

# GERMANY

## SOURCEBOOK



FASA  
CORPORATION

MICHAEL IMMIG & THOMAS RÖMER

# GERMANY SOURCEBOOK



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All persons and companies appearing in this book are fictional. Any similarities to real companies or persons, be they natural or legal, is completely coincidental. This is a work of fiction. Opinions and situations presented in this book do not necessarily reflect the views of the publisher or the authors.

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**GERMANY SOURCEBOOK**

A *Shadowrun* Sourcebook

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# INTRODUCTION

**T**he **Germany Sourcebook** is a supplement for the **Shadowrun** game system. It describes the Allied German States, a loose political confederation of states which maintain close cultural and economic ties. Similar to other **Shadowrun** sourcebooks, the **Germany Sourcebook** is formatted as an electronic document from that fictional world. Comments and additional information has been added by readers who seek to correct, expand, corroborate, or contradict the information presented. Because this "black" information comes from characters within the game universe, players or characters cannot safely assume that these comments are truthful, accurate, or clearly thought out (though they may be all those things). These various points of view give gamemasters greater scope to decide which information presented is accurate, misleading, or false in their own game.

Originally written in German, by Germans, and published in Germany as *Deutschland in den Schatten* by Fantasy Productions in October of 1992, the **Germany Sourcebook** offers a sometimes unique point of view that makes it different from an American product. Certain subjects that FASA's American products do not usually address in depth, such as religion, are an integral part of the German culture, and so cannot be left out of a discussion of German peoples' lives. Other topics that American readers might find unfamiliar are simply a function of the sensibilities of the writers, and of the translation. The translated text remains as faithful as possible to the original, and incorporates certain additions necessary to clarify points for an American audience.

A brief **Game Information** section in the back of the book provides rules for German variations on **Shadowrun** magic and paranormal animals. Gamemasters need the second-edition **Grimoire** to use these rules. The **Germany Sourcebook** works with both the original and second-edition **Shadowrun** rules.

Für unsere deutschen Leser:

Dies ist eine für den amerikanischen Markt bearbeitete übersetzung des deutschen Urtextes *Deutschland in den Schatten*. In allen relevanten Punkten, seien es Regel- oder Hintergrundaspekte, haben die Angaben im deutschen Original Vorrang vor damit eventuell im Widerstreit stehenden Angaben in diesem Buch.





WELCOME TO...

# SHADOWLAND

**"I have taken all knowledge to be my province."  
— Francis Bacon, 1592**

**CATEGORY**

**GO TO:**

- Message Base/Mail System OK
- Special Categories/ Topics (SIGS) OK
- Library Archive OK
- Information Base — SPECIAL FEATURES! (Limited Duration Posting)
  - Paranormal Animals of Europe (Don't say we didnt warn ya . . .) OK
  - Corporate Shadowfiles (Corp dirt !!) OK
  - Shadowtech Complilation (Weird Science 101) OK
  - Fields of Fire (Mercs, Military, and Big Guns™!— En Route!) NOT AVAILABLE
  - Tir na nÓg (Look No Further) OK
  - Real Life Compilation (Way Wiz!) OK
  - Germany Alliance (Deutschland en den Shatten!) OK
  - Tir Tairngire (Scan this, chummer!) OK

**GERMANY SOURCEBOOK**

- Welcome to Germany OK
- Fast Forward OK
- History OK
- Government OK
- German Society OK
- State Security OK
- Economy OK
- Rhine-Ruhr Megaplex OK
- South German States OK
- Awakened Lands OK
- Free State of Westphalia OK
- Berlin OK
- German Magic OK

DOWNLOAD ALL? OK

**NOTE FROM CONTROL—Anyone with any knowledge regarding sabotage to this system should contact me ASAP. Censorship will not be tolerated!**

# WELCOME TO GERMANY



*Money makes the world go around.*

—Kurt Weill

>>>>>[Because we knew you wouldn't mind, we cut the toadying drek that originally appeared here—you know the type of thing, isn't our country wonderful and we welcome your business be sure to visit all our fabulous tourist traps and don't forget to buy lots of products produced by our benevolent and politically correct megacorps and—well, you get the idea. We decided to cut right to something you'll find useful.]<<<<<<

—Stermul (00:00:20/10/30/54)

>>>>>[Sorry. We usually try to avoid that much cynicism first thing.

