simple citizens trying to keep family and friends safe during chaotic times.

With *Realm Management*, the PCs could even *start* as rulers of the realm and spend time fixing the social ills driving honest citizens to revolt – or challenging the insidious propaganda and covert takeovers of hostile forces. Alternatively, they might be trying to destabilize a *neighboring* realm, in order to soften them up for military conquest or humanitarian "rescue" later . . .

If the players want to do this, these rules make it possible! They can create a rebellion, foment discord, or battle such menaces – Chapter 2 offers plenty of guidelines. Done right, this can lead to roleplaying and gaming at the highest levels.

In settings with concrete evidence of divine right or actual deities, a god might be the realm's *literal* ruler, with its anointed servants running the realm's day-to-day activities. In campaigns with *active* deities, the GM may want to use the rules in *Man Proposes*, *God Disposes* (*GURPS Fantasy*, p. 148).

In *any* theocracy, excommunication is a truly terrible punishment for citizens: It not only threatens their souls, but also removes many or all legal rights!

*Examples:* Holy See; Tibet under the lamas; historical Muslim caliphates; Terry Pratchett's Omnia.

Typical Control Rating: 3 to 6.
Typical Conformity Rating: 4 to 6.
Typical Openness Rating: 0 to 6.

**Benefits:** When using Marshal Manpower to increase labor resources, the realm can spend any other Resource Point to convert it into a Workforce Point once per turn.

**Drawbacks:** -2 to rolls to avoid revolution or dissolution (p. 45), due to the possibility of religious schisms.

#### Economy Types

Deciding a realm's economy type is as important as choosing its form of government. The way a realm produces, allocates, and distributes goods and services can tell you much about its people. Such systems also include institutions or agencies that give the economy type its structure.

Ultimately, economy type answers three questions: "What is produced?", "How is it produced (and in what amounts)?", and "Who gets the goods?"

#### Capitalism

A realm with a capitalist economy features lots of private ownership of the means of production, with the market determining what to produce and consumers as the ones who drive it all. Such an economy lends itself to plutocracies if entirely unchecked (consider the robber barons of the 19th century!), but a species or culture with suitably community-oriented traits might produce different results. Laws or heavy cultural expectations may keep CEOs focused on how their companies will improve life for everyone, rather than just the bottom line.

Examples: New Zealand; Star Trek's Ferenginar; United States of America.

Benefits: Whenever Revenue is gained, make a Management Skill roll (or roll against Finance, if a suitably placed PC has it). Success by 3+ increases the gain by 20% immediately. When purchasing improved TL, Infrastructure Rating, or Education Rating, reduce the added cost of Improve (p. 34) by 5%.

**Drawbacks:** A capitalist economy is prone to wild swings unless carefully and skillfully managed. Roll against Management Skill every 2d turns. Critical failure results in an economic "bust" that reduces total current Resource Points by 1d×10%. After rolling a critical failure, ignore this drawback for 4d turns.

#### Communism

A realm with a communist economy is one in which property is state-owned rather than privately held. Essentially, the government – and through it, the people – owns the means of production. The people are given jobs to do; in return, the government gives them the goods and services they need to survive and continue to work.

Example: The USSR.

**Benefits:** Whenever a Workforce Point is gained, roll 3d. On a roll of 5 + Conformity Rating or less, an extra point is gained.

*Drawbacks:* Add one level of Corrupt (pp. 26-27) to the realm.

#### Mercantilism

A mercantile economy is one in which exports are maximized and imports are minimized. It promotes regulation of the economy by the government to increase its power abroad. High tariffs on goods (especially *manufactured* goods) are nearly universal.

*Examples:* Most countries in Europe from the 16th to 18th century; Chinese Empire in the 19th century.

**Benefits:** Buying Resource Points (*Buying/Selling Resource Points in Play*, p. 37) is automatically 10% cheaper.

**Drawbacks:** Selling Resource Points earns (3d)% less; roll each time RP are sold.

#### Post-Scarcity/Utopian

In a post-scarcity or "utopian" economy, the basic needs of survival (food, shelter, medical care) are available to all citizens, who do minimal labor – or possibly none at all, if magical servitor beings or robots are available! Many people still do work they enjoy, but payment is less in cash and more in social regard or personal pleasure. Post-scarcity cultures might range from realms of extremely indolent civilians to highly militant civilizations whose well-trained tacticians run wars of conquest to support their luxurious way of life!

*Examples: Star Trek*'s Federation; mythological lands ruled by fae.

**Benefits:** Increase base Status of all citizens by one and Citizen Loyalty by a step.

**Drawbacks:** Whenever a Workforce Point is gained, roll 3d. On a roll higher than 4 + Conformity Rating, that point is lost.

#### Socialism

In an idealized socialist economy, the basic needs of survival (food, shelter, medical care) and possibly even luxuries are available to all citizens, who do minimal labor to keep the *realm* running – or possibly none at all, if magical servitor beings or robots are available! The government rather than the private sector owns and manages the economy, and provides for the people's basic needs. People must work, but many get to do the work they enjoy, and unpleasant jobs may require government or social incentives. Such a system is slow to adapt to changing needs and disruptions, as people hope others will handle it.

In a variant of socialism, the Zwangswirtschaft of 1930s Germany, businesses remain privately owned but all major

decisions are dictated by the state; market transactions have only limited influence.

*Examples*: Modern-day China; Oz under Ozma, in L. Frank Baum's *The Emerald City of Oz.* 

Benefits: Increase starting Citizen Loyalty by two steps.

**Drawbacks:** Increase the cost of maneuvers by 1 Workforce Point. Increase the cost of disruptions or windfalls by one Resource Point *or* one turn's worth of Revenue, for actions pertaining to the realm's citizens or their welfare.

What is produced? How is it produced (and how much)? Who gets the goods?

#### **Traditional**

A traditional economy relies on the realm's beliefs and customs to help shape the goods and services it produces, as well as the manner in which those goods and services are distributed. This often means there are things that are *never* charged for, or for which only ritual exchanges are permitted. Examples might include giving water to anyone you find in the desert, a meal that's shared among anyone who shows up with something to add it (even just one root vegetable), the rescue of ships in distress, etc.

"Pure" traditional economies are incredibly rare in the modern world, but may suit campaigns with especially longlived races or cultures steeped in following traditions to the letter.

*Examples:* Rural or farming communities of all types; Inuit communities; tea plantations of South India.

**Benefits:** Start with 1d additional Workforce Points. Make a Management Skill roll whenever an ecological or agricultural disruption occurs; success negates it.

*Drawbacks:* 50% of Revenue (pp. 30-31) is immediately converted into Luxury/Precious Goods Points instead.

#### Mixed and Other Economies

It's possible to combine bits and pieces from more than one standard economy type in a hodgepodge system that works (or doesn't!) for a given realm. Such a mixed economy usually shares the benefits and drawbacks of all the contributing parts, although some of these might cancel out. That's just a guideline – the GM's judgment is final.

Below are some situations that *modify* how economies work. These variations can be applied to any economy type, adding their own distinct character – although they aren't all equally well suited to every economy. Accurately describing the economies of some realms might require *several* modifiers! Occasionally, a modifier may form the "whole" of an economy, but this is rarely stable and perhaps best-suited to non-human races, lost colonies, and weird cultural experiments.

*Composite* economies use different systems at different levels. For instance, in a nation made up of tribes or clans, there might be a socialist economy *within* each clan and a free market *between* clans – and foreigners can be cheated with impunity. Israeli *kibbutzim* are enclaves of socialist economic planning within a larger market economy.

*Criminal* economies are found in the cracks of society, and thrive in larger economies with many laws – or in anarchic ones where warbands and small enclaves are the largest forms of "government." Anything needed is obtained via robbery, theft, fraud, blackmail, or cash/trades for illegal goods and services. In some communist economies (e.g., the USSR), a large part of production and distribution actually occurs in a criminal sector.

*Palatial* (or palace) economies are common at TL1, and go with monarchies, theocracies, etc.; they may also represent socialist economies gone wrong. The economy is mostly staterun, but to get a share of the wealth, a citizen must be on good terms with the decision maker(s). Corruption is rampant. Labor and production tend to be inflexible, and surpluses get invested in either grandiose public works or war.

*Participatory* economies are those in which the people vote democratically on what goods are made or what services are produced.

*Slave* economies rely on the forced labor of others, who till the fields and make the goods. Slave economies are always at risk of uprisings . . . Note that if *non-sapient* beings (robots, magical constructs, etc.) are doing the work, it isn't a slave economy!

Subsistence economies go well with feudal and post-apocalyptic societies, and with many low-TL governments. The realm's economy is locked into (barely) feeding the citizens and providing their basic needs. Margins are so slim that disturbances can easily be disastrous, resulting in famines. Change for the better is very hard to come by. Market transactions may rely on barter, not cash; locating someone willing to swap what you want for what you have requires a roll similar to that to find a hireling or job (pp. B517-518).

*Unsustainable* economies rely on devouring finite resources: food, water, the environment, etc. A more refined version is deficit spending that's unsustainable in the long term. The economy and the realm are on a countdown to disaster!

#### **DEFENSE BONUS AND TERRAIN**

If other direct action against the realm doesn't lay it to waste first, it can be besieged or attacked; see *GURPS Mass Combat*, pp. 39-40. Terrain plays a major role in *Mass Combat*, as more dense or difficult terrain allows military forces to surprise their foes. The realm's typical terrain has no cost – and can be chosen freely – if it helps or hinders attackers and defenders alike. Terrain that helps only defenders requires the Defensible Terrain enhancement (p. 25), however, while terrain that helps only attackers imposes the Indefensible Terrain limitation (p. 27). These modifiers adjust the *Defense Bonus* (DB) of the realm's settlements, fortresses, etc. in mass combat.

#### **EDUCATION RATING**

Each realm has an *Education Rating* (ER) ranging from 0 (population is, on average, illiterate and uneducated) to 6 (population is, on average, literate and educated). This is derived from the realm's TL, and may in turn suggest cultural traits (p. 9).

Education Rating gives a modifier to Management Skill or other rolls the GM deems reflect a direct application of science, technology, or medicine - most often to counter

disruptions (e.g., rolls for Allocate Resources maneuvers to fight plagues) or maintain windfalls (e.g., rolls for Plan maneuvers to exploit technological breakthroughs). As a literate, educated populace is harder to fool with political shenanigans than a non-literate, uneducated one, apply the *inverse* of this modifier (e.g., +1 becomes -1) to Propaganda rolls made by corrupt leaders, foreign agitators, etc. The GM may extend these modifiers to any roll they feel overall education level should affect.

**ERO** – *No Education/Illiterate.* The realm's citizens are illiterate, rarely able to sum more than a few simple numbers, and otherwise uneducated. Even the rulers aren't much better educated than the general populace! Knowledge is passed down from teacher to student, and is unorganized; religious education by rote is likely to be common. Characters normally have a written comprehension level of None (p. B24). *Education Modifier:* -4. *Examples:* All preliterate historical societies; Mycenaean Greece; ancient Israel.

**ER1** – *Rare Education.* The majority (around 90%) of the realm's citizens are illiterate, but more are able to do addition and subtraction, and have some awareness of the idea of education. Trade and professional knowledge are taught strictly by apprenticeship. Most characters have a written comprehension level of None or Broken. *Education Modifier: -3. Example:* Imperial Rome.

**ER2** – *Infrequent Education.* For the majority, education resembles ER1: around 90% illiteracy, addition and subtraction are common, trades and professions are taught by apprenticeship, and most characters have a written comprehension level of None or Broken. However, higher education begins to appear for those who value and can afford it, and those who receive it are prominent in everyday life (doctors, lawyers, priests, engineers, etc.). *Education Modifier:* -2. *Example:* Medieval Europe, whose educational system is portrayed in *GURPS Locations: Worminghall.* 

ER3 – Uncommon Education. A bare majority (around 50%) of citizens are literate and able to do arithmetic. Higher education is more common but is still limited to a very small percentage of the population. Lack of basic mathematical skills, in particular, is likely to garner Social Stigma (Ignorant) (p. B155). Education Modifier: -1. Example: 16th-century Scotland, which raised taxes to fund education in every parish.

**ER4** – *Common Education.* The realm's citizens are almost wholly literate (less than 10% illiteracy). Anything below Accented written comprehension may garner Social Stigma (Ignorant), on top of the disadvantage of low literacy. *Education Modifier:* 0. *Example:* Early 20th-century France.

**ER5** – *Near-Universal Education.* The realm's citizens are almost wholly literate (less than 5% illiteracy). Higher education is sufficiently common and cheap that any citizen can improve themselves, if they make the effort. Higher education replaces apprenticeship for many professionals (nurses, accountants, teachers, businessmen, etc.). *Education Modifier:* +1. *Example:* Present-day United States.

**ER6** – *Universal Education*. The citizenry is almost wholly literate (illiteracy rates of less than 1%), and the majority have some sort of higher education or skilled trade. Free higher education is commonplace and likely sponsored by the government. *Education Modifier:* +2. *Example:* Present-day Scotland.

The realm's starting Education Rating equals half its TL, rounded *up*; e.g., a TL3 realm starts out with an ER of 2. Higher or lower ER is an enhancement or a limitation, respectively; see *Educated/Uneducated Populace*, p. 25.

#### MANAGEMENT SKILL

Governments – even small ones – require *managing*. They need people to handle requests, diplomatic missions, internal hiring and firing, etc. Eventually, a bureaucracy will form in all but the smallest or most alien realms. Creating character sheets for everyone working in upper management of even a small realm would be exhausting and overly complicated. Instead, each realm has an overall skill level for managing itself. This is an abstraction of the average skill level of people (freelancers or employees) working in the realm's administration, the communication systems they have access to, *how* they communicate, the overall morale of the bureaucracy, and so on.

All realms start with a *Management Skill* level of 12. This can be raised or lowered for  $\pm 5\%$  to Realm Value (pp. 29-30) per  $\pm 1$  to skill level.

Optionally, apply one of these modifiers as well:

Completely Reliable Management: The staff are diligent, have numerous backups and safety nets, copy memos to everyone, and so on. When rolling against Management Skill for any reason, you may reroll a failure twice, each turn, and use the best of the three rolls. For requests for assistance or similar, this *decreases* the Reaction-Time Modifier (p. 24) by 1d-1. +50%.

*Usually Reliable Management:* As above, but only reroll critical failures or failures by 10 or more. For assistance, *decrease* the Reaction-Time Modifier by 2d. +25%.

*Unreliable Management:* The management is underprepared, unskilled, or low in morale. *All* requests for assistance or similar increase the Reaction-Time Modifier by 1d-2 (minimum +1), and other actions require either 50% more time *or* penalize rolls by -2. -25%.

Very Unreliable Management: As above, but woefully so! Treat any failure by 5 or more as if it were a critical failure. All requests for assistance or similar increase the Reaction-Time Modifier by 1d-2 (minimum +1), and other actions require either twice as much time or penalize rolls by -4. -50%.

*Example:* A realm with a Management Skill of 15 (+3, for +15%) and completely reliable management (+50%) adds +65% to Realm Value, but would roll against a 15 when using Chapter 2 and could, once per turn, reroll a failed roll twice and take the best result.

Additionally, some realms have extremely adroit and capable multitaskers in their governments. To represent this, use one of the following modifiers:

*Facile:* The realm's staff are good at moving between multiple problems or concerns. Reduce the penalty for multiple maneuvers from -6 to -3 and the required Workforce Points from 2 points to 1 point. +15%.

Very Facile: The realm's staff are extremely good at moving between multiple problems or concerns. As for Facile, but the realm can perform one additional maneuver per turn with no penalty. The GM may allow multiple levels of this trait for

realms with AI assistants, magical communication, or anything similar that allows instantaneous communication or advanced intelligence. Each level increases the cost by another +30%, but allows the realm to take an additional maneuver every turn. Note this as (e.g.) "Very Facile 2." +30%/level.

#### REALMS OF FAITH

Society and religion have gone together since the dawn of civilization. Religion is too complex to chart and assign a "Faith Rating," though! It isn't the purpose of this supplement to emulate *every* aspect of domain management – just to offer a workable model for use at the gaming table.

Which isn't to say that religion has no role in a realm! Quite the opposite: The campaign setting's metaphysics could have a *huge* impact on how realms are governed. For example, if gods sometimes visit the material plane . . . could they rule a realm? Yes, absolutely! What about deities who remain distant – do they impose their will on civilization via followers, or do they take a "hands off" approach? And what about the divine right of monarchs to rule their kingdoms?

Realm designers must consider religious issues along with the other, more quantifiable options. This remains true even without the supernatural. If a realm is particularly religious or has an observed state religion, add an appropriate limitation, as that will restrict how the realm can act (without starting civil unrest, anyway). Religion is also likely to affect Control Ratings for some substances or services; e.g., puritanical societies might limit the purchase of alcohol or make prostitution illegal, while other faiths might *mandate* alcohol at times and employ holy sex workers. And realms may outlaw some religions and cultural groups in favor of state-sponsored religions (or atheism) or groups.

#### **H**ABITABILITY

A realm can *by definition* sustain a population of people – otherwise, it's just land. A realm's *Habitability* rates a combination of its arable land, nonarable-but-still-useful land (such as pasture), and living space, and how forgiving that land is. The higher a realm's Habitability, the easier it is to grow food, raise livestock, gather wild edibles, and so on, and thus the more population the realm can support.

Habitability gives a modifier that affects Animal Handling (Livestock), Farming, Fishing, Gardening, Survival, and Tracking (for hunting game only). This also applies to HT rolls to resist climate extremes, reflecting natural shelter (or lack thereof), local weather patterns, and so on.

Disastrous (0): The realm has the worst possible terrain, climate, and geographic location. Its inhabitants are barely scratching a living off rocks. Most of their time is spent hunting for and gathering food, farming, etc. Every 1d turns, roll 3d; on 6 or less, the realm suffers the effects of the drought/famine disruption (p. 39). Habitability Modifier: -3 or worse. Examples: The Arctic; marginal space stations or generation ships; the proverbial desert island.

Very Bad (1 to 3): The realm isn't in good terrain, climate, or geographic location – pick two of these problems – but the population makes it work. They might even be proud of being so tough! If so, add a cultural trait (p. 9) to reflect this. The terrain is likely sparse and the land barely farmable. Check for famine as for "Disastrous," but disaster strikes only on a roll of 4 or less. Habitability Modifier: -2. Example: Siberia.

Bad (4 to 6): The realm lacks one of good terrain, climate, or geographic location. Otherwise, treat as "Very Bad." Habitability Modifier: -1. Example: Tibet.

*Poor* (7 to 9): The realm is in neither a good location nor a bad one. The lands are livable, if marginal. *Habitability Modifier*: -1, at the GM's discretion. *Example*: Northern Sweden.

Neutral (10 to 12): The realm is in neither a good location nor a bad one, but isn't marginal. Habitability Modifier: 0. Example: Most of Europe.

Good (13 to 15): One of the realm's terrain, weather, or geographic location is *ideal*. The citizens have a good life. *Habitability Modifier:* +1. *Examples:* Fertile river valleys, like the Nile or the Indus.

Very Good (16 to 18): Two of the realm's terrain, weather, and geographic location are ideal. The citizens have a *great* life. Whenever a disruption involving weather, famine, drought, or any similar hardship is rolled, roll 3d; on 4 or less, *ignore it. Habitability Modifier:* +2. *Example:* An ideal terraformed world.