Have any of you chummers heard the saying that "work expands to fill the time available?" Well, it certainly did this time. In fact, it overflowed the time available. The following files represent a helluva lot of work, both in Germany and in North America, to get you chummers the straight story on life in the German states of 2054. Or mostly straight, anyway. Aside from the usual electronic comments, these files were written by a few different people, and though they tried for objectivity, we assume a little personal opinion crept in.

"This land of ours," to paraphrase a politician of the past century, is definitely not the paradise people imagined it to be a hundred years ago, but then, it isn't the hell

they envisioned in the 1980s, either. If you know when to get your butt to safety or are satisfied with trideo, SoyPizza, and the established political parties, you will find plenty of places in Germany where you can lead a reasonably comfortable life. For all you non-German readers out there, this document is our way of saying, "Wilkommen," or welcome. Read all there is to read, know all there is to know, and maybe drop by for a visit sometime.

We would also like to apologize to all customers who see their ads in this document appearing months later than originally intended. However, their appearance outside Germany (in translation if you paid the small surcharge), ensures that your advertising money will help drum up tourist biz. To all readers, our hotline is open 24 hours a day, so don't be strangers! As a courtesy to North American readers, we have followed standard practice and flagged European entries with time/date stamps that look like this: 01-APR-54. American entries have the usual 4-1-54 date stamp so that readers can tell where any given comment originated. For those chummers reading this who want to sound like they know what they're talking about, or want to know what they're saying once they step on German soil, we've dropped in a brief glossary and pronunciation guide, taken from an unnamed German corporation's drek-handy guide for visiting suits.

## GLOSSARY

The following glossary includes common German slang terms as well as words for which an equivalent English expression is almost impossible to find. Though most of these words have been in use for a century or more, the glossary also includes a few examples of street slang of more recent vintage. Appropriate pronunciation appears in parentheses after each entry.

**affengeil** (ahfenguile) *adj.* See **geil**.

**AG** *abbr.* "Aktiengesellschaft," meaning stock corporation, and ÖAG, meaning the corp is partly publicly held.

**alter** (ulter) *n.* Literally "old one"; chummer, term, man, and so on, as in "Listen up, alter!" The feminine version is *alte* (ulte).

**basta** (bustah) *n.* An expression borrowed from Italian, meaning "The discussion is closed."

**bölkstoff** (blkstoff) *n.* North German slang for alcoholic beverages, especially beer.

**bulle** (bulla) *n., pl. bullen.* Literally, "bull"; police officer. Most Europeans equate policemen with cattle; for example, the French slang term "vache" means cow.

**deern** (dare-n) *n.* North German term for girl or woman.

**ebbi** (abby) *n.* Colloquial term for the European Cash-free Transactor ECT, the equivalent of an American credstick (derived from the German-language abbreviation EBZ).

**geil** (guile) *adj.* Used in connection with a thing or condition, as in "a geil deck," it means wiz, heavy, and so on. Used in connection with a person, as in "a geil little chica," or oneself, as in "I'm geil," it means sexy or turned on. Sometimes, the variant **goil** (see below) is used to mean wiz. The word **affengeil** is a variant for both meanings.

**GmbH** *abbr.* From "Gesellschaft mit beschränkter Haftung," a limited liability company.

**goil** (goil) *adj.* See **Geil**, above.

**junge** (yoonga) *n.* Literally "boy"; can mean chummer, or serve as a general exclamation of excitement as in "Boy, oh boy!"

**KG** *abbr.* From "Kommanditgesellschaft," limited partnership.

**klampfe** (clumpfuh) *n.* Acoustic guitar; positive or neutral when used by folk singers and their audiences, derogatory when used by most other people.

**kleiner** (cline-er) *n.* Literally, "little one." A condescending form of address. The feminine form is **kleine** (cline-uh).

**kumpel** (koomple) *n.* Buddy; also slang for a miner, especially a coal miner. Used mostly in the Ruhr area.

**Herr Schmidt** (harr shmit) *n.* Equivalent to Mr. Johnson, literally translated "Mr. Smith."

**land** (lund) *n., pl. länder* (lender). Member state(s) of the German Alliance; used before the foundation of the AGS





to denote the states of the former Federal Republic of Germany.

**mann** (munn) *n.* Literally, man; equivalent to the West Indian "mon."

**merde** (mayrd) *n.* A French expression, meaning "shit." This word is one of the few French expressions still used in German slang.

**nakti** (nuck tea) *n.* Member of the extreme right-wing terrorist group Nationale Aktion (National Action).

**nee** (nay) *n.* Low German "no"; used throughout northern and western Germany.

**OHG** *abbr.* From "Offene Handelsgesellschaft," general partnership.

**POM Dependent** *adj.* In decker slang, phase-of-moon dependent means lunatic, crazy.

**shosan** (shozun) *n.* Result. This Japanese term has recently become popular among German riggers.

## PRONUNCIATION

The following guide gives the closest English equivalents for German vowels and consonants. Aside from the letter combinations discussed below, German has no silent letters; an E at the end of a word is pronounced, though usually unstressed. All vowels and umlauts can be drawn out by adding H or by doubling them.

## VOWELS

A is always pronounced like the U in "fun."

E is pronounced as in "set"; the rare EE combination is pronounced as a stretched-out version of the same sound.

I is pronounced like the I in "bit" or "fit." A drawn-out I, as in "beast" or "feet," is written IE.

O is pronounced as in "hot."

U is pronounced as the OO in "look."

AI, AY, EI, and EY are all pronounced like the I in "like" or "bike."

OI is almost inevitably pronounced as two separate letters, rather than as in "oil."

Ä (also written AE) is pronounced like the A in "bad."

Ö (also written OE) is pronounced like the U in "murder."

Ü (also written UE), a sound not used in English, is pronounced like the U in French "cul de sac" or "fumer."

## CONSONANTS

Most consonants are pronounced just as in English, with the following exceptions:

B at the end of a word is usually pronounced like P.

D at the end of a word is usually pronounced like T.

G is always pronounced like the G in "get" or "go." At the end of a word it is usually pronounced like K.

J is pronounced like the Y in "you."

R is rolled in German, like the "r" in a Scottish burr.

A single letter "s" followed by a vowel is always a soft sound, as in "has" or "casino." In contrast to English usage, it is always soft at the beginning of a word and always hard at the end. S followed by a consonant, as in ST or SP, sounds like the "s" in "stop" or "speak" unless it is at the beginning of a word. In that case, it is pronounced like SH in "shop."

SS or ß (a special letter used only in German) both signify an "s" as in "stop." SS is generally used after a short vowel; ß is used mainly after a long vowel, but also after umlauts regardless of their length.

V is generally pronounced like F when in front of E or O.

W is pronounced like the English V.

Z is pronounced TS as in "hits" or "mitts," even at the beginning of words.

The English TH sound does not exist in German. If the letter combination occurs at all, it is pronounced as T.

CH is pronounced like the SH in "shoe" or "shell" after E, I and all umlauts (Ä, Ö, Ü). After A, O, and U, it is pronounced like the CH in Scottish "loch" or "och aye." If followed by another consonant, as in "christian," it is pronounced K just as it is in English. The English CH sound as in "church" is spelled TSCH in German.

SCH is pronounced as a fuller, rounder version of SH.