Excellent (19): The realm is in a paradise! The terrain, weather, and geographic location are ideal for growing crops, raising livestock, and living. The inhabitants may appear blessed to outsiders. Treat as "Very Good" for dealing with hardships of the land, but ignore such disruptions on a roll of 6 or less. Habitability Modifier: +3. Example: Biblical Eden.

Record Habitability level, numeric value, and skill modifier on the same line; e.g., "Good (14; +1)."

Habitability starts at "Neutral." Having a higher or lower rating is an enhancement or a limitation, respectively; see *Habitable/Uninhabitable Land*, p. 25. Optionally, the GM can find baseline Habitability for a realm by rolling 3d for its numeric value.

## Example of Realm Creation (cont'd)

Consulting *GURPS Mass Combat*, the GM decides that Zarthus is mostly a hilly region surrounded by more hills and mountains.

Next, the GM notes that Zarthus' Education Rating is 2 (half of its TL3, rounded up). Despite the Fell-King's current plans, the older population is ill informed on multiple subjects. Fortunately, those who *run* the realm are competent; the GM settles on a Management Skill level of 15 (which will increase the Realm Value by +15% in later steps).

All realms start with a Habitability of "Neutral," but the GM decides to give Zarthus "Poor." A realm limitation will reflect this (see *Habitable/Uninhabitable Land*, p. 25).

Finally, the GM calculates the Reaction-Time Modifier: +2 for TL4 or less, no modifier for Management Skill 15, and +3 for complexity (the Fell-King's Status 7 is the highest level). That adds up to +5.

#### REACTION-TIME MODIFIER

Reaction-Time Modifier (RTM) is a broad indicator of how quickly the realm can respond to events. It reflects how well organized the realm is – both in administrative processes and availability of physical resources – as well as the technological ease of communicating and coordinating activities. Think of it as "Basic Speed for realms," with these differences: Lower is faster (e.g., -1 is better than +1), and slower realms act first and faster ones can interrupt those actions with their own, as explained in Chapter 2.

Use the *Reaction-Time Modifier Table* to determine Reaction-Time Modifier. This normally applies to *all* responses. However, certain realms work particularly quickly or slowly when it comes to specialized tasks, so the GM may specify different RTMs in some circumstances.

#### **Base Reaction-Time Modifier Table**

Trait	Modifier
TL0-4	+2
TL5-6	+1
TL7-8	0
TL9-10	-1
TL11+	-2
Management Skill 9 or less	+3
Management Skill 10-11	+2
Management Skill 12-14	+1
Management Skill 15-17	0
Management Skill 18-20	-1
Management Skill 21+	-2
Complexity	+(highest Status the realm supports)/2, rounded <i>down</i>

Reaction-Time Modifier can be modified from this base. Raising it is a limitation, and lowering it is an enhancement; see *Reflexive/Inactive Realm*, p. 26.

#### REALM MODIFIERS

Realm traits enable you to customize your realm by adjusting its statistics and much more. Realm enhancements are a great deal like advantages – but for an entire realm! – and increase Realm Value (pp. 29-30). Conversely, realm limitations resemble disadvantages, and decrease Realm Value.

#### Realm Enhancements

These traits give access to such things as enhanced national wealth, prodigious natural resources, and better military training facilities. Below are some examples. The GM is free to create more!

Able Populace (+25% or +50%): The realm's inhabitants are more productive than normal. Perhaps the elderly can work until later in life and the young start younger; maybe everyone is simply very efficient. Whatever the reason, the realm has a larger-than-normal labor pool. At the first level, whenever you gain Workforce Points for any reason, gain an additional one immediately. At the second level, you enjoy the first level's effects and whenever you *lose* Workforce Points for any non-voluntary reason, you lose one less.

Admired/Hated (±5%/level): The realm is well thought of (or despised by) other realms. It starts out with a positive (or negative) Social Resonance (p. 28). Starting with this trait doesn't meant the realm's Social Resonance won't change due to future actions!

*Advanced/Obsolete Infrastructure* ( $\pm 25\%$ /level): The realm's Infrastructure Rating (pp. 11-12) is higher (or lower) than 3. For a split IR (p. 13), *halve* this to  $\pm 12.5\%$ /level and round up.

Appearance (Varies): Like a city (see *GURPS City Stats*, p. 6), a realm can have an overall appearance. Treat this as you would for a character (p. B21), with each point of cost becoming +1% as an enhancement or -1% as a limitation. Realms *always* use the flat modifier for appearance from Impressive. The modifier affects any roll that makes sense to the GM: to see if NPCs come back (like Tolkien's Rivendell), to intimidate others (for a blasted hellscape like Mordor), and so on.

Clear Routes (+10%/level): The realm has exceptionally well-kept roads, easily navigable rivers, etc. This allows for easier trade and movement of goods. Once per turn when performing a Trade maneuver, the realm can use Workforce Points in place of any other Resource Points for that maneuver. Multiple levels make it possible to do this multiple times in a single turn – *if* the realm has multiple maneuvers available or takes penalties for multiple maneuvers.

Conventional/Unconventional Populace ( $\pm 2\%$ /level): The Conformity Rating (p. 13) of the realm is higher than 3 (or lower than 2). Most "playable" realms have ConR 5 or less, as 6 represents something like a hive mind.

Defensible Terrain (+10% per +1 Defense Bonus): Realms that are rocky, built in (or surrounded by) wetlands, or underground are harder to besiege than those that lack such protective geographic features. Each level of Defensible Terrain adds +1 to the Defense Bonus (*GURPS Mass Combat*, p. 32) of *all* of the realm's settlements; this also adds to terrain modifiers for pitched or encounter battles. When using *GURPS City Stats*, this *increases* the Defense Bonus of all cities. High levels of Defensible Terrain may make some locations – such as castles – impossible to invade in the traditional manner. The GM sets the maximum level, but more than +4 is hard to justify. This cannot be combined with Indefensible Terrain (p. 27).

Educated/Uneducated Populace ( $\pm 10\%$ /level): The realm's Education Rating (pp. 22-23) is higher (or lower) than its TL would otherwise suggest.

Famous for (Archetype) (Varies): The realm is known for producing heroes, villains, and/or everything in between. This trait functions similar to Social Resonance (p. 28), but for a narrower group of people. Consult Reputation (p. B26), reading the point cost as a percentage modifier to Realm Value; thus, a positive Reputation is an enhancement while a negative one is a limitation. For example, the entire aristocracy of the Necro-Kingdom of Zarthus consists of skilled necromancers; as most other realms find this disturbing, it's a limitation. Mixed versions of this trait are possible – a realm could be known for its good and bad seeds. Characters from realms with this trait may wind up with quirk-level Mistaken Identity (p. B21) if everyone expects them to be what the realm is famous for!

Fertile Territory (+15%/level): The realm possesses more arable land than normal. This might be achieved by irrigation and fertilization – or, at high TLs, using hydroponic gardens and similar artificial environments. When performing

a Gather/Extract maneuver to gain more Agriculture Points, note your margin of success. At the first level, if you succeed by 3+, you get one extra Agriculture Point; at higher levels, you gain one extra point per full three points of success, to a maximum number of additional Agriculture Points equal to the enhancement level. A similar benefit applies when obtaining Natural Resources Points through hunting/gathering. Fertile Territory cannot be combined with Infertile Territory (p. 27).

Habitable/Uninhabitable Land (±10%/step): The realm has a higher (or lower) Habitability (pp. 23-24) than "Neutral."

Heavy Taxation (+5%/level): The realm is more heavily taxed than its Control Rating would otherwise suggest. Each level increases CR by 1 for the sole purpose of taxation. (To increase the realm's overall CR, see Secure Society, p. 26.) This increases Starting Revenue (p. 31) and Revenue (pp. 30-31). It's assumed that the populace either is used to the tax rate or finds other benefits worth the tradeoff. This cannot be combined with Light Taxation (p. 27).

High/Low TL (±25%/level): The realm has a higher (or lower) starting TL than the campaign setting. Note split, divergent, and superscience TLs (pp. B511-514) as well, if relevant. At the GM's option, a single aspect of TL may be modified for ±20%/level. The aspects are Biotechnology/Medicine, Power, Transportation, and Weapons/Armor. For example, a duchy famed for its doctors and medical knowledge could have TL4 (TL5 Medicine) for +20%. Even more optionally, this trait's scope may be narrowed further, using one of the following forms:

- High/Low TL (Limited, Broad) (±15%/level): The modified TL applies to one broad field such as Agriculture, Armor, Arms, Biotechnology, Information Technology, Machinery, Material Science, Medicine, or a specific subset of Power (Fission, Fusion, etc.) or Transportation (Air, Ground, Water, etc.).
- *High/Low TL (Limited, Large)* (±10%/level): The modified TL applies to one field narrower than above, such as Airplanes, Computers, Genetic Engineering, or Pharmacology.
- *High/Low TL (Limited, Narrow)* (±5%/level): The modified TL applies to one skill to one specialty, if applicable and the equipment it uses directly. For example, Piloting (Aerospace).

Higher/Lower Carrying Capacity (±5%): Treat the realm's TL as one higher (or lower) for the sole purpose of Carrying Capacity (p. 10).

Higher/Lower Quality of Life (±25%/level): The realm's minimum quality of life – as compared to the campaign setting in general – is better (or worse) than its TL and wealth would otherwise indicate. Quality of life is expressed in terms of the minimum Status of the realm's inhabitants: Each level of this trait increases (or decreases) this by one. Status cannot drop below -2, or rise higher than the campaign's (maximum allowed Status)-2. If the realm is the *entire campaign setting*, this trait may not be applicable, and PCs certainly won't have to worry about it. Characters who interact with people from outside their native realm, however, may wish to take suitable social traits; e.g., Reputation (Citizen of a rich/poor realm).

Ideal Climate (+10% or +50%): The realm rarely or never suffers from droughts, floods, etc. Realms with near-ideal climate (+10%) ignore negative weather-related effects once every *four* turns; realms with ideal climate (+50%) ignore negative weather-related effects completely. Neither level can be combined with Hostile Climate (p. 27).

Independent Revenue Stream (+1%/level): The realm has a source of income separate from taxation. Each level of this trait gives the realm 1% of its Revenue (pp. 30-31) in extra monies every turn, to be spent however its rulers wish.

Loyal/Disloyal Citizenry (±15%/step): The citizens of the realm are more (or less) loyal than normal. Citizen Loyalty (p. 11) is most important for indicating whether a realm is grappling with revolutionaries, rebels, or traitors in the pay of other realms, with other nuances applying as the GM desires. (For instance, civil wars may have residents who are very devoted to their side, but their overall loyalty to the realm is ... shaky.) Each level increases or decreases the populace's loyalty to their home by one step from "Neutral" (e.g., +15% for "Good" or -15% for "Poor"). Starting Citizen Loyalty cannot go below "Very Bad."

Maneuver Mastery (+20%/maneuver): Pick a maneuver (e.g., Bluff or Negotiate). The realm is highly capable at performing that specific maneuver when using *The Wheel* (pp. 32-45) – it ignores the penalty to perform two or more maneuvers at the same time, as long as one of them is the maneuver picked for Maneuver Mastery. *Note:* It's cheaper to have Very Facile (p. 23) than to take Maneuver Mastery for multiple maneuvers. But Maneuver Mastery *does* stack with Facile/Very Facile, potentially allowing *three or more* maneuvers to be performed in a turn!

Quick/Ślow Deployment (±20%/level): The realm rapidly (or sluggishly) deploys its military forces to other areas. Each level of Quick Deployment (maximum four) subtracts a week from the time required to bring military forces to bear when using the Marshal Manpower maneuver (p. 35). At level four, the effects of Marshal Manpower happen "instantly" – in a few days in reality, but since the timescale for realm turns is a month, it's effectively instant. Each level of Slow Deployment increases the time by a month; thus, deploying forces takes more than one turn and requires multiple uses of Marshal Manpower.

Reduced/Increased Consumption (±25%/level): The realm's inhabitants require more (or less) food and water than normal. This could be a species trait, or a mystical or ultra-tech effect of the realm itself. Each level (maximum four) modifies the number of Agriculture Points or Natural Resources Points needed to sustain the population during a famine: Reduced Consumption lowers the points required by 1 per level, to a minimum of none; Increased Consumption raises the points required by 1 per level.

Reflexive/Inactive Realm (±5%/level): The realm acts faster (or slower) than its TL, Management Skill level, etc. would otherwise suggest. Each level (maximum four) gives ±1 to its Reaction-Time Modifier (p. 24). Remember, lower is better; each -1 to RTM costs +5%, while each +1 gives -5%.

Renewing Resource (+10%/+1 to rolls): The realm possesses a source of potentially unlimited, rapidly replenishing, and easy-to-access wealth. This can be due to a special natural resource, a unique technological process, clever business investments, etc. Pick one type of Resource Points. This trait gives +1 per level on rolls to extract/gather (p. 34), manufacture (p. 35), or marshal (p. 35) that resource, and the realm may gather this resource one extra time per level per turn without suffering the penalty for multiple maneuvers.

Reserve (Type) (+10%/level): Once every 3d turns, the realm can claim a number of one particular type of Resource Points. Each level of Reserve gives one bonus point. This

requires no action on the realm's part – it represents a well-organized economy, advanced technology, etc. With the GM's agreement, points can be claimed every 12 turns (at level 1) or every six turns (at level 2 or higher) rather than every 3d turns.

Secure Society (+10%/level): The realm has many laws regarding taxation, Legality Class (p. B507), military service, and so on. Each level increases Control Rating by 1 for *all* purposes. This affects Revenue (pp. 30-31) – but if the goal is simply to increase CR for taxation, use Heavy Taxation (p. 25) instead. Secure Society cannot be combined with Loose Society (p. 27).

Unique Resource (+100%): As per Renewing Resource (above), but wholly (or mostly) exclusive to the realm. This is often something supernatural – like magical materials that are found nowhere else - but entirely natural resources are possible. Examples include a finicky spice that grows nowhere else (common in Earthly history!), fish that spawn only in that realm's rivers, or animals that have a specialized habitat and don't breed well in captivity. In a science-fiction setting, perhaps a Precursor artifact creates an exotic mineral, or radiates an energy that affects crops beneficially - within a few miles. Exact benefits are left for the GM to decide (e.g., "This special metal as hard as diamond, found only in the Republic of Ka-Ash-Ur, can be shaped with magic to create nigh-unbreakable objects, making it excellent weapon material."), but Unique Resources are always worth trading for on at least a 2:1 scale. Adventurers might never interact with Unique Resources, may have them as background only ("I learned my skills hunting the legged snakes of RuKa for their opal fur."), or could find themselves entangled in constant plots as neighboring realms try to sneak in to steal their realm's Unique Resource, attempt to conquer the entire realm, kidnap the PCs to learn the secret . . .

#### Realm Limitations

Limitations lower the realm's cost... in return for a downside. Those listed below are examples; the GM is invited to invent others. Many standard limitations are the opposite of traits in *Realm Enhancements* (pp. 24-26); follow the page reference to the full description.

Admired/Hated (±5%/level) (p. 15). Advanced/Obsolete Infrastructure (±25%/level) (p. 25). Appearance (Varies) (p. 25).

Broad-Minded/Chauvinistic Populace (-2% or -5%): The realm's Openness Rating (pp. 13-14) falls outside the normal range of 2-4, hampering the realm's actions in relation to other realms as follows: at OR0 (-5%), any roll to mollify or assist another realm is at -2; at OR1 (-2%), any roll to mollify or assist another realm is at -1; at OR5 (-2%), any roll to harm or threaten another realm is at -1; and at OR6 (-5%), any roll to harm or threaten another realm is at -2.

Conventional/Unconventional Populace (±2%/level) (p. 25).

Corrupt (-10%/level): The realm's administrators and/or leaders are dishonest. This results in a system of governance that works but is defective. Whenever the realm rolls for any gains – temporary or permanent – from windfalls (pp. 41-45), roll at -1 per level of Corrupt. Furthermore, roll 3d once per turn; on a roll of (5 + level of Corrupt) or less, lose one random Resource Point or 20% of that turn's Revenue (GM's choice) to graft, bribes, etc.

If a maneuver other than Do Nothing was taken, roll at the completion of the maneuver, and instead of a random RP or percentage of Revenue, subtract 1 RP of the type the maneuver required.

Educated/Uneducated Populace (±10%/level) (p. 25). Famous for (Archetype) (Varies) (p. 25).

*Habitable/Uninhabitable Land* (±10%/step) (p. 25).

Hard-Power Oriented (-5%): The realm relies on military might rather than diplomacy or negotiation. When dealing with another realm, it suffers -2 on all rolls for maneuvers where it cannot effectively use its military to get what it wants.

High/Low TL (±25%/level) (p. 25).

Higher/Lower Carrying Capacity (±5%) (p. 25). Higher/Lower Quality of Life (±25%/level) (p. 25).

Hostile Climate (-5% or -25%): The realm's climate is inhospitable. At the -5% level, roll 3d once every four turns; on 9 or less, the realm suffers the effects of the inclement weather disruption (p. 38). At the -25% level, roll *every* turn, and on 15 or less, the realm suffers bad weather conditions. In either case, if inclement weather and another weather-related disruption occur simultaneously, multiply the effects of the worst one by ×1.5. Neither level can be combined with Ideal Climate (p. 25).

In Debt (-1%/level): The realm is carrying more debt than usual for an economically healthy realm. It begins with 5% less Starting Revenue (p. 31) per level – and every turn, it must spend 1% of its Revenue (pp. 30-31) per level to pay its creditors. For half limitation value, the realm simply begins with less Starting Revenue.

Indefensible Terrain (-5% per -1 Defense Bonus): A realm built on flat terrain, next to an easily navigable river, etc. is easier to invade, and its cities and strongholds are easier to besiege. Each level of Indefensible Terrain decreases the Defense Bonus (GURPS Mass Combat, p. 32) of all the realm's settlements; this also subtracts from terrain modifiers for terrain for pitched or encounter battles. When using GURPS City Stats, this reduces the Defense Bonus of all cities. This cannot be combined with Defensible Terrain (p. 25).

Inefficient (-15%/level): The realm's economic system or administration is seriously faulty. Treat as Corrupt (pp. 26-27). However, in the case of corruption, a powerful and important minority of the population is happy, because they're lining their pockets. In the case of Inefficient, nobody is gaining anything: The harvest rots in the granary, the lumber warehouse goes up in flames, the missiles rust in the silos, the shops' shelves are empty, and everyone is unhappy. On top of the effects of Corrupt, roll vs. Management Skill once per turn, at -1 per level past the first. Failure causes Citizen Loyalty to drop by a step for that turn; critical failure means the drop is permanent.

Infertile Territory (-20%/level): The realm has poor soil quality, relatively little arable land, or otherwise few natural resources. When performing a Gather/Extract maneuver to gain more Agriculture Points or Natural Resources Points, note your margin of success. At the first level, you must succeed by 2+ to receive the points. Each additional level increases the required margin of success by 2. Infertile Territory cannot be combined with Fertile Territory (p. 25).

Light Taxation (-5%/level): The realm is less heavily taxed than its Control Rating would otherwise suggest. Each level

## Example of Realm Creation (cont'd)

Poring over the realm enhancements, the GM selects Able Populace 2, +50% (life is hard and the Zarthusians are hardy, and then there's the "free" undead labor); Defensible Terrain 4, +40% (Zarthus is a terrible place with many natural defenses); Maneuver Mastery (Marshal Manpower), +20% (to summon undead hordes); and Renewing Resource 5, +50% (for the dreaded Black Mines). In total, this adds +160% to Realm Value.