There you have it. Everything you need to know.]<<<<<<

—Sysop (00:00:23/30-OCT-54)



# FAST FORWARD

*Anything to declare? Weapons? Viruses? Wires? Nothing? Well, it's yer loss, I wouldn't have checked anyways."*

—Typical customs humor

## FACTS AT A GLANCE

**Population:** 98.3 million (299 persons/square kilometer)

Human: 68%

Elf: 3%

Dwarf: 17%

Troll: 8%

Ork: 4%

Other: less than 5%

**Average Life Expectancy:** 59.6 to 107.1 years, depending on income

**Per Capita Income:** EC 31,000 (31,000¥)

**Population Below Poverty Line:** 16%

**On Fortune's Active Traders List:** 1%

**Megacorporate Affiliation:** 16%

**Annual Crime Rate:** 1.6 felonies/100 inhabitants

### Education:

High school diploma or equivalent: 47%

University degree or equivalent: 13%

### Religious Affiliation:

Pagan (Polytheist/Pantheist): 25%

Atheist/Agnostic/Unknown: 14%

German Catholic: 13%

Protestant: 12%

Muslim: 10%

Roman Catholic: 8%

Greek Orthodox/other Christian denomination: 8%

Jewish: 2%

Other: 8%

## GEOGRAPHY AND CLIMATE

The Allied German States (AGS) covers 329,256 square kilometers, lying between 47 and 55 degrees north latitude and 6 and 15 degrees east longitude. The flat plains and forests of the north give way to hill country in the midlands and the south, which extend to the foothills of the German Alps. Germany's highest point, the peak of the Zugspitze mountain, rises 2,959 meters above the ground.



The Gulf Stream gives Germany its moderate climate. The average temperature varies across the country, but has warmed by about 1.5 degrees Celsius over the past few decades. Mild, wet winters offer occasional snowfall as well as a few violent storms; summers are hot and dry, leading to occasional droughts in August. About twice a year, usually near the end of January and sometimes in mid-August, heavy smog collects and hangs over the urban areas of Rhine-Ruhr, Rhine-Main-Neckar, Halle-Leipzig, Berlin, Stuttgart, Nuremberg, and Munich. High ozone concentrations occur spontaneously throughout the year in these same areas, but most often during the summer. Areas along the North Sea coast and the Wattenmeer mud flats belch methane and other polluting gases with increasing frequency.

**GETTING THERE**

>>>>>[Standard tourist drek again, I see. Guess the Germans really do want a few folk to come over. Personally, I'd rather skip the touristy stuff and get to some paydata for those of us in shadowy places. . .]<<<<<<  
 —Matazz (00:10:04/11-18-53)

>>>>>[Pay attention, chummer. This "standard tourist drek" comes in handy for plenty more folk than ugly Americans in loud Hawaiian shirts. Sometimes it's better for a runner to get in by legit routes.]<<<<<<  
 —Austen (01:11:06/11-18-53)

**BY PLANE**

German airports rank among the busiest and safest in the world. The major airports operate at Berlin, Düsseldorf in the Rhine-Ruhr metropex, Cologne/Bonn, Frankfurt, Munich, Stuttgart, and Hamburg. All offer transorbital flights. Because of Berlin's unique status as a free city, its airport rules and regulations differ from those in the rest of Germany.

Average costs for a flight to Germany from various locations appear below. Unless otherwise noted, all prices are in ecus (European currency units). For more information on ecus, see **Currency**, p. 14 of this section. The price given is to Cologne/Bonn from each listed destination; prices for flights to other airports vary by 25 ecus more or less.

**BY TRAIN**

Most train lines into the Allied German States use the Transrapid (TR) maglev monorail system. TR lines travel into Germany from Copenhagen (EC 120), Warsaw (EC 230), Vienna (EC 160), and Zürich (EC 100). Prices listed in parentheses are for fares to Frankfurt, a major German

**AIRFARES TO GERMANY**

City of Origin	Cost (ECU/¥)
Delhi	750
Johannesburg	800
Lisbon	150
London	160
Moscow	400
New York	800
Paris	100
Riyadh	650
Rome	130
Seattle	1,500
Seattle Transorbital	3,000
Sydney	2,200
Sydney Transorbital	3,500
Tokyo	1,900
Tokyo Transorbital	3,100

economic and rail center. Extensions of the Warsaw line to Kiev and the Vienna line to Budapest are under construction, projected to open in 2058. Other train lines go to Paris via the French TGV high-speed rail system and to Rome via the German ECE high-speed rail system. Second-class fares from Paris to Frankfurt are EC 150; to Rome, EC 150. All Transrapid seats are first class; other trains offer first and second class seats, with first-class prices one-and-a-half times higher than the amounts listed above.

**BY CAR**

Despite the rising costs of gasoline, most people traveling within Europe still prefer private cars. The Scandinavian route via Copenhagen and Lübeck provides easy access to the AGS for visitors from the north; to the east, the busiest highways lead to Gdansk and Kaliningrad, Warsaw, and Prague. Going southeast toward Athens, travelers must brave the infamous "Autoput." Always a hazardous route, the Euro-Islamic wars of the 2030s made this trek more dangerous than ever before.

>>>>>[To be precise, the Autoput route should be reserved for potential suicides and trigger-happy rigger wannabes. Professional drivers discard the chrome and install a hidden rocket launcher in the trunk. Extreme caution must be exercised south of Budapest. It's an absolute free-for-all down there, and you never know which self-appointed toll collector you'll have to blow away next.]<<<<<<  
 —Jagdpanther (16:39:05/22-APR-54)

Though the Alpine roads were once heavily traveled, their use has fallen off since the Alpine states began demanding a toll of up to EC 400 per car. Currently, the only way to reach Italy without spending one's entire bank account is via the Rail and Road system, where the car is loaded aboard a train in Rosenheim, Bavaria, for a non-stop trip to Italy via the Brenner rail tunnel. The only roads left open to and from France since the Cattenom nuclear accident are the E77 from Karlsruhe to Nancy and the E102 from Freiburg to Besançon.

Customs formalities represent an absolute minimum at the borders to the United Netherlands, Denmark, the Czech Republic, and Austria, but when traveling to Poland, France, or Switzerland, expect waiting periods of up to several hours. Traveling by train to these countries offers a distinct advantage; officials deal with all formalities during the journey, and the passenger loses far less time to customs.

**BY SHIP**

Ship travel across the Atlantic and the North Sea has become progressively rarer. Of Germany's harbors, only those at Bremen and Hamburg can accommodate passenger traffic, and the number of luxury liners cruising the world's oceans has dwindled over the past few decades.

>>>>[This is, of course, quite apart from the fact that one passenger in three has to be removed from the ship by those nice young men in their clean white coats once the toxic spirits who live in the seas produce their commonest effects. I seem to recall rumors of one or two of those in the North Sea.]<<<<<

—Käpten Kaos (15:55:00/27-OCT-54)

The Baltic Sea, however, supports booming ferry traffic between the German harbors of Kiel, Lübeck, and Rostock and the harbors of Poland, Scandinavia, the Baltic states, and Russia. Travelers with a flexible schedule should consider the solar-driven "sail ferries" whose lower fares make up for the relative length of the trip. Those in need of swifter transportation can book passage on the fast, though expensive hovercraft.

>>>>[Sure, the hovers are fast, but not everyone can get up for the firsthand experience of a race between a passenger ferry and an elven torpedo boat. Those Sassnitz longears just hate hovercraft. . .]<<<<<

—Käpten Kaos (20:20:13/02-JUL-54)

**ON ARRIVAL**

To enter the AGS, travelers from friendly or neutral states generally need only a passport or equivalent travel document. By contrast, visitors from such "unfriendly" states as Aztlan, Amazonia, or those in the Damascus League (Alliance for Allah) must present valid entry visas and complete medical records in addition to passports. Every visitor who plans to pursue a professional career in Germany must submit such appropriate documents as weapon and cyberware licenses, degrees in magical disciplines, other proof of qualification for chosen professions, and so on. Every visitor entering the country receives a green visitor's card that lists the individual's relevant data in writing and machine-readable coding and also contains a holographic portrait and thumbprint. The visitor must carry this card at all times.