Next, the GM looks over the realm limitations and add Appearance (Ugly), -8% (Zarthus really is an ugly place to live!); Chauvinistic Populace (OR1), -2% (justifiably so, since outsiders often crusade against their necromantic practices); Famous for Necromancers (-2 to reaction rolls), -10%; Hated 2, -10% (no one likes them much); Hostile Climate 1, -5% (thanks to magical workings gone awry); Lower Carrying Capacity 3, -15% (sustaining a population is very difficult in that harsh land); Obsolete Infrastructure 1, -25% (not quite apocalyptic, but close); and Uninhabitable Land 1, -10% (again, the land is *harsh*). In total, this gives -85% to Realm Value.

Finally, using these and previous traits, the GM writes up a description (p. 28).

decreases CR by 1 for the sole purpose of taxation. (To reduce the realm's *overall* CR, see *Loose Society*, below.) This decreases Revenue (pp. 30-31). Light Taxation cannot be combined with Heavy Taxation (p. 25).

Loose Society (-15%/level): The realm has few laws regarding taxation, Legality Class (p. B507), military service, and so on. Each level decreases Control Rating by 1 for *all* purposes. As CR affects Revenue (pp. 30-31), this makes sustaining the realm harder. Worse, as the populace is more likely to have weapons on par with law enforcement, the risk of revolution is greater should they grow discontent, while less legal pressure on organized crime, corporations (at higher TLs), etc. means internal takeovers are more likely – any of which could change the realm's traits drastically! Loose Society cannot be combined with Secure Society (p. 26).

Loyal/Disloyal Citizenry (±15%/step) (p. 26).

*Mothballed Military* (-2%/level): The realm has 5% less money per level per turn for its Military Resources.

Quick/Slow Deployment (±20%/level) (p. 26).

*Reduced/Increased Consumption* (±25%/level) (p. 26).

Reflexive/Inactive Realm (±5%/level) (p. 26).

Scarce Resource (-25%/type): A particular resource is in short supply in the realm. This can be due to naturally lacking that resource, a technological deficiency, a unique supernatural affliction, poor business investments, etc. Pick *one* type of Resource Points, which cannot have Renewing Resource (p. 26). This trait gives -5 on rolls to gather or extract (p. 34) that resource, and means the realm *cannot* perform multiple maneuvers when gathering or extracting it.

Soft-Power Oriented (-10%): The realm relies on diplomacy and negotiation rather than military might. When dealing with another realm, it suffers -2 on all rolls for maneuvers where it must use its military to get what it wants. This is mutually exclusive with Hard-Power Oriented (above).

Superstitious Populace (-5%): The realm's people are unusually superstitious. Roll against numerical Citizen Loyalty (p. 11) whenever a disruption (pp. 38-41) occurs. Failure means the inhabitants believe their plight to be the result of supernatural effects or divine will – a punishment for improper behavior by their rulers or even by everyone. For a one-time effect, like a single bad storm, this gives -3 on further Citizen Lovalty rolls for the next 1d-3 (minimum 1) turns; for a continuing disruption (a drought, waves of storms, consecutive plagues of locusts, etc.), the -3 persists until the disruptions end, and for an additional 1d turns afterward. In some game worlds, the populace is right – at least some of the time! They're quick to blame their rulers (or their neighbors) for improperly placating the gods, digging up ancient burial grounds, or otherwise bringing rains of blood onto everyone by their misdeeds. Continuing effects may result in the citizenry taking matters into their own hands, rebelling against rulers or turning against their sinning fellows in order to stop the disruption.

Unrecognized (-5% or -10%): The realm's government controls its territory, but most or all other realms don't recognize the *legitimacy* of that control. The initial reaction from other realms cannot be better than "Poor." The realm suffers -4 to Diplomacy rolls when dealing with realms that don't recognize its legitimacy, and its envoys don't start with Diplomatic Immunity (p. B65), though this can be gained in play using Negotiate (pp. 35-36). Unrecognized is worth -10% if it applies to *all* other recognized realms. It's worth -5% if even one other recognized realm recognizes the government (meaning relations between those realms are unaffected). Should at least *three* other realms grant recognition in play, the limitation disappears; this requires the unrecognized realm to achieve a "Very Good" or better reaction from the realm being asked to grant recognition.

### FINALIZING THE REALM

With resources, various ratings, government and economic types, and traits decided, it's time to flesh out the realm fully! Several of the following considerations depend on previous decisions, and call for some measure of tweaking.

#### REALM DESCRIPTION

After determining the realm's size, write down a preliminary description (you can change this later!). A *good* description encapsulates as much information as possible about the realm, its inhabitants, and its terrain – particularly its size and any elements determined for it so far. Of course, disruptions (pp. 38-41) and windfalls (pp. 41-45) may change these details, so keep the description flexible enough to account for such circumstances.

#### OFF THE MAP

Maps in roleplaying games are a time-honored tradition that goes back to the hobby's very foundation. Maps of realms – however small or large – are valuable props that let players know where their characters are. They're also a good way to highlight realm traits. For example, Filiagar is a dwarven realm, settled both above and below the surface; it has mines of precious adamant deep beneath the earth, but also fertile fields whose abundant crops feed the population and enable the dwarves to brew beer. A map allows the GM to pinpoint exactly where such things are and entice the PCs to visit interesting places.

Yet the same could be said of *not* having a map! Letting players imagine the realm in their own way can ease willing suspension of disbelief. For consistency's sake, the GM should keep notes on how far apart given landmarks are. Unless, of course, the realm is explicitly *mutable* – a trait the GM would have to define as an enhancement, a limitation, or something whose pros and cons cancel each other out.

Use broad-but-pertinent details to describe the realm: Is it a region of lakes and rivers? How do its people react to outsiders? How do they treat their own? Is it a land of riches? Around 300 to 500 words should suffice to give players the gist of what the realm is like.

#### Social Resonance

Social Resonance measures how non-citizens view a realm. It's effectively Reputation for realms, and treated as such. Resonance starts at 0 – others think neither good nor bad things about the realm – but changes during game play based on the realm's actions. This modifier might be "aspected"; for example, if a realm is known for feeding, clothing, and sheltering its poor, then its officials and citizens might enjoy +2 to reactions from pious or humble people or organizations.

Starting with a positive Social Resonance is an enhancement, while starting with a negative one is a limitation; see *Admired/Hated*, p. 25.

### REALMS AS PATRONS OR ENEMIES

Realms often serve as supporters or foes of adventurers. To determine a realm's point cost as a Patron, compare its Realm Value to the asset values given for Patrons (pp. B72-73). For example, if a TL3 county costs \$4,500,000 to found, its assets would be worth 4,500x the campaign's \$1,000 starting wealth, making it a 10-point Patron.

Enemies (p. B135) are harder to gauge, as the rules don't rate them in terms of dollar value. Instead, figure the approximate size of the realm's population and compare that to the examples given. Use only the civil servants . . . unless all of the realm's people really *are* out to get you! For example, if our TL3 county were an Enemy, disadvantage value would come in at around -20 points for the local constabulary, rangers, government officials, and so on – or -30 points if the *entire county* were after the PC.

#### STARTING REACTION ROLLS FOR REALMS

Some mechanics in *Realm Management* rely on how the campaign's realms see one another. Since realms are functioning as NPCs in their own right, this is effectively a reaction roll (pp. B559-562). For player-controlled realms (e.g., a PC is the queen of a small kingdom), the GM may allow the player(s) to decide how they react to other nations – but rolling randomly is also fun, and can lead to creative roleplaying. The GM might also decide that a realm's starting Social Resonance (p. 28) matches how its rulers are perceived: Maybe the Fell-King of Zarthus is a good guy overall, but he gets a bad rap and thus his people share in his reputation . . . or nobody trusts him because of the terrible things his grandparents did . . . or the whole "necromancers everywhere" issue sets the tone.

To let the dice decide, make a reaction roll modified for the subject realm's starting Social Resonance and consult the chart below. Roll for each realm's reaction toward the other, and then either average the results or pick one. For example, if one realm reacts very badly to another whose reaction to them is very good, the GM can pick one mutual reaction for both or use the average – in this case, "Poor." Rarely, divergent reactions make sense: Perhaps many realms resent the self-proclaimed utopia that keeps benevolently sending aid missions everywhere, or maybe an outgoing realm insists on trying to have trade agreements with a more standoffish one.

Once a realm's starting reactions are known, the GM should keep a list of how each realm feels about the others (or use mind-mapping software to accomplish this); e.g., "Zarthus despises the Kingdom of the Light due to past crusades against Zarthus; Very Bad reaction."

Disastrous (0 or less): The realm is at war (or about to be) with the subject realm. They hate one another over past deals, ideological differences, border contention, or similar. Realms with this reaction are either marshaling military forces, or (at best) doing nothing.

Very Bad (1 to 3): The realm will do anything short of open war to sabotage, belittle, or undermine the subject

realm. As for "Disastrous," they may dislike one another due to past actions or because they covet something the other realm has.

*Bad (4 to 6):* The realm dislikes the subject realm and will passively oppose it.

*Poor* (7 to 9): The realm is unimpressed by the subject realm and will passively work against it if there's a chance for great benefit with little downside. Alternatively, this can represent a "cool" relationship with an allied realm.

Neutral (10 to 12): The realm neither likes nor dislikes the subject realm. They'll work with that realm should it benefit them.

Good (13 to 15): The realm likes the subject realm – perhaps they're long-term allies, related nations, or the like. Whatever the reason, they will come to the aid of subject realm if they can, but won't overcommit resources. Assistance is likely to come in the form of military advisors, medical or humanitarian aid, or similar. The realm won't put its own people in danger, but will help the subject realm as much as they can otherwise.

Very Good (16 to 18): The realm is an ally of the subject realm. They are the staunchest of trade partners; will offer any sort of aid they can, even at mild expense to their own people; and will always assist in wars between the subject realm and other realms.

Excellent (19 or better): The realm is a fanatical ally of the subject realm. They'll always come to its aid – even if this seriously inconveniences their own people – including going to war against any who attack the subject realm. The realm's people react favorably to those of the subject realm. Consider why there's such a strong bond: Did the subject realm save the realm sometime in the past? Come to their aid financially? Bring food when its people were starving? Whatever the reason, make a note of it.

Reaction rolls can vary with actions taken during a turn. The GM should keep track of past results as well as current ones.

#### **INCOME RESOURCES**

A realm isn't a static thing! Its inhabitants are going about their daily lives, working, consuming, and otherwise living. Tracking the minutiae of even a small village would be difficult at best, so *Realm Management* sweeps most of that under the rug and relies on two big numbers to help make sense of what sort of material power a realm has: its population and the average monthly pay of its inhabitants. The former was noted on p. 10, while the latter can be found on p. B517. Once these two values are known, Realm Value can be extrapolated, which in turn makes it possible to figure other statistics.

#### Realm Value

First, find the realm's base value, as follows:

Base value = (Monthly pay of average citizen)  $\times$  Population  $\times$  0.6

This assumes that about 60% of the inhabitants are working and able to contribute something to the realm, while the remaining 40% are too young, old, injured, or sick to work at any given time – that's where the factor of 0.6 comes from. Some racial traits (Early Maturation, Immunity to Disease, Unhealing, Unliving, etc.), high technology (e.g., cloning tanks or miraculous healing), magic, or environments (such as those that cause frequent injury or require shorter working hours) may change these fractions. In that case, adjust the 0.6 above and in the calculation for Revenue (pp. 30-31) to suit the circumstances.

Then add up any applicable cultural traits, reading points as a percentage; modifiers for realm inhabitant racial traits; modifiers pertaining to Management Skill; and realm enhancements and limitations. Apply this percentage to base value to get *Realm Value*. A positive percentage increases Realm Value, while a negative one decreases it, but Realm Value cannot fall below 20% of base value.

To this, whoever is paying for the realm must add the cost of starting Resource Points (0.5% of base value per RP; see p. 6) and the cost to raise any military units (see *GURPS Mass Combat* for information on determining this cost). Record the starting RP cost separately in the "Notes" section of the stat block.

#### Military Resources

A realm's *Military Resources* (MR) stat represents its total budget for combat forces and the logistical elements that support them *per turn*. *GURPS Mass Combat* describes combat elements, each of which has a *cost to maintain*.

#### Optional Rule: Characters and Realm Value

Realm Value covers only the "hard" aspects of starting a realm. It doesn't take into account founders who are lazy, greedy, or any other number of other things. The GM is encouraged to gloss over such details for NPCs – assume that any overages were somehow dealt with during the startup, while any savings due to efficient work are long gone, and move on.

For PCs, the GM might want to be pickier! Optionally, starting from zero, tally -1 per advantage or other positive aspect that could affect founding a realm, and +1 per disadvantage or other negative aspect. Multiply the total by 5% to get the effect on startup cost. For example, if a founder has Greed and Laziness, that's two disadvantages, giving +2 × 5% = +10% to final value – everyone is trying to make a little on the side and do as little work as possible. If they had Greed and Workaholic, the GM might add only +5% for Greed, or decide that Workaholic is positive and the effects cancel out. Note this in the realm's stat block, but use unmodified Realm Value for all other purposes.

#### Optional Rule: Time to Found a Realm

Realistically, founding a realm should take years, if not decades. This system sweeps that under the rug. Should the GM want to play out creating a realm from nothing, assume it takes a number of years equal to:

Founding time =  $10 \times (Starting Realm Value)/(Population \times Typical monthly pay at campaign TL)$ 

Round *up* to the next full month. For example, Zarthus' *starting* Realm Value is \$155,635,200 and its population is 192,000. Average monthly pay at TL3 is \$700, so founding it would take  $10 \times 155,635,200/(192,000 \times 700) = 11.58$  years, or 11 years, 7 months.

#### Optional Rule: PC-Founded Realms

Player characters wishing to found a realm must first have a place to found one; this can be the subject of an adventure or mini-campaign as the PCs "clear" terrain and put it in a condition to support settlement. They must pay the costs for military units, starting Resource Points, and Realm Value. If the GM is using the previous rule, they must also take the time required. Founding cost can be paid in installments over that time; any delay in funding means a commensurate delay in time. Payments can be in cash, material resources, or anything else the GM deems appropriate. The GM should consider telling the players what's being spent, and how; e.g., a group seeking to found a small realm made up of villages might be told that the lumber they got from the Dark Wood is being used to build houses or a bridge to connect two villages separated by a river.

Maintenance is delivered to combat elements by logistics troops, which also have a cost to maintain. This can be treated as an overhead cost of 50% of the base cost for land logistics; 100% for naval logistics; 200% for air, orbital, or submersible logistics; or 500% for interplanetary logistics. This is further modified by *distance*: a short distance (300 miles or less) costs 50% less, middling distances (up to 500 miles) use base cost, long distances (up to 5,000 miles) double cost, and extreme distances (global on a planetary scale) triple cost. Interstellar realms use 20 times base cost for inter-system distances or 100 times base cost (or more) for interstellar distances. Technologies the realm possesses may reduce these figures. For

example, if FTL drives are plentiful and the next system is only a hop, skip, and a jump away, the GM might treat inter-system distances as *middling* and use base costs.

To determine Military Resources, look up the typical monthly pay for the realm's TL (p. B517), multiply this by its population, and then multiply the resulting amount by its *Military Budget Factor* (MBF):

 $MR = (Monthly pay of average citizen) \times Population \times MBF$ 

The MBF is normally based on the realm's Control Rating (CR):

CR	<b>MBF</b>	CR	<b>MBF</b>
0	*	4	5%
1	0.5%	5	10%
2	1%	6	20%
3	2%		

\* A CR0 realm has *no* true military.

The GM may assign a higher or lower effective CR for use in determining military mobilization. In wartime, a realm's MBF normally increases by one step on this table. Treat CR6 in wartime as 50%.

Once the GM determines Military Resources, they can use that value to decide which combat elements the realm can readily call to its aid. See *Mass Combat* for costs and options for various combat elements.

A subjugated realm has CR0 and no military forces, but *does* have an enforced CR from whoever is occupying them. Realms in this situation may have combat elements assigned to them by the national, imperial, or planetary government they answer to; these should be mentioned in the "Notes" section of the realm write-up.

Record Military Resources separately from Realm Value, just as with Resource Points.

#### Revenue

*Revenue* is the total amount of money a realm can access in a given turn. It represents monies *after* collecting taxes, funding the government and war efforts, and so on.

To determine Revenue, look up the typical monthly pay for the realm's TL (p. B517) and multiply this by the realm's population, by its *Revenue Factor* (RF), and then by 0.6:

Revenue = (Monthly pay of average citizen)  $\times$  Population  $\times$  RF  $\times$  0.6

The RF is normally based on the realm's Control Rating (CR):

CR	RF	CR	RF
0	*	4	20%
1	2%	5	30%
2	5%	6	50%
3	10%		

\* A CR0 realm has *no* method of taxation for garnering Revenue, but as an optional rule, the GM may allow such realms to raise 0.5%.

The GM may decide that a realm has a higher or lower effective CR for the purpose of determining Revenue. This "taxation CR" does *not* have to be the same as the effective CR used for Military Budget Factor (p. 30) – but the more "effective Control Ratings" the GM assigns a realm, the more complicated their job becomes!

A realm can garner more than this amount for an emergency, special occasion, or the like. This represents borrowing, a war tax, or similar measures. Each step by which RF increases on the table gives a cumulative -2 to all Finance and Administration rolls to keep the government solvent. The maximum increase is to *five times normal;* e.g., if RF is normally 10%, it could go to 50%, which is three steps and -6 to skill. Failing to fund your government leads to it shutting down, which leads to angry inhabitants – possibly with pitchforks and/or guillotines.

#### Starting Revenue

A realm normally begins with a *Starting Revenue* equal to 1% of its Realm Value (p. 29). This can be spent to purchase more military forces, bribe other realms for Resource Points, and so on. A realm may start with less than this if it's in debt (p. 27).

#### Inhabitants' Status

At TL0-4, a realm's *typical* inhabitants are assumed to have Status -1; they're subsistence farmers or similar who must produce all they need and pay their taxes to the realm's government. Citizens living in cities usually enjoy a better quality of life, and have Status 0 instead. At TL5+, all typical inhabitants are assumed to have Status 0.

In some cases, *all* citizens enjoy a certain level of comfort thanks to state programs, social safety nets, etc., resulting in higher minimum Status; this is a realm enhancement. In others, most might live in squalor, giving a minimum Status lower than average for the TL, though never worse than -2; this is a realm limitation. See *Higher/Lower Quality of Life* (p. 25).

Maximum Status depends on what sort of government the realm has (pp. 14-20). For example, a TL8 representative

## Example of Realm Creation (concluded)

The GM now has stats for Zarthus and needs to tie everything together. First comes Realm Value. The GM multiplies the typical monthly pay of a TL3 citizen (\$700) by population (192,000) and then by 0.6. This gives a *base* value of \$80,640,000.

Starting Resource Points cost 0.5% of *base* value apiece. That's  $\$80,640,000 \times 0.005 = \$403,200$  each. The GM specified 25 starting Resource Points, so that comes to \$10,080,000. This is recorded separately.

Total realm enhancements were +160%, total realm limitations were -85%, total cultural traits were +3%, and Management Skill level was 15, for +15%. Adding these together gives +93%. Applying this to base value gives a Realm Value of \$155,635,200. Starting Revenue is 1% of this: \$1,556,352.

Next comes the monthly Revenue that Zarthus' citizens provide. The GM multiplies the typical monthly pay of a TL3 citizen (\$700) by population (192,000), then by 0.1 (the RF for CR3), and finally by 0.6. That comes to \$8,064,000/turn.

For Military Resources, the GM starts with the typical monthly pay of a TL3 citizen (\$700), multiplies by population (192,000), and then by 0.02 (the MBF for CR3). That gives \$2,688,000/turn for military units: soldiers, zombies, etc.

The GM decides to ignore *starting* military units for now. The Nightmare Court can raise military forces (probably from the grave!) later. If there *were* such units, their cost would be recorded separately, exactly as for Resource Points.

Average Status is -1 for rural citizens, but those in large settlements enjoy a Status 0 lifestyle. Status 7 is the maximum, and represents the Fell-King himself. (As the entire game world has a lot of Status -1 farmers, etc., the GM didn't add Lower Quality of Life to the realm limitations – it's effectively a campaign feature.) Consequently, the average Wealth level of Zarthus' citizens is Struggling, while the Fell-King and his Nightmare Court are *at least* Filthy Rich.

Based on its population and Realm Value, the Necro-Kingdom of Zarthus is a -30-point Enemy or a 20-point Patron.

Adding in all the modifiers from realm traits gives a starting Social Resonance of -2 (-4 for those who dislike necromancers). Zarthusians aren't popular with other kingdoms!

The GM writes all this down, following the format shown in the examples on pp. 46-48.

democracy (like the modern United States) can support up to Status 7 (the President of the United States) – although most citizens are Status 0, and Status -1 or -2 is still possible.

Note the Status range in the stat block as, for instance, "Inhabitants' Status: -2 to 7" or "Inhabitants' Status: 0 to 5." Use whichever Status is appropriate for the *majority* of the realm's populace when determining baseline Status for PCs.

#### INHABITANTS' WEALTH

Using the table on p. B517, assign a range of Wealth levels that correspond to the range of Status levels determined above.

#### **CHAPTER TWO**

## THE WHEEL

Chapter 1 explained how to create a realm and describe it in terms of ratings, levels, enhancements, limitations, etc. This chapter shows how to *use* all that information. It simulates interactions both between realms and *within* them (tackling domestic projects, dealing with famines and epidemics, and so on).

"The Wheel" is a resolution system similar to the combat system, but less granular. Conceptually, it's akin to *Combat Lite* (pp. B324-328)...for realms. Sample interactions include trade, "soft power" approaches (e.g., diplomatic missions), and "saber rattling" (e.g., threats of war or police action).

Each *turn* of the Wheel is equal to a month of time. However, the GM may change this scale to a season (three months) or even a year! Doing so effectively multiplies the number of actions a realm gets.

During its turn, each realm selects a *maneuver* and assigns a specific quantity of resources (p. 6) to resolve an issue. These resources are kept secret to all but the GM and the realm's

controller (if any). Once every realm has selected a maneuver, realms act in order from highest to lowest Reaction-Time Modifier. Faster realms can opt to change their actions – though *not* their assigned RP – in response to slower ones. For instance, RTM +8, +6, and +4 realms would act in that order; the RTM +6 realm could react to the actions of the RTM +8 one, while the RTM +4 realm could react to *both* of the others.

Once all realms have finished, the results are tallied and take effect. For example, a trade war between three realms might result in one realm getting richer (more Resource Points), one getting poorer, and the third barely breaking even.

Briefly, a turn proceeds like this:

- 1. All realms roll for disruptions (pp. 38-41) and windfalls (pp. 41-45). Effects happen simultaneously for all realms.
  - 2. Resolve maneuvers in the order determined by RTM.
  - 3. Spend points as needed.

## Maneuvers for Realm Resolution

A *maneuver* is an action that a realm can take during its turn. Each turn, a realm must choose one of the following maneuvers:

Maneuver	Page	Maneuver	Page
Allocate Resources	33	Negotiate	35
Bluff	33	Plan	36
Demolish	33	Reconnoiter	36
Do Nothing	33	Sabotage	36
Gather/Extract	34	Threaten	36
Improve	34	Trade	37
Manufacture	35	Wait	37
Marshal Manpower	35		

A realm's choice of maneuver determines what it can do on its turn. Each maneuver comes with a required skill roll and a resource cost. Resources are typically one of the four types of Resource Points defined in Chapter 1 (Agriculture Points, Luxury/Precious Goods Points, Natural Resources Points, or Workforce Points), but the GM may assign additional costs, where applicable. For example, if two realms are negotiating with one another and want to trade resources, and one wishes to "sweeten the pot" in the form of a lump sum of cash, this would come directly out of the realm's Revenue – and might require additional rolls to raise more funds.

#### Free Actions

Realms can communicate with one another – to issue ultimatums, offer trade deals, etc. – as a "free action" at any time during a turn, within the limits of TL.

#### **Internal Maneuvers**

Many maneuvers (like Improve and Manufacture) are obviously useful internally, but the GM might allow *any* maneuver to work this way; e.g., Bluff for propaganda directed at a realm's own people, or Threaten to cow them. In such cases, if there would normally be an opposing roll, ignore this and simply roll against skill, unless noted otherwise. The GM may assign bonuses or penalties, depending on the circumstances. Resource Points are still allocated and used normally.

#### **Multiple Maneuvers**

A realm can take multiple maneuvers in a turn. This requires *either* spending 2 Workforce Points per maneuver (minimum 4) *or* suffering -6 to all rolls for actions that turn. If the realm has Facile (p. 23), this becomes a mere 1 Workforce Point per maneuver or -3 to all rolls.

#### **ALLOCATE RESOURCES**

*Resource Cost:* 1 Workforce Point (none, as a prelude to another maneuver), plus any *extra* cost required to counter a disruption, maintain a windfall, or similar.

Required Skill Rolls: Administration, Management Skill, or appropriate skill for the situation; e.g., Expert Skill (Epidemiology) when figuring out how to treat a disease.

This general-purpose maneuver covers everything from coping with an epidemic to managing day-to-day bureaucratic machinery. Realms most often choose it when dealing with internal politics.

Allocate Resources can also be a prelude to marshaling forces or gearing up for war. In such cases, the *next* Marshal Manpower or Plan maneuver costs one fewer Resource Points. Allocate Resources may be taken up to three times for this purpose, reducing the cost of the later maneuver by up to 3 Resource Points. Used like this, Allocate Resources doesn't cost any Workforce Points – only time.

#### **B**LUFF

Resource Cost: 1 Workforce Point.
Required Skill Rolls: Fast-Talk, Management Skill, Propaganda, or Psychology (Applied).

This maneuver can represent subtle threats (for outright threats, use Threaten, pp. 36-37), obfuscating the truth (of an event, action, or deal), *lying*, or otherwise being deceptive with another realm or your own people. Thus, it's *risky*, and rolls for it are always at -4. Success at Bluff works exactly like a successful roll for Negotiate (for diplomacy) or Threaten (for intimidation).

Bluff can also give +4 to rolls to Threaten if performed specifically for this purpose immediately before a Threaten maneuver – but failure means the Threaten maneuver is at -4 instead.

When Bluff is used against a realm's own populace (whether as concealed threats or as propaganda), a successful roll increases the society's Conformity Rating (p. 13) by one for the next three months. Failure *reduces* ConR by one instead; critical failure reduces it by two! If this drops ConR to 1 or less, check for revolution (p. 45).

#### DEMOLISH

Resource Cost: 1 Workforce Point + money. Required Skill Rolls: None.

This maneuver is used to shed realm enhancements, or add new realm limitations. It's normally done only to conquered territory that you don't wish to add to your own realm – but undead or profoundly evil rulers might want to change a newly conquered realm. It costs money equal to 1/5 of the change in the Realm Value of the realm being damaged. Resource Points *can* be destroyed if the GM agrees they're accessible.

#### Do Nothing

Resource Cost: None. Required Skill Rolls: None.

This maneuver is exactly what it sounds like: The realm takes *no* actions and spends *no* Resource Points. This could be due to infighting within the realm's leadership, angry citizens protesting, generals contemplating a coup, a major issue that leaves the realm's rulers at a loss as to what to do, and so on. If a realm can't decide what to do in a situation, the GM should assume it takes Do Nothing. This is realistic! The machinery of government is often ponderous and slow to turn.

Paradoxically, a Do Nothing turn can be great for roleplaying. Infighting that inhibits governmental response could be rich in opportunities, from diplomacy through spying to assassination (of character or of bodies, whichever). Agents must discover whether the citizens (or generals) are angry for good reason, or if it's due to enemy provocateurs.

#### WHO ROLLS?

Many maneuvers require a roll against the realm's Management Skill. Failure means the maneuver was wasted. But what if *PCs* are rulers or high-ranking government officials? The GM should always give the characters the opportunity to use their personal skills, if better. This places agency in the players' hands – as it should be! Important NPCs may be allowed to do the same thing. Brilliant leaders, PCs or not, can make up for the shortcomings of bad staff.

#### **NUANCED MANEUVERS**

Any maneuver may be aggressive, conservative, or wary.

*Aggressive* maneuvers give +2 to skill rolls per additional full multiple of *required* Resource Points spent (minimum of 2 points).

*Example:* As GM, Susan has the Kingdom of the Light threatening hostilities against Zarthus – again – despite internal reluctance. The Light-King decrees propaganda is the answer, and spends 4 Workforce Points on Bluff (above), which normally costs 1 Workforce Point. That's three full multiples extra, giving +6 to the Management Skill roll!

Conservative maneuvers inflict -2 on rolls per Resource Point saved (minimum 1 point saved).

*Example:* Casey's PC, with Administration-20, is running a newly established space habitat. Using conservative Gather/Extract (p. 34) to mine local asteroids, they save 1 Workforce Point at the cost of -2 to their Administration roll.

*Wary* maneuvers give one specific opposing realm -1 on their rolls against the realm executing the maneuver per -1 the executing realm accepts on their *own* rolls, up to -4 for each realm.

*Example:* Alfonso is running an alt-history World War I campaign. To simulate Russia's refusal to demobilize in response to Germany's demands, he decides that Russia is taking Allocate Resources (above) instead (preparing for another Marshal Manpower next turn), taking -1 to its roll for Allocate Resources – but giving Germany -1 to anything it does to Russia next turn.

The military might need to figure out if their leader is compromised, replaced by a doppelganger, or simply disagreeing with them. The *government* being deadlocked or baffled doesn't mean the *characters* are stuck!

A realm in deadlock and/or at a tipping point is in a state where the effects of canny or courageous action are amplified. The adventures of a person or small group can produce the effect of *any other maneuver* "for free," at the GM's option.

#### GATHER/EXTRACT

Resource Cost: 1 Workforce Point.

Required Skill Rolls: Administration, Management Skill, or skill appropriate to the resource being gathered; e.g., Prospecting when gathering minerals, or Professional Skill (Forester) when gathering wood from a forest.

A realm may opt to spend its turn earning more Resource Points (any kind other than Workforce Points – use Marshal Manpower, p. 35, for that). This takes an entire turn. The resource type must be specified at the *beginning* of the sequence.

The realm may seek multiple types of Resource Points. This inflicts -2 on the roll per different type of resource and uses the *lowest* of Administration, Management Skill, or an appropriate skill for gathering the resource. If Management Skill is the only applicable skill available, roll at -4 per different type of resource.

Success generates RP equal to *half* the margin of success (minimum of Management Skill/4, dropping fractions); if multiple types were sought, these are distributed as desired by whoever rolled. Critical success generates that *and* 1d extra

RP (chosen randomly if multiple types were sought). Critical failure *removes* 1 RP of the GM's choice.

#### **IMPROVE**

Resource Cost: 1 Workforce Point + money.

Required Skill Rolls: Engineer (appropriate type) or Management Skill.

This maneuver is used to acquire new realm enhancements, or shed realm limitations. It costs money equivalent to the change in Realm Value these modifications entail. If the roll fails, *half* of the cash cost can be saved – but on a critical failure, the *whole cost is lost*. Critical success doubles the effect at no extra cost.

Some enhancements are straightforward to add; e.g., Advanced Infrastructure via a building program, or Maneuver Mastery via a reorganized civil service. Others depend on the characteristics of the land or the people, and cannot normally be added; e.g., Ideal Climate. Thus, this maneuver always requires the GM's approval and is heavily setting-dependent – a TL12^ society *could* rebuild a planet with nanotechnology, while some fantasy settings have real gods who *could* add Ideal Climate with the wave of a hand!

Improve cannot be used to acquire more starting Resource Points after the realm has been founded. Buying Resource Points for cash is cheaper anyway; see *Buying/Selling Resource Points in Play* (p. 37).

This maneuver allows building up a realm over time in play. It also means that Realm Value can be used as "build points" for realms that have existed for a long time.

#### **OPTIONAL RULE: SIGNIFICANT ASSISTANCE ACTIONS**

Many maneuvers assume that PCs are either in charge of the realm or able to assist it with skill rolls. Often, only one player's character is rolling: the leader, or someone else who's important under the circumstances (a diplomat, the head of the Center for Disease Control, a military general, etc.). But what about the other players? They could take turns rolling, or create characters with skills pertinent to running a realm, but there's still a risk that a diplomatic leader might leave the supreme general's player snoring, that the trade expert gets sidelined for many turns while the realm goes to war, and so on. Or everyone could stare balefully as the administrative wizard monopolizes the dice.

To keep players from getting bored and mounting a coup of their own, the GM might dip into "typical" role-playing sessions more often. Alternatively, they can involve more people in the abstractions of *Realm Management*.

To do the latter, let the other PCs assist their associates by performing useful actions related to the realm's current maneuver. The GM picks an appropriate skill to complement the task. If multiple *skills* are appropriate, the player rolls against the highest if the proposed *assistance* is appropriate, the lowest if it's inappropriate ("Serve delicate *fare* to the Elf-Queen, not delicately roasted *fairies!*"). Success gives +1 to the next roll required for the

maneuver, while failure gives -1; critical success adds +2, while critical failure inflicts -2. Multiple characters can try to help out, with results being additive; e.g., two failures, a critical success, and a success would grant -1 + -1 + 2 + 1 = +1.

The GM may increase the bonus or lessen the penalty from such actions if the player describes the proposed assistance particularly well; an additional +1 or +2 is fair. For example, if the realm were taking a Reconnoiter maneuver and a player said, "I spend the next month in a ghillie suit, scoping out military compounds in the enemy-controlled area; I have high Camouflage, Stealth, and Observation skills, and I want to confirm the numbers the scouts send back and learn as many additional details as I can," the GM might grant another +1. The player would roll against the best of Camouflage, Stealth, and Observation. Success would give +2 to the next roll pertaining to this military matter, while failure would give 0 – and critical failure would give only -1, while critical success would give +3! If the player had announced their intent to get camera views of the compounds using spy drones disguised as UFOs with flashing lights and musical tones . . . well, the GM would've required a roll against the worst applicable skill, and granted no additional bonus.

#### **MANUFACTURE**

Resource Cost: 1 Workforce Point.

Required Skill Rolls: Any crafting or Engineer skill, or Management Skill.

This maneuver converts Natural Resources Points to  $1.5 \times 1.5 \times 1$ 

#### MARSHAL MANPOWER

Resource Cost: Possibly Military Resources or Luxury/Precious Goods Points.

Required Skill Rolls: Administration, Leadership, Management Skill, or Propaganda.

This maneuver is used to marshal or recruit *GURPS Mass Combat* forces (including logistics forces), recruit labor to generate more Workforce Points, or do anything else that gathers multiple realm inhabitants in one place for a particular reason. For example, it could be used to found a new town or colony within the realm's holdings, build grand structures (e.g., pyramids), or assemble citizens in a specific city to prepare for a siege.

When marshaling *existing* military forces for *Mass Combat*, a successful roll allows the movement of any number of elements. This can be used, for instance, to deploy forces to resist an invasion by a neighbor . . . or to send in forces to invade!

When recruiting *new* military forces, a successful roll lets the realm raise elements that cost up to its current Military Resources (p. 30). Use *cost to raise* (*Mass Combat*, p. 8) for this purpose. Recruits are usually ready by the *next* turn – but optionally, the GM may halve the time required for Inferior troops, double it for Good troops, or triple it for Elite troops. See *Mass Combat*, pp. 11-12 for more on troop quality.

When recruiting labor, roll against the *better* of Administration or Management Skill. If using *Splitting Workforce Points* (p. 7), specify the type before rolling; multiple types

may be sought, but this uses the *lower* of Administration or Management Skill at -2 per different type, or Management Skill at -4 per different type, if it's the only skill available. Success generates Workforce Points equal to 2/3 of the margin of success (minimum 1); if multiple types were sought, these are distributed as desired by whoever rolled. Critical success generates an additional 1d Workforce Points, chosen randomly if multiple types were involved. Failure still generates 1 Workforce Point, while critical failure removes 1 Workforce Point – both of the GM's choice, if multiple types were involved.

Optionally, the realm may spend Luxury/Precious Goods Points when recruiting labor force, to attract migrant workers with indulgences and bonuses. It may spend a number of points up to its Openness Rating to gain an identical bonus to the roll for the maneuver.

#### **NEGOTIATE**

Resource Cost: 1 Workforce Point.
Required Skill Rolls: Diplomacy or Management Skill.

Realms can negotiate with each other or with their own people. Negotiating with other realms is most often done prior to trade deals, but Negotiate works in *any* situation where realms engage in diplomacy. Unlike Bluff (p. 33), it's truthful – though it may be hard for another realm to tell the difference between Bluff propaganda and Negotiate propaganda!

Negotiate is effectively an Influence roll (p. B359) to improve how one realm views another or how the realm's own citizens see its rulers. Roll a Quick Contest against the Conformity Rating + numerical Citizen Loyalty of the realm being influenced (on the realm's *own* citizenry, use its own ConR + Loyalty). Interpret the outcome using the *Negotiate Outcome Table* (below).

When used on another realm, Negotiate may target its leadership or its citizens. It can also target *both*; in that case, roll separately for each group, at -2 on both rolls. A positive *and* negative result can mean division between the government and its people (giving up to -4 to the other realm's rolls to influence its populace), though the GM can rule that the reaction is the average of the two; see *Starting Reaction Rolls for Realms* (p. 29). When rolling for just one group, the other keeps its original opinion for 1d turns, which can be handled as division or by averaging.

#### Negotiate Outcome Table Margin Reaction of Effects on Own Citizens Other Realm Victory by 8+\* Excellent Citizen Loyalty increased by three steps for the next three turns, by one thereafter Victory by 5-7 Very Good Citizen Loyalty increased by two steps for the next three turns, by one thereafter Victory by 1-4 Citizen Loyalty increased by one step noncumulatively Good Tie Neutral No change Loss by 1-2 Poor Citizen Loyalty reduced by one step Loss by 3-4 Citizen Loyalty reduced by two steps for the next turn, by one thereafter Bad Loss by 5-7 Very Bad Citizen Lovalty reduced by three steps for the next turn, by one thereafter Loss by 8+† Disastrous Rebellion! (p. 45)

<sup>\*</sup> Or, at the GM's option, if the influencer rolls a critical success and the subject does not.

<sup>†</sup> Or, at the GM's option, if the influencer rolls a critical failure and the subject does not.