Any visitor planning to work within the AGS should, if possible, handle entry requirements through his or her employer. If this is not an option, the German Embassy of the job-seeker's home country can provide the necessary documentation. Most international business partners of the AGS maintain corporate consulates in the German cities of Hannover, Frankfurt, Düsseldorf, Hamburg, and Munich. For information on what items visitors can bring

into the AGS duty-free, travelers should consult the German Embassy in their own country.

**CURRENCY**

The AGS uses three currencies: the ecu or EC (European Currency Unit), the nuyen, and the deutsche mark (DM). Business transactions are usually conducted in ecus or nuyen; in the private sector, the deutsche mark (DM) remains dominant.

The historical roots of this apparent monetary chaos began in 1999, when a concerted effort to create a united European currency established the ecu as legal tender and issued ecu notes and coins. In theory, the German government had planned to phase out the deutsche mark over several years, completely replacing it with the ecu by 2030. Unfortunately for that plan, the Awakening, the VITAS plague, and UGE, as well as the machinations of French astrologers, English druids, and German nationalists had already reduced United Europe to a state where the question of a shared currency was irrelevant. Despite the momentous events that derailed European unification, the ecu remains as an outward sign of European willingness to unite. As for the nuyen, its power is a direct result of the rising strength of the Japanese megacorps and Japan's generous aid in helping to rebuild Europe after the Euro-Wars of the 2030s.

Currently, all non-cash transactions are handled in either nuyen or ecu; the "hard currency" DM remains in use for cash sales. Exchange rates remain stable at 1:1 between nuyen and ecu and at 2:1 for either of those currencies against the DM.

Both DM bills and coins circulate throughout the AGS, though large-denomination coins are slowly supplanting the bills. These standard plastic coins vary in size and color, and are valued at 50 pfennig/DM 0.5 (white), DM 1 (red), DM 2 (blue), DM 5 (white), DM 10 (red), DM 20 (blue), and DM 50 (green). Five and 10-pfennig coins exist, but are quite rare, as are the purple DM 100 and black DM 250 coins. All coins incorporate a microchip, which makes them almost impossible to counterfeit.

Germany does not use the American and Japanese-style credsticks. These must be exchanged for an ECT (European Cash-Free Transactor) at the border.

>>>>[Actually, most Germans call them Ebbis, from the German abbreviation EBZ. That's short for Europäisches Bargeldloses Zahlungsmittel.]<<<<<

—Raghnal (00:11:53/10-NOV-54)

An ECT is an EPROM-carrier about the size of a pack of cigarettes, with a digital readout and a jack for interfacing with an automatic teller. With access to a CredLink, you can use ECTs to transfer money between accounts via the Matrix or even via radio. Like the credstick, ECTs offer various security clearances and classes of credit. Financial

Institutions also offer fixed-value ECTs, the equivalent of certified credsticks.

### TIME AND DATES

Germany runs on Central European Time (CET), one hour later than GMT. However, financial transactions depend on Tokyo Stock Exchange Time (TSET), eight hours ahead of CET. Because of this difference, all banks and most automatic teller machines feature two clocks, each set to a separate time, but in a 24-hour format. As with other European nations, AGS citizens write dates as day/month/year, in contrast to the American month/day/year format.

>>>>>[Don't sweat it. I've taken the liberty of scanning the files and exchanging the numbers for three-letter month codes in all the Euro-entries to avoid confusion. Consider it my belated Christmas gift to all you BBS readers.]<<<<<<

—B. J. (04:25:17/29-DEC-54)

### TRAVEL WITHIN GERMANY

Once inside the Allied German States, visitors have multiple options for traveling. Though maglev train and car remain the most popular modes of transport, air and conventional rail travel are also available.