When Negotiate is used against a realm's own citizens, persistent bonuses or penalties to Citizen Loyalty endure until something else – scandals, famines, successful or failed military actions, etc. – modifies Loyalty. The effect of victory by 1-4 is persistent but *not* cumulative; raising Loyalty to "Excellent" takes multiple *serious* victories. No similar condition applies to losses of any size, and if Loyalty falls far enough – even temporarily – the realm's government is in trouble! (Maybe the PCs can find a way to delay revolution until the government corrects its misstep? Or perhaps they can lead the rebels through the front gates . . .)

### The Wheel and GURPS Boardroom and Curia

The Wheel can be used when organizations "battle" one another as well as when realms duke it out. This is intentional! *Boardroom and Curia* was a major inspiration for *Realm Management*. Use the same rules, making modifications and altering justifications wherever necessary. For example, an organization might Allocate Resources for a project, or use Bluff when negotiating with another organization. The *Disruptions Table* (pp. 38-41) and *Windfalls Table* (pp. 41-45) can be repurposed, too! For instance, if *Blackmail Acquired* (p. 42) arises in the context of corporations, the GM might rule that a CEO is compromised by someone with the goods on them.

#### **PLAN**

Resource Cost: 1 Workforce Point. Required Skill Rolls: Administration, Intelligence Analysis, Management Skill, Strategy, or Tactics.

This maneuver allows a realm to study a situation, evaluate its goals, and map out its future actions. It gives +2 on rolls for *one particular maneuver against a specific realm or for a specific purpose*. A realm can take multiple, successive Plan maneuvers. Each additional maneuver grants a further +1 to rolls for the final action, to a maximum of +6 after five turns. For example, if a realm took three turns to Plan a new mine, they'd have +4 on rolls for a Gather/Extract maneuver to get Resource Points from it.

#### RECONNOITER

Resource Cost: 1 Workforce Point. Required Skill Rolls: Intelligence Analysis, Management Skill, Strategy, or Tactics.

Similar to Plan (above) – but instead of granting a skill bonus, a successful Reconnoiter maneuver reduces the next maneuver's required Workforce Points by one per four points of margin of success (minimum one fewer Workforce Points).

Reconnoiter can also be used for reconnaissance of an enemy's forces before a battle. Success gives the basic information in *Initial Intelligence* (*GURPS Mass Combat*, p. 30) without the opposing side getting the same information – i.e., you learn their general numbers without revealing yours – and if the other side didn't succeed at Reconnoiter

as well, their commander has -1 to their first Strategy roll in the ensuing conflict. Critical success provides the *exact* numbers of elements on the other side. Failure results in a bungled mission; lower the target realm's reaction to the spies' realm by one step (e.g., "Neutral" becomes "Poor" or "Poor" becomes "Bad"). Critical failure means the spies or recon forces were captured; the opposition might trade them back for concessions, or just keep them in prison (where they may be subject to interrogation, mind reading, etc.). Immediately make a reaction roll at -4 to determine the opposing realm's new reaction to the spying realm, with the best possible result

being one step worse than the previous reaction – you can't get a *better* reaction after being caught spying (even cultures that value sneakiness won't be impressed by operatives who get caught!).

Finally, Reconnoiter can be used to discover what resources a rival realm has. This requires *winning* a Quick Contest, with each realm using the best relevant skill.

#### **SABOTAGE**

Resource Cost: 2 Workforce Points.

Required Skill Rolls: Administration, Management Skill, or a skill appropriate to the exploit; e.g., Computer Hacking or Computer Programming to sabotage a government's computer systems.

This maneuver has a wide range of manifestations, from physical sabotage of another realm's infrastructure or military vehicles, to political or cultural attacks that disrupt their society, such as sabotaging their election system or financial records (e.g., who has or hasn't paid their taxes this year). Purely *social* sabotage is usually better represented by Bluff (p. 33) or Threaten (below), but the GM could require Sabotage for something esoteric like attacking a realm's religious institutions, inserting misinformation into their educational materials ("The Seventh Fleet was a *valued ally* of the Ring Colony until the Colony's second mayor betrayed them."), or arranging falsified studies ("In low doses, lead is a healthy dietary supplement.").

Roll a Quick Contest, with the sabotaging realm using the required skill, and their target using the highest of Administration, Management Skill, Propaganda, or the skill the saboteur used. Victory for the saboteur causes one of two effects: the target realm's rolls for their next maneuver suffer -1 per two points of victory, or the target's resources are impaired, costing them one Resource Point of the saboteur's choice per five points of victory or one random Resource Point per three points of victory. Which effect applies is up to the GM, who should consult with the players for PC-controlled realms. Loss means a bungled mission; lower the target realm's reaction to the sabotaging realm by one step per two full points of loss.

#### **THREATEN**

Resource Cost: 1 Workforce Point.
Required Skill Rolls: Intimidation or Management Skill.

This maneuver represents "saber rattling" by one realm against one or more others. Roll a Quick Contest of the threatening realm's skill vs. (12 + Citizen Loyalty modifier) for the other realm(s).

If the threatening realm *wins*, the opposing realm must perform a Do Nothing or Wait maneuver next turn. Victory with a critical success means the target realm is "stunned," and must take Do Nothing for 1d turns; a Leadership roll can snap a realm out of this, but requires a margin of success equal to or greater than the margin of victory of the original Threaten maneuver. *Any* victory lowers the opposing realm's reaction to the threatening realm by one step.

If the threatening realm loses, reroll the target realm's reaction to it, with the best possible result being the current reaction (the target regards the attempt as too inept to be troubling). Loss with a critical failure also means the *threatening* realm must take a Do Nothing or Wait maneuver!

Continuous use of Threaten can erode reactions enough to result in war!

### **TRADE**

Resource Cost: 1 Workforce Point.

Required Skill Rolls: Administration, Economics, Finance, Management Skill, Market Analysis, or Merchant. At the GM's option, no roll is necessary for mutually friendly realms.

Realms may trade with one another, exchanging money, Resource Points, services, and/or goods. This is a simple exchange, with each realm bartering for assets. If the GM requires a skill roll, roll a Quick Contest of skill. The winner gets bonus assets equal to their margin of victory  $\times$  10%; round Resource Points to the nearest whole number.

Two realms can also enter into a *continuing* trade deal, whereby the exchange is repeated every turn thereafter – or less frequently (every *N* turns, where *N* is some fixed, agreed-upon number) – without any further maneuvers being required. Such a deal may be canceled at any time, but doing so formally requires another Trade maneuver to arrange the details of the termination. Canceling an arrangement unilaterally is possible, but that will annoy the other partner, worsening their reaction by *at least* one step (e.g., "Good" becomes "Neutral").

Trade maneuvers represent trade within an *established* framework of commercial law and agreements. Realistically, initially establishing such a framework – setting the broad legal terms for trade – is a multi-year process, at least in the modern world, and outside the scope of these rules.

Realms of the same Realm Size Value (see pp. 4-6) trade Resource Points on a 1:1 basis. For realms of different sizes, when the *larger* nation trades RP to the smaller, multiply those RP by 2 if the difference in Realm Size Values is +1, by 5 if +2, by 10 if +3, by 20 if +4, by 50 if +5, by 100 if +6, and so on. Divide when trading in the opposite direction. For example, realms of Realm Size Values +9 and +3 differ by 6, so it takes *100* of the smaller realm's RP to equal one of the larger realm's.

Realms may also *sell* Resource Points, receiving cash, or equivalent goods or services. See *Buying/Selling Resource Points in Play* (below).

## BUYING/SELLING RESOURCE POINTS IN PLAY

After play has begun, a realm may purchase Resource Points by expending a maneuver and spending money equal to Realm Value  $\times$  0.001 per point. A realm may do so as often as desired. For instance, if the Necro-Kingdom of Zarthus (pp. 46-47) – with Realm Value \$155,635,200 – wanted to buy Agriculture Points "on the market," it would pay \$155,635,200  $\times$  0.001 = \$155,635.20 per point.

However, the GM may mark up the final cost by as much as 100% and/or take into account the realm's accessibility (remote realms, and those in harsh terrain, are difficult to get supplies to). Luxury/Precious Good Points should *always* be worth at least 20% more – and perhaps more than that! Such things can reach earth-shattering prices, and the mark-up should reflect that.

Realms may also *sell* Resource Points, receiving cash – or equivalent goods or services – for Realm Value × 0.001 apiece. Obviously, the realm must *have* RP in order to sell them!

## OPTIONAL RULE: Non-Scaling Resources

**Realm Management** assumes that smaller realms receive relatively little when trading Resource Points to larger ones, while on a point-for-point basis, larger realms have more to offer than smaller ones; see *Trade* (below). However, it might better suit some games to use a 1:1 scale *regardless* of Realm Size Value. This isn't intended to be realistic, but to keep things simple, dynamic, and gameable!

### WAIT

Resource Cost: Per specified reaction.
Required Skill Rolls: Administration or Management Skill.

A Wait maneuver lets a realm delay its reactions to other realms until one or more of them takes a specific maneuver. Then the waiting realm may perform one prespecified maneuver before anyone else acts. For *this reaction only*, it becomes the realm with the best Reaction-Time Modifier. If the Wait maneuvers of several realms are "triggered" simultaneously, the slowest realm (highest RTM) reacts first, then the next-slowest, and so on; however, faster realms (lower RTM) may *interrupt* the reactions of slower ones, reacting before them.

Wait can instead represent a realm stockpiling resources in preparation for a *possible* natural disaster, pandemic, or similar disruption (pp. 38-41). In such cases, the disruption is the trigger, and last turn's Wait is converted into an instant reaction, most often Allocate Resources, in response – the realm manages to "get ahead of the disaster" before it can cause maximum harm. Such a reaction can also be used to help an allied realm.

Like Do Nothing (pp. 33-34), Wait is a common choice when a realm wants to assess the political landscape.

## Managing a Realm

The Wheel lets realms interact not only with other realms, but also with *themselves*. Much of the time, they'll be taking either Allocate Resources or Do Nothing maneuvers. This simplicity is intentional! Most players and GMs don't want to spend an entire game session deciding what sort of cattle their burgeoning hamlet will take to the big city's market, or what their interstellar empire will do about the giant tick infestation in Ceti Prime, so these rules attempt to boil down day-to-day realm management to a few rolls.

### Happenings Within a Realm

Realms aren't meant to be static. It's assumed that other things are happening in and around the realm that require the attention of those in charge. For example, a realm may be suffering from a flu epidemic that's decimating its population. The government can ignore it and suffer the consequences, or attempt to contain or cure it. Further, this could be going on while the realm is at war, on shaky political ground, arranging a political marriage, or any other number of things.

At the start of each turn, the GM rolls 3d for each realm to see whether *something* happens that has the potential to affect the turn. On 5 or less, roll on the *Windfalls Table* (pp. 41-45); on 16 or more, roll on the *Disruptions Table* (pp. 38-41). The GM may want the possibility of multiple events. If so, a second event occurs on 4 or 17, a third one on 3 or 18. To have the possibility of both windfalls *and* disruptions, flip a coin for the second and third events (or roll 3d more than once per turn!).

### Disruptions Table

Whenever a *disruption* is called for, roll 1d, 1d on this table, reading the first die roll as the first number in parentheses and the second die roll as the second.

The listed effects are *guidelines*. They might need to be scaled or modified to have the intended impact – particularly in smaller or larger realms. For example, the flooding of a single county of a single continent on one planet of an interstellar empire might be sad, but not debilitating. Thus, the GM may decide that an entire *planet* is suffering monstrous floods or rainy seasons with higher-than-normal rainfall – or that the flooded location was small but heavily populated and culturally vital, so now the empire must deal with fanatical refugees who want their home fixed *immediately*. Modified disruptions may need modified countering actions, too!

In all cases below, round against the realm in any calculations.

#### Plague! (1, 1-2)

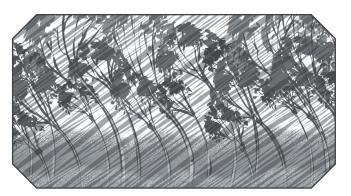
*Immediate Effect:* Lose 1d/2 Workforce Points and reduce population by (3d)%.

Long-Term Effects: Left uncured, inflicts a loss of 1d/2 random Resource Points per additional turn it's active.

*Countering Maneuver:* An Allocate Resources maneuver that costs the same number of Resource Points as were lost – though not necessarily of the same type – and requires

a successful Bioengineering (Vaccines), Diagnosis, Esoteric Medicine, Pharmacy, *or* Physician roll. Success creates a cure and removes this effect after 1d-1 turns.

A dangerous sickness has broken out. In a magical setting, this might be a *curse* instead; the effects are the same, but the cure likely involves a good wizard, a holy person, or a heroic quest.



#### Inclement Weather (1, 3-4)

*Immediate Effect:* Reduce the number of Agriculture Points and Natural Resources Points by 1.

Long-Term Effects: N/A.

*Countering Maneuver:* N/A (but the GM may allow societies with weather control to ignore this disruption completely).

Unpredictable weather – e.g., storms, snow, or other dangerous precipitation – makes travel and outside work difficult. This can also represent minor earthquakes, or mudslides and similar weather-induced catastrophes.

#### Sabotage! (1, 5-6)

Immediate Effect: Lose 1d-3 random Resource Points.

Long-Term Effects: Roll 3d. On 6 or less, the realm now has a mole operating within it, causing it to lose 1 random Resource Point *per turn* until rooted out. It's possible to get multiple moles in a realm's administration – and their effects stack!

Countering Maneuver: To root out a mole, use the Reconnoiter maneuver. Success removes it. If multiple moles are present, success removes one mole plus one additional mole per two points of success.

The realm has been sabotaged in some way. This *might* be accidental, but it's usually the work of agents, foreign or domestic. Domestic activists tend to do more damage; e.g., eco-terrorists might spike trees, foul fishing nets, impede seal hunts, and damage oil pipelines.

#### Trade Embargo/Sanction (2, 1-2)

*Immediate Effect:* Reduce the embargoing realm's reaction to the subject realm by 1d steps.

Long-Term Effects: N/A.

Countering Maneuver: The affected realm may increase the reaction of other realms to it via normal uses of Bluff, Negotiate, etc.

A specific realm will no longer trade with the afflicted realm. If several realms were trading with the affected realm, the GM may choose who stops trading with it, or decide randomly.

#### Invasion! (2, 3-4)

Immediate Effect: N/A.

Long-Term Effects: An invading force can reduce a realm's population – literally, or by denying the realm access to its people – and thus reduce revenue and resources while they occupy the realm's territory. Each turn the invading force remains in the area, subtract 1 from each kind of Resource Points.

Countering Maneuver: Special.

The realm's borders have been violated by an invading realm. This can be dealt with by sending in military forces (resolve this using *GURPS Mass Combat*) or through some sort of parley or concession (e.g., Negotiate or Trade maneuver). Long-term invasion is indistinguishable from annexation. Assume that the invaders have initially committed elements equal to  $1d \times 10\%$  of the invaded realm's military – enough to hold the territory until more arrive.

Some settings have the option of supernatural or high-tech invasions; e.g., an invasion of mindless undead from Zarthus, or controlled nanotech "gray goo" assaulting portions of a space station. The effects are the same: Not removing the invading force makes the area no longer part of the realm.

#### Flood (2, 5-6)

*Immediate Effect:* Reduce Infrastructure Rating (pp. 11-12) by 1d/2 and lose 1d-3 Agriculture Points.

Long-Term Effects: Reduced Infrastructure Rating becomes permanent in the flooded area.

Countering Maneuver: Allocate Resources + 1d-2 Resource Points. Success restores the area's Infrastructure Rating.

*Notes:* If Realm Size Value is greater than +6, this affects only *part* of the realm. Determine the location and make a note of the reduced Infrastructure Rating there.

The realm is dealing with a massive flood that's eroding infrastructure and causing problems with the local food and water supplies.

#### Drought/Famine (3, 1-2)

*Immediate Effect:* Lose 1d-1 Agriculture Points (minimum 1) *and* the realm's ability to feed itself (see below).

Long-Term Effects: The realm must allocate at least 3 Agriculture Points or Natural Resources Point every turn to avoid starvation. If this expenditure isn't met, the people begin to starve. If only 2 RP are spent, temporarily reduce Citizen Loyalty (p. 11) by one step until the RP are spent to sustain the realm's population. If only 1 RP is spent, reduce Citizen Loyalty by two steps. If no RP are spent, check for revolution immediately (p. 45)! If a realm has no Agriculture Points to spend, reduce population by 5% in addition to any other effects; if the realm has negative Agriculture Points, this becomes 10% instead!

Countering Maneuver: Allocate Resources + 1d-2 Resource Points (minimum 0) + 3 Agriculture Points or Natural Resources Points. But roll 3d at the start of each turn; on 6 or less, the problem resolves on its own.

The realm is suffering from severe drought or famine, causing loss of foodstuffs, livestock, and so on. Extended droughts or similar natural disasters (locusts, crop blights, persistent livestock diseases, etc.) can trigger an exodus as citizens leave to find a place where they won't starve, and can kill those who remain. This can also represent bad weather causing the destruction of a fishing fleet, floods washing crops away, and similar events.

#### Corruption (3, 3-4)

*Immediate Effect:* Reduce Revenue by 20% and decrease Citizen Loyalty by one step.

Long-Term Effects: Roll 3d. On 6 or less, the realm now has an embezzler operating within it, causing it to lose 5% of its Revenue per turn until discovered. It's possible to get multiple embezzlers in a realm's administration – and their effects stack!

Countering Maneuver: To root out an embezzler, use the Reconnoiter maneuver. Success removes the culprit. If there are multiple embezzlers, success removes one embezzler plus one additional embezzler per two points of success.

## WHAT DO ADVENTURERS DO WHEN NOT RUNNING A REALM?

**Realm Management** assumes that PCs will be involved in running realms. For instance, one character might have an appropriate trait (e.g., Rank or Status) – or perhaps *every* player gets a vote. However it's done, realms that *could* be under player control *should* be. When the goal is to make the players actually care about a domain, player agency works better than the GM rolling a bunch of dice and reporting the results.

Alternatively – or as well – players could have their characters perform actions on the realm's behalf each turn. For example, when marshaling military forces, a PC might be the officer in charge, giving the orders, with the player rolling against Strategy or Tactics. While PCs tend to be capable experts, this *can* lead to the use of skills at

*lower* levels than the realm's Management Skill. That's realistic! Management Skill level reflects the combined efforts of *all* parties involved in the administration, working together toward a common goal.

So . . . what do adventurers do when not running a realm? Have adventures, of course! But whether they're ridding the land of monstrous spiders or patrolling the border along the NeoTexas asteroid ring, the GM should think about how the heroes' actions affect the setting's realms. A successful adventure can give a further +1 to +5 on any one roll for a maneuver, improving the odds of the *realm* succeeding, too. In a campaign *focused* on realmlevel events, it's part of the GM's job to ensure that the fates of characters and realms are entwined.

The realm's government has grown corrupt: taking bribes, embezzling money, "confiscating" property, and so on. This disruption represents a *general* state of corruption in a realm, though it also decreases Citizen Loyalty; people won't stay loyal to a government whose leaders are profiting at their expense!

#### Political Schism (3, 5-6)

*Immediate Effect:* -1d on all rolls for Bluff, Negotiate, Threaten, or Trade. Halve this penalty and keep it for long-term effects, in addition to the effects noted below.

Long-Term Effects: Roll 3d. On 6 or less, a new political ideology has cropped up among dissatisfied voters and politicians. Reroll the immediate effect (above) and take the *worse* roll. Also, lower the realm's Conformity Rating by one until this problem is solved.

Countering Maneuver: Bluff to spread propaganda among the realm's people. This requires one roll plus one additional roll per new political ideology to be discredited or moderated (minimum two rolls).

The realm is suffering political upheaval as two (or more!) political parties vie for power. This can cause chaos in the form of back-and-forth bickering, government shutdowns, brute-force military interference just short of coup d'état, and so on. Fixing this problem requires long-term effort on the part of the citizens, and the realm can stay in schism until one faction finally gains the upper hand – or a functional balance point is achieved.

Resource Points, population, or Revenue, as the realm deals with an overtly or covertly troublesome group.

#### Troublesome Flora/Fauna (4, 3-4)

Immediate Effect: Lose 1d-3 Agriculture Points (minimum 1).

*Long-Term Effects:* -1 Agriculture Point every four turns until the problem is solved.

Countering Maneuver: Allocate Resources, spending RP equal to the total loss, plus an additional 1 Workforce Point.

A dangerous or troublesome animal or plant has gotten into the realm and is causing issues. The cause might be something as innocuous as releasing rabbits or toads into the wild, planting kudzu, or importing fish with a parasite against which native aquatic life has no defenses. More exotic possibilities include patented corn (requiring expensive synthetic hormones to germinate) contaminating unmodified crops, parthenogenic cockatrices escaping their military handlers, or duct-cleaning robots building feral "children."

#### Fire (4, 5-6)

*Immediate Effect:* Lose 1d random Resource Points.

Long-Term Effects: Burnt areas bring in pests, destroy farms, provide hideouts for outlaws, etc. This causes loss of another 1d-5 (minimum 1) Resource Points per turn for 1d turns, after which the effects go away on their own.

Countering Maneuver: Allocate Resources, spending RP equal to the total loss.

# human civilization to exist; set free, it causes innumerable problems. Aquatic cultures may instead suffer from a volcano (underwater or on a nearby island), fire on their above-water areas, or a toxic bloom

in their waters that lasts until dispersed by the tides. Devastation and aftereffects should be similar.

Properly maintained, fire allows

#### Pollution (5, 1-2)

*Immediate Effect:* Lose 2 Resource Points of the GM's choice.

Long-Term Effects: Depending on the type of pollution, the GM can assign further penalties to the realm's population, Infrastructure Rating, and

Resource Points (especially Agriculture Points).

Countering Maneuver: Allocate Resources, spending at least 1 Workforce Point. Up to three further Workforce Points may be spent, each granting +1 (maximum +3) on the roll required to clean up the mess.

Part of the realm has become polluted. This can be the result of a nuclear meltdown (or uncontrolled magi-power cascade), industrial (or alchemical) runoff, or toxic smog (magical or otherwise). Space stations might have suffered damage to climate controls and air-scrubbers. Whatever the root cause, cleanup requires time and effort. Sometimes, a quest or troubleshooter team may *also* be needed to address the cause of the pollution!

## THE FOUR HORSEMAN WRIT LARGE

One realm can intentionally inflict a disruption (pp. 38-41) upon another as an attack. The GM decides what effects are within reach: Setting a fire is one thing; arranging a hurricane is another!

To use a disruption as an attack, take its countering maneuver and spend Resource Points equal to that maneuver's cost or *half* of the disruption's immediate effect, whichever is *less*. Causing problems is usually easier than fixing them.

As well, *adventurers* can inflict calamities – on other realms or even their own! This might be intentional (e.g., encouraging Zarthusians to rebel against their Fell-King) or accidental (e.g., killing the dragon leads to an orc invasion through passages within the ancient dwarven kingdom in which the dragon had been nesting). This is yet another way a small group of PCs can affect entire realms.

#### Religious Uprising (4, 1-2)

*Immediate Effect:* Reduce Conformity Rating by 1d-3.

Long-Term Effects: None, though in the long term, the religion might change how the realm operates (e.g., sending out missionaries on the realm's dime).

Countering Maneuver: Bluff, at a penalty equal to the lost Conformity Rating.

A new religion has spread among the realm's inhabitants. It needn't be aggressive to be disruptive! Even the most peaceful of faiths can cause logistical problems with new holy days, or draw hostility from people with different beliefs.

The above effects assume a fairly modest or mellow religion. For one that's violent, intolerant, or prone to aggressive conversions, the GM can assign such long-term effects as lost

#### Shortage (5, 3-4)

Immediate Effect: Lose 1d-1 points of one resource, chosen at random. Roll 1d: 1, Luxury/Precious Goods Points; 2, Natural Resources Points; 3-4, Agriculture Points; 5-6, Workforce Points. Alternatively, the GM can decide that a particular shortage is affecting non-Resource Point attributes: Conformity Rating (a lack of leadership that the realm respects), living space (reduce population as inhabitants go elsewhere), and so on.

Long-Term Effects: Short-term shortages last only 1d-3 turns (minimum 1) before self-correcting. For long-term shortages, subtract 1 point of the original type per turn. Reduced Infrastructure Rating is a common loss as building materials, labor, spare parts, etc. become scarce.

Countering Maneuver: Allocate Resources, spending Workforce Points equal to the initial loss.

The realm is experiencing a shortage of a particular product or service, space, or something similar. Pick a reason why! A nationwide harvesters' strike might cause a loss of Agriculture Points until their complaints are addressed (a temporary shortage). A space habitat might suffer a long-term shortage of life support due to accidentally approving too many offspring, resulting in a population drain as families seek other homes – at least until life support is upgraded.

#### Infrastructure Breakdown (5, 5-6)

*Immediate Effect:* Reduce Infrastructure Rating by one.

Long-Term Effects: Roll 3d. On 6 or less, this loss is permanent; otherwise, the IR level restores itself after 1d-2 (minimum 1) turns. A countering maneuver may be performed to bring IR back to its original level.

Countering Maneuver: Fixing a permanent loss requires a Marshal Manpower maneuver.

The realm-wide Infrastructure Rating has been reduced due to natural calamities, sabotage (by an enemy or internal faction), failure to budget for maintenance, or anything similar – GM's choice. If the loss is permanent, be sure to describe how it can be fixed (if at all). For example, a failing orbital habitat may require parts obtainable only by sending traders to a nearby space empire . . . or it might be doomed, requiring the PCs to figure out how to get everyone to safety!

#### Civil Unrest! (6, 1-2)

*Immediate Effect:* Reduce Citizen Loyalty by one step.

Long-Term Effects: Roll 3d. On 6 or less, this loss is permanent; otherwise, Citizen Loyalty restores itself after 1d-2 (minimum 1) turns. A countering maneuver may be performed to bring Citizen Loyalty back to its original level.

Countering Maneuver: Fixing a permanent loss requires a Bluff or Negotiate maneuver.

The realm is saturated with widespread dissent. This usually has a root cause; what that is and how it interacts with other issues is up to the GM. The cause might be entirely legitimate, arise from a vocal minority (who may or may not have a valid point), or be instigated by outside influencers using Sabotage and Bluff (propaganda) maneuvers. The unrest itself might take the form of local riots, demonstrations, or more esoteric forms of protest; e.g., high-tech societies could

organize nationwide flash mobs (live or virtual!) or "die-ins," while fantasy ones might have local mana temporarily drained by illusionary slogans. Non-majority factions and external actors may *pay* people to be disruptive or join protests!

If civil unrest reduces Citizen Loyalty to "Disastrous," check for revolution (p. 45).



#### Demagogue (6, 3-4)

*Immediate Effect:* Treat as a level of Inefficient (p. 27) for 1d turns.

Long-Term Effects: Lower Citizen Loyalty and Conformity Rating by 1d-3 (minimum 1) levels until this disruption is countered.

Countering Maneuver: Bluff, to counter the speaker's propaganda.

The realm is in the grips of a powerful speaker (or speakers) who preaches something different from the government line. The message doesn't necessarily have to be "bad"! A speaker urging tolerance and kindness in a dark empire is as much a demagogue as one teaching hate and anger.

#### Combined Event (6, 5-6)

*Immediate Effect:* As per both events.

Long-Term Effects: As per both events.

Countering Maneuver: Each event must be dealt with separately.

Reroll this result twice and add together the effects of both disruptions. If this is rolled a *second* time, roll twice more – but there's a maximum of three disruptions at a time.

### Windfalls Table

When a *windfall* is indicated, roll 1d, 1d on this table, reading the first die roll as the first number in parentheses and the second die roll as the second.

Here, too, the listed effects are *guidelines*. For example, a new trade route in a fantasy campaign might be the result of magical portals, aerial beings who don't mind lugging valuables over long distances, or a new enchantment that makes ships safer. In a far-future campaign, perhaps a naturally stable wormhole was found, a new FTL drive was invented, or genetically engineered psis learned to fold space around cargo to get it from one planet to another.

In the case of windfalls, instead of *countering* long-term effects, realms would benefit from making them permanent! In most cases, this requires expending some kind of points and rolling against an appropriate skill. For some, long-term effects won't happen at all *unless* the realm works toward that goal.

We require

more minerals.

- Starcraft

As with disruptions, always round *against* the realm in calculations.

#### New Trade Connection (1, 1-2)

*Immediate Effect:* Gain 1d/2 Agriculture Points, Luxury/Precious Goods Points, or Natural Resources Points.

Long-Term Effects: Roll 3d. On 6 or less, the trade route stabilizes and stays

within the realm, bringing in an additional 1 Resource Point of the above type for the next 1d turns.

Maintaining Long-Term Effects: At the end of the rolled number of turns, a realm can take an Allocate Resources maneuver to keep enhancing their new trade. In this case, treat it as garnering new Resource Points. This maneuver requires no Resource Points to perform, but does require a successful Administration, Management Skill, or Merchant roll. On a critical failure, the new trade partners have been insulted, with setting-appropriate results (as well as losing the long-term effects bonus to Resource Points). On a critical success, the trade route is stabilized and needs no further effort to keep bringing in extra Resource Points!

A new trade route (or routes) has been discovered within the realm's territory, bringing a fresh infusion of resources into the realm.

#### Blackmail Acquired (1, 3-4)

*Immediate Effect:* The realm's next Bluff, Negotiate, or Threaten maneuver against the compromised realm is rolled at +2 (or +1d-2, minimum +1).

Long-Term Effects: The second such maneuver taken reduces the size of the bonus by one, with this continuing until the bonus reaches 0.

Maintaining Long-Term Effects: The realm that acquired the blackmail can attempt a Reconnoiter maneuver to maintain the bonus after it would have decayed with use, but this requires winning a Quick Contest, with each realm using the best relevant skill.

The realm has obtained compromising material on one or more foreign leaders. This gives it a better chance of coercing the compromised realm. Choose a realm and decide what the blackmail material is. Player characters might need to obtain it, demonstrate that they really do have it, or figure out how to discredit it . . . or have it drop into their lap somehow, meaning they must figure out what to do next!

#### Third-Party Charity (1, 5-6)

Immediate Effect: As per the second roll.

Long-Term Effects: As per the second roll.

Maintaining Long-Term Effects: As per the second roll.

Another realm or power has done something to help the entire realm significantly. Reroll this result – the second roll indicates what the favor is exactly. For example, a friendly realm might share a technological breakthrough, or set up

a convenient trade route at the border. The GM and players should decide *why* this is, unless the friendly realm has a reaction of "Very Good" or better toward the one that benefits ("They just really like you over there!"). The rolling realm may not be *able* to maintain the benefits, if the friendly realm still

controls the windfall's source!

#### Reform (2, 1-2)

Immediate Effect: For 1d-1 (minimum 1) turns, the realm gets +2 on all rolls required for any maneuver it uses on its own populace; e.g., Bluff for a propaganda campaign. This bonus never applies to actions to increase Citizen Loyalty.

*Long-Term Effects*: Increase Conformity Rating, Openness Rating, or Citizen Loyalty by one level.

*Maintaining Long-Term Effects:* Bluff, Negotiate, or Threaten before the bonus runs out.

The realm has somehow reformed its laws, ideology, or state religion. This often leads to a closer relationship with its people, but it could also signify immigration reform or the realm rethinking how it approaches foreign powers when it has a conflict. For example, this could be a policy change representing a shift toward diplomacy over outright military action – or the reverse, if another realm's aggression has become egregious!

#### Enhanced Currency Exchange Rate (2, 3-4)

*Immediate Effect:* Immediately receive a turn's Revenue as a bonus.

Long-Term Effects: Roll 3d every turn. On 6 or less, increase that turn's Revenue by 50%; on 16 or higher, this effect goes away.

Maintaining Long-Term Effects: Roll 1d/2. Take that many Plan maneuvers (minimum 1), rolling against the best of Administration, Finance, or Management Skill.

The realm's currency gains value compared to that of other realms! This is often a short-term fluctuation, though a canny realm might be able to maintain their financial dominance for some time. Even then, the GM may choose to interpret any related or combined disruption (p. 41) as *reducing* the exchange rate, dropping Revenue back to pre-windfall levels.

#### Military Training (2, 5-6)

*Immediate Effect:* Add 50% of the realm's Revenue to its Military Resources immediately – this boost comes from *outside* the realm's normal finances! The funds can be used to raise forces or maintain them.

Long-Term Effects: As above.

*Maintaining Long-Term Effects:* This effect can be kept as long as an Allocate Resources maneuver is performed and 1 Workforce Point is spent.

A friendly realm or other entity helps to train, equip, or otherwise aid the realm's troops. After the initial assistance, the realm can keep this edge as explained above. If a combined windfall (p. 45) includes this result and another suitable one, the extra Military Resources *could* come from the other result, but an infusion of cash into the military isn't normally a *windfall* – it's just relocating money from other budgets.

42

#### Technological Breakthrough (3, 1-2)

*Immediate Effect:* Gain 1d/2 (minimum 1) points of *one* resource, chosen at random. Roll 1d: 1-2, Agriculture Points; 3-4, Natural Resources Points; 5-6, Luxury/Precious Goods Points.

Long-Term Effects: None. The GM might decide that the breakthrough warrants an increase in TL (p. 9).

Maintaining Long-Term Effects: If the breakthrough could result in an increase in TL, overall or in a specific area, the realm must succeed at *eight* Plan maneuvers to justify it. Gadgeteer PCs can reduce this to four maneuvers – or to just one, for a Quick Gadgeteer! Rework the realm's Realm Value and pay 80% of the difference in money.

The realm is the first (or one of the first) to develop a new type of technology. Decide what this is! Details depend heavily on the realm's current TL. Planting crops might be a technological breakthrough for a TL0 society, while developing FTL travel would be a technological breakthrough at *any* TL.

#### Investor/Patron (3, 3-4)

*Immediate Effect:* Gain 1d Resource Points, chosen randomly or by the GM.

Long-Term Effects: Roll 3d. On 6 or less, the investor lingers; next turn, add another 1d-3 RP of the initial type and roll 3d again. This can go on indefinitely, with each roll of 6 or less meaning 1d-3 RP and a further roll – but rolling 7 or more on a later turn means that when the benefactor departs, they add a final 1d-3 RP as a "parting gift."

Maintaining Long-Term Effects: Usually none, but see below.

The realm has attracted the attention of another realm, an investment group, or a rich patron who wants to see it thrive. This results in bonus Resource Points; lucky realms can keep getting free points as long as they continue to roll low. (The GM and players should come up with plausible explanations for the continued largess, and the GM might reward good roleplaying with bonuses to long-term effects rolls!) If the realm has been in trouble recently, this windfall could represent humanitarian aid, cash, or similar assistance from one nation to another.

To *complicate* this windfall: The benefactor might be willing to stick around . . . in exchange for good press, "useless" resources (e.g., rocks in Zarthus), or "intangibles" (such as access to certain locations). Why are they willing to trade valuable resources for such trivial things? Is it wise to make this deal instead of letting the benefactor move on? The PCs should find out!

#### Resource Discovery (3, 5-6)

*Immediate Effect:* Gain 1d Resource Points appropriate to the discovery.

Long-Term Effects: Receive 1 additional appropriate Resource Point.

Maintaining Long-Term Effects: Take an Allocate Resources maneuver (this requires 1 Workforce Point). Success garners an additional RP that turn. Critical success gives 1d points instead! Critical failure loses 1 RP of the indicated type.

The realm has discovered a new source of minerals, a virgin forest, fertile fields, or similar. The exact nature of the

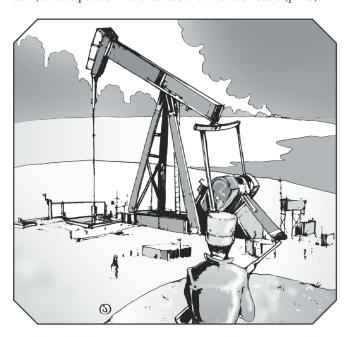
resources will depend heavily on the campaign's TL and genre. For example, a space-opera realm could find a new source of unobtanium on a distant planet, while a low-TL fantasy realm might discover an area suffused with magical energies.

#### Bumper Crop (4, 1-2)

Immediate Effect: Gain 1d Agriculture Points.

Long-Term Effects: Receive 1 additional Agriculture Point. Maintaining Long-Term Effects: Take an Allocate Resources maneuver (this requires 1 Workforce Point). Critical success gives 1d Agriculture Points! Critical failure loses 1 Agriculture Point.

The realm has experienced an exceptionally good harvest, or its herds of domesticated animals have multiplied well. This windfall cannot be maintained beyond a single additional turn, unless paired with a suitable combined result (p. 45).



#### Mild Weather (4, 3-4)

Immediate Effect: Gain 1 Agriculture Point.

Long-Term Effects: Cancels the effects of any of the following disruptions that are still ongoing: Drought/Famine (p. 39), Flood (p. 39), or Inclement Weather (p. 38).

Maintaining Long-Term Effects: N/A.

The realm is experiencing mild weather. This could mean fewer snowstorms in cold climates, or just the right amount of water in areas with a monsoon season. This can also represent such things as milder reactions from areas of twisted mana (*GURPS Thaumatology*, p. 60), or fewer asteroid strikes on a lunar habitat or rock-beaten planet.

#### Loyalty Boost (4, 5-6)

*Immediate Effect:* Increase Citizen Loyalty by one step for 1d turns.

Long-Term Effects: Increase Citizen Loyalty by one step permanently.

*Maintaining Long-Term Effects:* A successful Bluff or Negotiate – but these maneuvers require no resources.

There's an outpouring of patriotism amongst the realm's citizens. Choose a reason! Perhaps a ruler's new policies are broadly popular, or they've done "the right thing" in a difficult political situation.

#### Social Resonance Increase (5, 1-2)

*Immediate Effect:* Increase the realm's Social Resonance by one.

Long-Term Effects: N/A.

Maintaining Long-Term Effects: N/A.

Other realms now hold the realm in higher regard. Decide why: Perhaps it provided generous humanitarian aid, or helped stop an impending war through diplomacy – or the GM rolled this result and crafted an adventure for the PCs! After the heroes successfully return a kidnapped heir, eliminate a galactic threat, or throw a *really good* Musicians for Aid Across Borders concert to help their neighbors, the windfall takes effect.

## WHERE THE BLACK SWAN FLIES

All of the disruptions (pp. 38-41) and windfalls (pp. 41-45) are *mostly* possible in the real world, but the realistic edges have been sanded off in favor of cinematic smoothness. This is intentional. Like everything else in *Realm Management*, these events are a game aid for abstract realm emulation, and a way to give PCs a way to interact with some of the biggest "NPCs" in the game world: realms.

What about the weird stuff? Certainly, the Mesoamericans of the 16th century never saw the conquistadors coming – it was an out-of-context problem. The GM can include such events in the campaign, but shouldn't do so at random; they're for *adventures*, not coincidences. "Black swan events" like alien invasions can make or break the game. The GM must treat them as *campaign changers*, and ensure that they're consistent with game's expected tone . . . or that the players are okay with changing that tone.

#### Pilgrimage (5, 3-4)

*Immediate Effect:* Gain funds equal to 10% of a turn's Revenue.

Long-Term Effects: Roll 3d. On 6 or less, a shrine has been built. The realm may roll against Administration, Management Skill, or Religious Ritual every turn. Success grants 10% extra Revenue – pilgrims must eat! Critical success increases Revenue by 25% for the turn. Critical failure risks damage to the site (see below).

Maintaining Long-Term Effects: Allocate Resources. An appropriate skill may be substituted for Administration or Management Skill, if better.

A group of people now consider a spot within the realm to be sacred. This needn't be specifically religious – it could be a place of spirituality, somewhere a beloved leader lived or was put to death, or anything else groups of people would journey to visit. After deciding on a reason and location, add those to the "Notes" section of the realm's write-up.

If the realm fails to stabilize this windfall, it persists for only one turn: a "flash in the pan." Stabilized, it becomes a source of income for the realm (see the long-term effects), but on a critical failure to funnel pilgrims into and out of the area smoothly, something has gone wrong – a hostile sect, random vandalism, natural disaster, etc. – and the realm must *spend* money to fix the damage. Alternatively, the PCs might have to go on a mission to oust a newly arrived monster, deal with a massive robotic glitch, or negotiate with protesters who are occupying the location.

#### Immigration (5, 5-6)

*Immediate Effect:* Get one turn's worth of Revenue from taxes and duties.

Long-Term Effects: Permanently increase population by  $1d\times0.5\%$ .

Maintaining Long-Term Effects: Pay a cost equal to the increase in Realm Value and take 1d-2 (minimum 1) Marshal Manpower maneuvers.

This windfall symbolizes extra living space becoming available in the realm *and* a reason for people to relocate to it – perhaps an asteroid colony has finally completed a new residential cavern, a trading outpost has hit critical mass to become a thriving town, or the dimensional gates have been stabilized and the last demons exorcised. Now new miners, traders, or farmers can move in. (If the long-term effects *aren't* maintained, the reason for the immigration apparently didn't last, and the prospective residents leave.)

#### Educational Reform (6, 1-2)

*Immediate Effect:* Increase Education Rating by one for 1d turns.

Long-Term Effects: The Education Rating increase becomes permanent.

Maintaining Long-Term Effects: Either Allocate Resources (spend 2 Workforce Points) or Negotiate.

The realm has put time and energy into educational works, and it has paid off. The populace is now more informed and educated.

#### Crime Reduction (6, 3-4)

*Immediate Effect:* Increase Citizen Loyalty by a step for 1d turns *or* gain 1 Workforce Point.

Long-Term Effects: Permanently increase Citizen Loyalty by a step *or* gain 1d-2 (minimum 1) Workforce Points.

Maintaining Long-Term Effects: Either Allocate Resources or Marshal Manpower.

The realm is experiencing a widespread reduction in criminal activities. This could be due to an increase in welfare safety nets, draconian anticrime measures, legal reform, a huge crime ring being disbanded, or something similar. The realm's owner and the GM should decide on the reason and which result – increased Citizen Loyalty or Workforce Points – is reasonable.

The GM could also use this windfall as the *impetus* for an adventure! For instance, it might take effect *after* the PCs disband a supervillain team that was funded by organized crime, or uncover a corrupt "you scratch my back, I'll scratch yours" political network.

#### Combined Event (6, 5-6)

*Immediate Effect:* As per both events. *Long-Term Effects:* As per both events.

Maintaining Long-Term Effects: Each event must be maintained separately.

Reroll this result twice and add together the effects of both windfalls. If this is rolled a *second* time, roll twice more – but there's a maximum of three windfalls at a time.

## **EXPANSION AND GROWTH**

Realms can expand outward without the need for warfare. This is especially true of small realms that started life as colonies in remote areas, with room to become kingdoms or nations in their own right. But how to represent this with game mechanics?

The easiest way to "upgrade" a realm is to determine what new territory it has claimed or what advances it has made, calculate what its Realm Value (pp. 29-30) would be now, and pay the difference between the new value and the former one. During the upgrade period (2-17 turns – GM's choice or roll 3d-1), disruptions occur on 15 or more rather than 16 or more; windfalls are unaffected. A lot can go wrong when breaking new ground!

Alternatively, the GM may want to game out the realm's expansion. Player characters could be part of the new settlement – whether they're simply clearing out pesky wildlife, causing mayhem elsewhere as a smokescreen for the land grab, or making high-level decisions about which NPC minions do what jobs.

If the PCs are making high-level decisions, the realm's upgrade still takes 3d-1 turns. If they're creating a diversion so that other realms won't swoop in and annex the new territory themselves, the GM may roll *secretly;* the characters will be called home only when the expansion is secured. And if they're the ones "on the ground" in the new area, the GM should figure out what tasks need to be accomplished – if the heroes manage to cut short the required time, so be it!

Once the upgrade is completed, the GM should let a player roll against an appropriate skill; e.g., Engineer (Mining), Farming, or Thaumatology (for magical gates). Success by 0-2 means the realm pays the normal amount for the expansion, success by 3+ means it pays 80% of that, and critical success requires only 50%. Failure means it pays 110% of the difference in Realm Value; critical failure means it pays 125%! These adjustments don't affect the new Realm Value – just the amount paid to *get* there.

Game out *aggressive* expansion – military invasion or similar – with *GURPS Mass Combat*. An attack on claimed territory usually leads to an instant decrease in the target realm's reaction toward the instigating realm. The victim's allies will likely follow suit, and even neutral parties may distrust the aggressor for some time to come.

Treat occupied territory as a separate realm from the conquering one. A conquered realm has its numerical Citizen Loyalty set to 1d/2 (round up) and a Conformity Rating of 0. Resource Points also become 0, which may reflect unintentional destruction, looting, or a retreating army taking stockpiles with it. While conquerors often impose a change of government type, such as to colonialism (pp. 17-18), this isn't mandatory – some conquerors allow their new subjects

a degree of internal autonomy, with government structures grounded in pre-conquest traditions. For other ideas, see *Non-Independent Realms* (p. 17).

### REVOLUTION AND DISSOLUTION

Many things can put a realm at risk of an uprising: civil unrest (p. 41), leaders *failing* a Bluff maneuver (p. 33) to influence their people, lack of food (p. 39), and any similar circumstances where the population – which may include subjugated beings as well as citizens! – is desperate. In these situations, the realm must roll against numerical Citizen Loyalty + *half* Conformity Rating (round down).

Success means the realm continues on for a turn; critical success grants +1 to the next such roll. Failure reduces Conformity Rating by one for 1d turns. *Critical* failure starts a revolution! This could be a true revolt – setting fire, pitchforks, and Madame Guillotine against the ruling class – or a cultural or ideological revolution.

If Conformity Rating is still greater than 0, roll as above each turn until the problem is solved (via appropriate allocation of Resource Points – or perhaps the actions of the PCs), a regime change occurs, or ConR reaches 0. At ConR 0, the people *will* riot or otherwise impair the realm however they can. Use *GURPS Mass Combat* to resolve any clashes. In all cases, the PCs may side with or against the coup; see *Join the Revolution!* (p. 20) for ideas.

Sing, swing!
Savor the sting!
As she severs you,
Madame Guillotine!
- Nan Knighton,
"Madame
Guillotine"

#### Dissolution

If a revolution succeeds, check for dissolution. Roll against Management Skill every turn to see whether the revolutionaries can form a stable government.

Success means the realm limps on for another turn. Critical success raises the realm's Conformity Rating, and no further checks for dissolution are required – unless the initial issue (e.g., famine) is still a concern! The leaders of the revolution have a grace period of 1d+1 turns to fix underlying problems before the populace turns on *them*. The GM decides what happens if they succeed, but usually, a new government forms (realms still need caretakers) and a regime change occurs.

Critical failure results in *immediate* – and often violent – dissolution. There is no grace period.

## **APPENDIX**

## EXAMPLES

Here are three examples of finished realms, each with a brief history, an adventure seed, and of course a fully formatted stat block.

## THE NECRO-KINGDOM OF ZARTHUS

Ruled by the Fell-King and his Nightmare Court, the Necro-Kingdom of Zarthus is situated behind the Bones of the Dragon: a mountain range that encloses the kingdom, giving it a distinctive "closed U" shape. The U is sealed with a colossal wall of bone and stone, its ends sunk into the mountains. Rumor has it that the wall is made from the bones of invaders who've dared crusade against past Fell-Kings - and those rumors would be correct. The rest of the world could wish that wall were even higher, to better contain the country's horde of mindless undead . . . as well as the upsettingly less-mindless undead.

Zarthus has poor soil and very little sunlight, thanks to a spell gone wrong centuries before. This makes it difficult to feed the people, and those who starve are added to the dead that wander the land. That doesn't mean the kingdom is poor – far from it! The Black Mines to the south of the capital city of Dunwald have a seemingly endless supply of the "black gold" for which Zarthus is known.

The kingdom's ruler and most powerful necromancer, the Fell-King, assigns positions of leadership to those he (she? It?) favors. Magical runes sustained by the power of this Nightmare Court keep dangerous undead out of villages - usually. Safe locations, wealth, and the use of undead labor for lesser tasks let some Zarthusians become skilled crafters and jewelers.

## THE NECRO-KINGDOM OF ZARTHUS

Total Area: 160,000 square miles

Realm Size Value: +16

**Resource Points:** 25 (9 Agriculture Points, 3 Luxury/ Precious Goods Points, 3 Natural Resources Points, 10+1d Workforce Points\*)

**TL:** 3^

Cultural Traits (+3%): Magery 0 (One College Only, Necromancy, -40%) [3]

Realm Inhabitant Racial Traits: None

Population: 192,000

Citizen Loyalty: Neutral (11; +1)

**Infrastructure Rating: 2 Control Rating:** 3

**Conformity Rating: 2 Openness Rating: 1** 

Government Type: Feudal Aristocracy (thaumatoc-

**Economy Type:** Traditional

Defense Bonus and Terrain: +4; mostly hills and mountains

**Education Rating: 2** 

Management Skill (+15%): 15

Habitability: Poor (9; GM may assess -1 to certain

**Reaction-Time Modifier:** +4†

Realm Enhancements (+160%): Able Populace 2 (+50%); Defensible Terrain 4 (+40%); Maneuver Mastery (Marshal Manpower) (+20%); Renewing Resource 5 (Black Mines) (+50%)

Realm Limitations (-85%): Appearance (Ugly) (-8%); Chauvinistic Populace (OR1) (-2%); Famous for Necromancers (-2 to reaction rolls) (-10%); Hated 2 (-10%); Hostile Climate 1 (-5%); Lower Carrying Capacity 3 (-15%); Obsolete Infrastructure 1 (-25%); Uninhabitable Land 1 (-10%)

**Social Resonance:** -2 (-4 for those who dislike necromancy/necromancers)

Patron Value: 20 points Enemy Value: -30 points **Realm Value:** \$155,635,200

Military Resources: \$2,688,000/turn‡

**Revenue:** \$8,064,000/turn\* Starting Revenue: \$1,556,352 **Inhabitants' Status:** -1 to 7

Inhabitants' Wealth: Struggling to Filthy Rich

**Notes:** Labor pool is mostly undead who can perform repetitive tasks without supervision. Starting Resource Points cost another \$10,080,000 (not included in Realm

\* Traditional economy gives +1d starting Workforce Points, but 50% of listed Revenue must be converted into Luxury/Precious Goods Points.

† Includes -1 for aristocracy, in return for the effects of Corrupt 1 (pp. 26-27).

‡ Feudal usually adds +5% to listed Military Resources, but occasionally gives -30% instead; see p. 18.

Zarthus would be an *excellent* adventuring location in a *GURPS Dungeon Fantasy* or *GURPS Banestorm* campaign, though the latter already has a similar kingdom: Abydos. (featured in *GURPS Banestorm: Abydos*).

## Adventure Seed: We're Nice Necromancers

The Fell-King has invited the PCs and their entourage to Dunwald in an effort to demonstrate that the realm isn't as "evil" as others think. This backfires when an apprentice necromancer accidentally unleashes an undead horde. The heroes get a life-or-death battle, while their guide downplays it as "just one of those things." Do they flee or give the Zarthusians a chance?

Luxembourg is next to go And – who knows – maybe Monaco.

Tom Lehrer,"Who's Next"

## THE NEW VENETIAN REPUBLIC

After the apocalypse, the few survivors along the Mississippi River were a scattered and diverse group, each community fending for itself. In the decades that followed, the town of New Venice tried diplomacy and forged an alliance of mutual aid with many of the other settlements. A generation later, President Camilla "Kay" Riva of the New Venetian Republic is faced with many challenges, both external and domestic.

The republic's navy is its strength, and claims the swamps and floodplains along the whole length of the Mississippi as New Venice's territory. Between sodden conditions and toxins, food production is marginal. Many ruined cities dot the old river's banks, however, and thanks to these and flotsam from upstream, the republic is a wealthy place . . . by post-apocalyptic standards.

New Venice was designed for *GURPS After the End*, and could be used in any post-apocalyptic take on the real world.

### Adventure Seed: It's a Dirty Job

President Riva is offering a substantial reward to anyone who can help guard a convoy that's bringing shipments of topsoil from the Plains to New Venice's marginal croplands. Road raiders have been attacking traders to steal their vehicles. Can the PCs keep the dirt safe?

## THE HEGEMONY

The Hegemony is designed to be the "evil empire" of an action-oriented TL10/11 *GURPS Space* campaign that features extensive genetic engineering and cybernetic enhancement. It's loosely modeled on ancient Sparta and a dark version of Plato's ideal state.

## THE NEW VENETIAN REPUBLIC

**Total Area:** 16,000 square miles

Realm Size Value: +13

**Resource Points:** 25 (3 Agriculture Points, 7 Luxury/Precious Goods Points, 10 Natural Resources Points, 5 Workforce Points)

TL: 4

**Cultural Traits:** None

Realm Inhabitant Racial Traits: None

Population: 250,000 Citizen Loyalty: Poor (9; -1) Infrastructure Rating: 2 Control Rating: 1 Conformity Rating: 2 Openness Rating: 2\*

Government Type: Representative Democra-

cy-Clan/Tribal (hybrid)

**Economy Type:** Subsistence Capitalism (barter) **Defense Bonus and Terrain:** +2; mostly swamps

**Education Rating: 3** 

Management Skill (+10%): 14 Habitability: Bad (6; -1) Reaction-Time Modifier: +2\*

**Realm Enhancements (+80%):** Clear Routes 1 (+10%); Defensible Terrain 2 (+20%); Educated Populace 1 (+10%); Maneuver Mastery (Plan) (+20%); Ouick Deployment 1 (+20%)

**Realm Limitations (-115%):** Disloyal Citizenry 1 (-15%); Hostile Climate 2 (-25%); Loose Society 1 (-15%); Lower Carrying Capacity 3 (-15%); Obsolete Infrastructure 1 (-25%); Uninhabitable Land 2 (-20%)

Social Resonance: 0 Patron Value: 15 points Enemy Value: -30 points Realm Value: \$90,000,000

Military Resources: \$1,000,000/turn

Revenue: \$2,400,000/turn Starting Revenue: \$900,000 Inhabitants' Status: -1 to 0

Inhabitants' Wealth: Struggling to Average

**Notes:** This young realm consists of groups of independent survivors, held together only through its ruler's constant efforts. Its territory is mostly toxic swamp full of choking weeds, with a large river as the nation's backbone. Communities live on collections of boats, or on natural or artificial islands – imagine flooded, vine-covered cities with stacks of rusting shipping containers – while agriculture is primarily in floating gardens and some less-tainted marshy areas. Maintained at TL4 (original TL was 9, but then the apocalypse happened). Possesses gifted leadership, a large navy (not included in Realm Value), and full coffers. Starting Resource Points cost another \$15,000,000 (not included in Realm Value).

<sup>\*</sup> Includes -1 for clan/tribal.

Ruled by the Hegemon – an ultra-powerful AI – the Hegemony is a caste system built around three genetically engineered races. The rulers are the Guardians: charismatic, intelligent, long-lived, and arrogant. Below them are the warrior Orions: strong, swift, and deadly on the battlefield. Last come the Helots, who do all other necessary work; they're the servant caste, whose primary purpose is to glorify the two upper castes. In a world of computers and robots, having human servants is the ultimate in conspicuous consumption. Captives from other civilizations are often brainwashed into this caste.

The territory spans 13 star systems, in an open cluster in the Milky Way. The main system, housing the Hegemon and a massive O'Neill cylinder (Hestia Prime), is Hestia, a huge O3 star with a luminosity more than a million times that of the Sun. Although it will burn for only a few thousand years more before sterilizing the core system in a magnificent supernova, it currently provides vast, pure solar power. The Hegemon is confident that by the time Hestia would

explode, the Hegemony will have developed techniques to stabilize it – or have moved the entire O'Neill cylinder to a new system.

## Adventure Seed: Our Man in Hestia Prime

The PCs are charged with extracting an agent – a rare turn-coat Helot – from Hestia Prime. The task will be dangerous and difficult, as the Hegemony's citizens are fanatically loyal to the Hegemon and the state. Worse, the agent is actually a compulsive liar who has been passing along false information for several months. The Helot is still in very real danger, though, because the Hegemon takes a dim view of citizens communicating clandestinely with the outside. On one hand, they group has its orders: extract the agent. On the other, they've been ordered on the most dangerous mission of their lives to rescue a fake, and cannot communicate with HQ without risking detection. What do they do?

### THE HEGEMONY

**Total Area:** 4,500 million square miles (13 populated systems)

Realm Size Value: +27 (interplanetary state)\*

**Resource Points:** 165 (30 Agriculture Points, 30 Luxury/Precious Goods Points, 70 Natural Resources Points, 35 Workforce Points)

**TL:** 10^

Cultural Traits (-10%): Sense of Duty (Hegemony) [-10] Realm Inhabitant Racial Traits (+6%): 75% Helot II (*GURPS Bio-Tech*, p. 67) [8], 20% Orion (*Bio-Tech*, p. 67) [70], and 5% Guardian (*Bio-Tech*, p. 69) [185], for a weighted average of [30]

**Population:** 45,000,000,000 **Citizen Loyalty:** Excellent (19; +8)†

Infrastructure Rating: 5 Control Rating: 6 Conformity Rating: 5

Openness Rating: 2

**Government Type:** Cybercracy **Economy Type:** Post-Scarcity

**Defense Bonus and Terrain:** 0; spaced-based realm

**Education Rating:** 6

Management Skill (+50%): 12 (Completely Reliable)

Habitability: Good (13; +1)‡

**Reaction-Time Modifier:** 0 (+1d-1 for requests for assistance)

**Realm Enhancements (+234%):** Advanced Infrastructure 2 (+50%); Conventional Populace 2 (+4%); Educated

Populace 1 (+10%); Famous for Soldiers (+4 to reaction rolls) (+10%); Habitable Land 1 (+10%); Loyal Citizenry 2 (+30%); Quick Deployment 2 (+40%); Renewing Resource 5 (+50%); Secure Society 3 (+30%)

**Realm Limitations (-19%):** Appearance (Unattractive) (-4%); Hard-Power Oriented (-5%); Hated 2 (-10%)

**Social Resonance:** -2 (+2 for those who like warriors)

Patron Value: 30 points Enemy Value: -40 points

Realm Value: \$545,832,000,000,000

Military Resources: \$50,400,000,000,000/turn

**Revenue:** \$75,600,000,000,000/turn **Starting Revenue:** \$5,458,320,000,000

Inhabitants' Status: 1†

Inhabitants' Wealth: Comfortable

**Notes:** Contains an O3 star, which will provide cheap energy for another 5,000 years. Then it will go supernova – but the realm counts on being able to solve that problem by then. Starting Resource Points cost \$124,740,000,000,000 (not included in Realm Value).

- \* Realm Size Value would normally be +30, but the Hegemony spans 13 systems rather than 100 or so.
- † Improved one step for post-scarcity (p. 21), which also has drawbacks.
- ‡ The planets have been extensively terraformed, giving them better terrain than default.

Wash's Stegosaurus: Yes. Yes, this is a fertile land, and we will thrive. We will rule over all this land, and we will call it . . . This Land. Wash's Allosaurus: I think we should call it "your grave!"

- **Firefly** #1.1

## INDEX

For specific realm limitations and enhancements, see the **Realm Modifiers** subindex on p. 51.

Actions, assistance, 34; see also Maneuvers. Adventures, 39, 44; disruptions, 38-41; seeds, 47, 48; windfalls, 41-45; see also Campaigns, Player Characters.

Aggressive maneuvers, 33.

Agriculture Points, assigning, 6; disruptions, 38-41; examples, 7-8; feeding inhabitants, 6; overview, 5, 7; related realm modifiers, 25-27; splitting, 7; windfalls, 42-43; see also Luxury/Precious Goods Points, Resource Points.

Allocate Resources maneuver, 33. Anarchy, 14.

Animal Husbandry Points, 7; see also Agriculture Points.

Area, 4-6; *see also Realm Size Value*. Area Knowledge skill, 5; *realm size and*, 4. Aristocracy, 15.

Assistance actions, 34.

Athenian democracy, 15.

Attributes of realms, see Citizen Loyalty,
Conformity Rating, Control Rating,
Cultural Traits, Defense Bonus, Economy
Type, Education Rating, Enemy
Value, Government Type, Habitability,
Infrastructure Rating, Management
Skill, Military Resources, Openness
Rating, Patron Advantage, Population,
Racial Traits, Realm Modifiers, Realm
Size Value, Realm Value, Reaction-Time
Modifier, Resource Points, Revenue,
Social Resonance, Status Advantage,
Technology Level, Terrain, Wealth Trait.

Autocracy/dictatorship, 15.

Blackmail acquired windfall, 42.

Bluff maneuver, 33.

Brand-new settlement, 17.

Bumper crop windfall, 43.

Bureaucracy, 15.

Calamities, see Disruptions.

Campaigns, adding realm management to, 3; changing, 44; see also Adventures, Player Characters.

Capitalism, 20.

Carrying Capacity, 5, 10; population modifier and, 10.

Caste, 16.

Characters, see Adventures, Campaigns, Inhabitants, Player Characters.

Citizen Loyalty, 5, 11; conquered realm, 45; disruptions, 39-41; Negotiate maneuver, 35, 36; related realm modifiers, 26-28; revolution, 45; split, 13; Threaten maneuver, 37; windfalls, 42-44.

Citizens, *see Inhabitants, Player Characters*. Civil unrest disruption, 41.

Clan/tribal, 16.

## Power without a nation's confidence is nothing. - Catherine the Great

Climate, see Habitability, Weather.

Colonialism, 17.

Colony but in name, 17.

Combined events, 41, 45.

Communism, 21.

Composite economies, 21.

Conformity Rating (ConR), 13; base, 13; Bluff maneuver, 33; conquered realm, 45; dissolution, 45; happenings, 40-42; Negotiate maneuver, 35; overview, 5, 12; related realm modifier, 25; revolution, 45; typical ratings, 14-20; see also specific government types.

Conservative maneuvers, 33.

Control Rating (CR), 5; Citizen Loyalty and, 11; Military Budget Factor, 30; related realm modifiers, 25-27; religion and, 23; Revenue and, 31; splitting, 13; starting, 12; typical ratings, 14-20; see also specific government types.

Corporate state, 18.

Corruption disruption, 39-40.

Crime reduction windfall, 44.

Criminal economies, 22.

Cultural traits, 5, 9.

Cybercracy, 18.

Defense Bonus (DB), 22; related realm modifiers, 25, 27.

Demagogue disruption, 41.

Democracy, 15, 19.

Demolish maneuver, 33.

Description of realm, 28.

Dictatorship, 15.

Disruptions, 5, 38-41; as attack, 40.

Dissolution, 5, 45; see also Revolution.

Do Nothing maneuver, 33-34.

Drought/famine disruption, 39.

Economy types, 5, 20-22; mixed, 21-22; related realm modifier, 27; see also Government Types.

Education Rating (ER), 22-23; overview, 5, 22; Propaganda rolls and, 22; related realm modifier, 25; starting, 23; windfall,

realr 44.

Educational reform windfall, 44.

Embargo disruption, 38.

Emblematic trait, 9.

Enemy disadvantage, realm as, 28.

Enhanced Currency Exchange Rate windfall, 42.

Enhancements, realm, 5, 24-26.

Ethnic trait. 9.

Example realms, 46-48; *creation*, 6, 9, 15, 24, 27, 31.

Events, see Disruptions, Windfalls.

Expansion, 45.

Faith, realm and, 23.

Famine disruption, 39.

Farming Points, 7; see also Agriculture Points.

Fauna disruption, 40.

Feudal government, 18.

Fire disruption, 40.

Flood disruption, 39.

Flora disruption, 40.

Free actions, 32.

Gadgeteer advantage, 44.

Gather/Extract maneuver, 34.

Glossary, 5.

Government types, 5, 14-20; new, merged, variant, and weird, 16; non-independent realms, 17; see also Economy Types, Revolution.

Growth, 45.

GURPS, 3; After the End, 3, 47; Aliens: Sparrials, 16; Banestorm, 47; Banestorm: Abydos, 47; Bio-Tech, 48; Boardroom and Curia, 3, 4, 36; City Stats, 3, 11, 25, 27; Dungeon Fantasy, 3, 47; Fantasy, 9, 20; Infinite Worlds, 19; Locations: Worminghall, 22; Mass Combat, 3, 4, 22, 24, 25, 27, 30, 35, 36, 39, 45; Space, 3, 47; Space Atlas, 18; Thaumatology, 43; Ultra-Tech, 9.

Habitability, 23-24; overview, 5, 22; related realm modifier, 25; starting, 24; traits modifier affects, 23; see also Terrain.

Happenings, disruptions, 38-41; windfalls, 41-45.

Hegemony (example realm), 47-48; *stats*, 48.

Immigration windfall, 44.

Improve maneuver, 34.

Inclement weather disruption, 38.

Income resources, 29-31.

Infrastructure breakdown disruption, 41.

Infrastructure Rating (IR), 11-12; happenings, 39-41; overview, 5.

happenings, 39-41; overview, 5, 11; related realm modifier, 25; splitting, 13.

Inhabitants, cultural traits, 5, 9; racial traits, 5, 10, 29; Resource Points to feed, 6; Wealth, 5, 31; see also Citizen Loyalty, Conformity Rating, Education Rating, Openness Rating, Player Characters, Population, Revolution, Status Advantage.

Invasion disruption, 39.

Investor/Patron windfall, 43.

INDEX 49

Kritarchy, 18. Limitations, realm, 5, 26-28. Loyalty Boost windfall, 43.

Luxury/Precious Goods Points, assigning, 6; disruption, 41; exotic resources as, 8; overview, 5, 7, 9; related maneuvers, 35; windfalls, 42, 43; see also Agriculture Points, Natural Resources Points, Resource Points.

Management Skill, based on racial IQ, 10; dissolution, 45; Education Rating and, 22; Infrastructure Rating and, 11; modifiers to, 23; negative Resource Points and, 6; overview, 5, 23; Reaction-Time Modifier and, 24; starting, 23; see also Maneuvers.

Maneuvers, 32-37; for countering disruptions, 38-41; free, 32; internal, 32; list, 32; multiple, 32; nuanced, 33; overview, 5, 32; related general modifier, 26; rolling for, 33; significant assistance actions, 34; to counter disruptions, 38-41.

Manufacture maneuver, 35.

Maps, using, 28.

Marshal Manpower maneuver, 35; related realm modifiers, 26.

Mental Workforce Points, 7; see also Workforce Points.

Mercantilism, 21.

Meritocracy, 19.

Mild weather windfall, 43.

Military, colony, 17; cost to raise, 30; expansion, 45; government, 19; happenings, 39, 40, 42; Marshal Manpower maneuver and, 35; related realm modifiers, 26, 27; see also specific government types.

Military Budget Factor, 30.

Military Resources (MR), 5, 7, 30; formula, 30; Marshall Manpower maneuver, 35; related realm modifier, 27; windfall, 42.

Military training windfall, 42.

Mixed economies, 21-22.

Modifiers, realm, 24-28; see also the section on p. 51.

Natural Resources Points, 8-9; assigning, 6; converting to Luxury/Precious Goods Points, 35; disruptions, 38, 39, 41; examples, 8-9; feeding inhabitants, 6; Manufacture maneuver, 35; overview. 5, 7, 8; related realm modifiers, 25-27; windfalls, 42, 43; see also Luxury/ Precious Goods Points, Resource Points.

Necro-Kingdom of Zarthus (example realm), 46-47; example of creation, 6, 9, 15, 24, 27, 31; stats, 46,

Negotiate maneuver, 35-36.

New trade connection windfall, 42.

New Venetian Republic (example realm), 47; stats, 47.

Nonhuman labor, 8.

Oligarchy, 19.

Openness Rating (OR), 13-14; overview, 5, 12; related realm modifier, 26; starting, 14; typical ratings, 14-20; windfall, 42; see also specific government types.

Optional rules, 7, 17, 30, 34, 36.

Organizations, Wheel system and, 37.

Palace economies, 22.

Palatial economies, 22.

Participatory economies, 22.

Patron advantage, realm as, 28. Physical Workforce Points, 7;

see also Workforce Points.

Pilgrimage windfall, 44.

Plague disruption, 38.

Plan maneuver, 36.

Player characters, assistance actions, 34; expansion and growth, 45; founding by, 30; Gadgeteer, 43; inflicting disruptions, 40; reactions, 29; realms as Enemies, 28; realms as Patrons, 28; revolution, 20, 45; rolling for maneuvers, 33; running realms, 3, 39; sabotage, 36; traits and Realm Value, 30; see also Area Knowledge Skill, Inhabitants, Maneuvers.

Plutocracy, 19.

Political schism disruption, 40.

Pollution disruption, 40.

Population, 10; as realm modifier, 10; disruptions, 38-41; maximum, 10; Military Resources and, 30; overview, 5, 10; realm size and, 5, 6; Realm Value and, 5, 29; Revenue and, 31; windfall, 44; see also Conformity Rating, Education Rating, Habitability, Inhabitants, Revolution, Status Advantage, Wealth Trait.

Post-scarcity/utopian economy, 21. Propaganda rolls, Education Rating and, 22. Protectorate, 17.

Racial traits, 5, 10; Realm Value and, 10, 29. Ratings, splitting, 13; see also Citizen Loyalty, Conformity Rating, Control Rating, Education Rating, Infrastructure Rating, Openness Rating, Technology Level.

Reaction rolls, for realms, 29.

Reaction-Time Modifier (RTM), 24, Management Skill and, 23, overview, 5, 24, related realm modifier, 26, turn order and, 32, Wait maneuver, 37, see also specific government types.

Realm Size Value, 4-6; Flood disruption, 39; overview, 4, 5; table, 4.

Realm Value, 5, 29-30; Demolish maneuver, 33; Enemy value, 28; enhancements, 24-26; expansion and growth, 45; formula, 29; founding time and, 30; Improve maneuver, 34; limitations, 26-28; Management Skill and, 23; Patron value, 28; PC traits and, 30; racial traits and, 10, 29; Resource Point cost and, 6, 37; Starting Revenue and, 31.

Realms, creation example, 6, 9, 15, 24, 27, 31; definition, 4; designing, 4-27; finalizing design, 28-31; PC-founded, 30. Rebellion, see Revolution.

Reconnoiter maneuver, 36.

Reform windfall, 42.

Religion, effects of, 23. Religious uprising disruption, 40.

Representative democracy, 19.

Resource Discovery windfall, 43.

Resource Points (RP), 6-9; Allocate Resources maneuver, 33; assignment guidelines, 6; buying, 6, 37; conquered realm, 45; cost of, 6, 30; Demolish maneuver, 33; disruptions, 38-40; exotic, 8, 26; Gather/Extract maneuver, 34; initial assignment, 6-7; negative value, 6; non-scaling, 37; nuanced maneuvers and, 33; overview, 5, 6; Realm Value and, 30; related realm enhancements, 25, 26; related realm limitation, 27; scaling, 37; selling, 6, 37; spending on maneuvers, 32; Starting Revenue and, 7, 31; Trade maneuver, 37; windfalls, 42, 43; see also Agriculture Points, Luxury/Precious Goods Points, Maneuvers; Natural Resources Points, Workforce Points, specific economy and government types.

Resources, income, 29-31; see also Military Resources, Realm Value, Revenue.

Revenue, 30-31; formula, 31; happenings, 39, 42, 44; overview, 5, 30; related realm enhancements, 25, 26; related realm limitations, 25-27; starting, 5, 7, 31; using with maneuvers, 32; see also specific economy and government types.

Revenue Factor (RF), 31.

Revolution, 5, 20, 45; Bluff maneuver, 33; Citizen Loyalty and, 11; related disruptions, 39, 41; related realm modifiers, 26, 27.

Sabotage, disruption, 38; maneuver, 36.

Sanction disruption, 38.

Settlement, brand-new, 17. Shortage disruption, 41.

Significant assistance actions, 34.

Size, see Realm Size Value.

Skills, realm expansion, 45; to maintain windfalls, 42-45; see also Management Skill, Maneuvers.

Slave economies, 22.

Social Resonance, 5, 28; reaction rolls and, 29; related realm modifiers, 25; windfall, 44.

Social Stigma disadvantage, 9. Socialism, 21.

Status advantage, inhabitants, 5, 31; quality of life modifier, 25; Reaction-Time Modifier and, 24.

Subjugated realm, Control Rating, 30; Military Resources, 30.

Subsistence economies, 22.

Tables, base Reaction-Time Modifier, 24: Carrying Capacity, 10; Citizen Loyalty Will modifier, 11; Citizen Loyalty, 11; disruptions, 38-41; Military Budget Factor, 30; negotiate outcome, 35; Realm Size Value, 4; windfalls, 41-45.

Technocracy, 20.

windfall, 43.

Technological breakthrough windfall, 43. Technology level (TL), 5, 9; Control Rating and, 12; Education Rating and, 22, 23; Infrastructure Rating and, 12; Manufacture maneuver, 35; population and, 10; related realm modifier, 25;

Terrain, Defense Bonus, 22; Habitability and, 23-24; related realm modifiers, 25, 27; see also Habitability.

Territory (government type), 17. Theocracy, 20.

50 INDEX

Third-Party charity windfall, 42. Threaten maneuver, 37. Time, founding, 30. Trade embargo/sanction disruption,

Trade maneuver, 36-37; Realm Size Value and, 37; related enhancement, 25.

Traditional economy, 21.

Tribal government, 16.

Tributary state, 17.

Troublesome flora/fauna disruption,

Turn, defined, 5; steps, 32; see also Wheel Resolution System.

Unsustainable economies, 22.

Utopian economy, 21.

Vassal state, 17.

Wait maneuver, 37.

Warv maneuvers, 33.

Wealth trait, inhabitants, 5, 31.

Weather, habitability, 23-24; happenings, 38, 39, 43; related realm modifiers, 25, 27.

Wheel resolution system, disruptions, 38-41; happenings step, 38; overview, 5, 32; windfalls, 41-45.

Wheel resolution system, turn steps, 32; see also Maneuvers.

Windfalls, 5, 41-45.

Workforce Points, 8; as maneuver cost, 33; assigning, 6; disruptions, 38, 41; examples, 8; exotic sources, 8;

Marshal Manpower maneuver, 35; multiple maneuvers and, 32; nonhuman, 8; overview, 5, 7, 8; Reconnoiter maneuver, 36; related enhancement, 25; related realm modifiers, 24, 25; splitting, 7; see also Resource Points.

### Realm Modifiers

Able Populace, 24. Admired, 25. Advanced Infrastructure, 25. Appearance, 25. Broad-Minded Populace, 26. Chauvinistic Populace, 26. Clear Routes, 25. Conventional Populace, 25. Corrupt, 26-27. Defensible Terrain, 25. Disloyal Citizenry, 26. Educated Populace, 25. Famous for (Archetype), 25. Fertile Territory, 25. Habitable Land, 25. Hard-Power Oriented, 27. Hated, 25. Heavy Taxation, 25. High TL. 25. Higher Carrying Capacity, 25. Higher Quality of Life, 25. Hostile Climate, 27.

Ideal Climate, 25. In Debt. 27. Inactive Realm, 26. Increased Consumption, 26. Indefensible Terrain, 27. Independent Revenue Stream, 26. Inefficient, 27. Infertile Territory, 27. Light Taxation, 27. Loose Society, 27. Low TL, 25. Lower Carrying Capacity, 25. Lower Quality of Life, 25. Loyal Citizenry, 26. Maneuver Mastery, 26. Mothballed Military, 27. Obsolete Infrastructure, 25. Quick Deployment, 26. Reduced Consumption, 26. Reflexive Realm. 26. Renewing Resource, 26. Reserve (Type), 26. Scarce Resource, 27. Secure Society, 26. Slow Deployment, 26. Soft-Power Oriented, 28. Superstitious Populace, 28. Unconventional Populace, 25. Uneducated Populace, 25. Uninhabitable Land, 25. Unique Resource, 26.

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51 INDEX

## REALM DESIGN FORM

Name:				
Total Area (in square miles):			Area Knowledge Class:	
Realm Size Value:			Notes:	
Resource Points				
Agriculture Points:			Natural Resources Points:	
Workforce Points:			Luxury/Precious Goods Points:	
Cost per Point:			Starting Resource Points total:	
Resource Notes:				
TL:	Notes:			
Cultural Traits:				
Realm Inhabitant Racial Traits				
Population:			Carrying Capacity (max):	
Citizen Loyalty - Level:		Value:	Total Will modifier:	
Infrastructure Rating:			Control Rating:	
			Openness Rating:	
Education Rating:	Notes:			
Management Skill - Level:	Modifiers: _		Realm Value modifier:	
Habitability – Level:		Value:	Skill modifier:	
Reaction-Time Modifier:	Notes:			
Realm Enhancements:				
			Total Realm Value modifier:	
Realm Limitations:				
			Total Realm Value modifier:	
Social Resonance:				
Patron Value:			Enemy Value:	
Realm Description:				
Realm Value				
Monthly pay of citizens:			Base Realm Value:	
			Time to Found (optional):	
			Military Resources:	
Revenue:			Starting Revenue:	
			Inhabitants' Wealth:	
Optional total cost (adjusted Realm Value + starting Resource Point total + cost to raise military):				
_		-		