#### BY AIR

Helicopter trips account for nearly half of all air travel within Germany, with small turboprop airplanes and private jets or airships picking up the rest. Most towns with more than 50,000 inhabitants boast an airport, some quite extensive. Most inland flights have impressive safety records, with the number of crashes and hijackings remaining relatively low within the past year.

Because so many different modes of air travel exist, no general price list is available. As an example, a tourist-class trip from Hamburg to Munich aboard a turboprop costs roughly EC 80. Travelers interested in exact current prices should ask for information at local airports.

>>>>>[That "impressive safety record" means that one out of every hundred thousand flights will hit the ground spectacularly or collide with a military jet in midair. Or maybe one flight in fifty thousand you'll share the ride with a meshugge Nazi or Jihad freak, who's usually carrying a holdout pistol and self-made plastic explosives. Half those skyjackings have a happy ending, one-third are intercepted with acceptable losses, and the remaining 12.5 percent disappear somewhere down Lebanon way or get paid for by Lloyds. . .]<<<<<<

—Daniel Düsentrieb (a.k.a. Gyro Gearloose)  
(01:15:56/22-JUN-54)



#### BY TRANSPRAPHIC MAGLEV

The Transrapid AG maglev trains offer a fast and economical alternative to air travel. Major Transrapid lines include the Copenhagen–Zürich Express from Lübeck via Hamburg and Hannover to Frankfurt, Karlsruhe, and Freiburg; the Copenhagen–Vienna Express to Nuremberg from Berlin via Brandenburg, Hannover, and Dortmund to Cologne or Rijnstaad (Warsaw–Holland Express) and from Lübeck via Berlin and Dresden to Prague. Connecting lines link Hamburg to Bremen, Karlsruhe to Munich via Stuttgart, Ulm, and Augsburg, and Nuremberg to Munich. At least one line, from Dresden via Kassel to Dortmund, is in the planning stage. Fares for Transrapid travel within Germany run roughly 20 percent cheaper than a flight along the same route, and take roughly 20 percent less time.

#### BY CONVENTIONAL RAILWAY

The former federal railway Deutsche Bundesbahn ÖAG maintains an extensive rail network across Germany. It offers various classes of train service, including express, regional, and local trains. ICE/ECE (InterCity Express/EuroCity Express) is equivalent to first class—fast and expensive; InterRegio trains are equivalent to second class; Nahverkehrs-Schnellbahn, or Close Area Trains, offer third class, local service. Every town in Germany, no matter how small, lies within 20 kilometers of a train station.

>>>>>[Could be a really super transport system if they could just get rid of the delays that eat up approximately one-tenth of the planned travel time. . .]<<<<<<

—NN (18:41:59/10-JUL-54)

>>>>>[. . .at least.]<<<<<<

—Jagdpanther (18:48:21/10-JUL-54)

### BY CAR

In Germany, there exists one car for every two inhabitants, which adds up to 49 million automobiles. Though most state governments in the German Alliance have banned private cars from city centers, levied taxes on automobiles, and legislated environmental controls, these measures have done little to curb extensive use of cars for intermediate- and long-distance travel.

The dense German autobahn (highway) network is complemented by an extensive system of well-constructed roads, known as the Bundesstraßen, which are maintained by the confederate government. Many autobahnen offer hoverlanes and numerous service stations supplying energy, batteries, and fossil fuels to drivers. Fuel quality reaches the highest European standards, but comes at a steep price; one liter of all-purpose fuel costs roughly EC 2.50.

>>>>>[That comes to 9.5¥ for a gallon of fuel! Talk about pricey!]<<<<<<

—Rigger Rodney (14:44:10/16-NOV-54)

All autobahnen and Bundesstraßen, as well as many city streets, provide ALI service (Autofahrer Leit und Information system), an electronic driver information- and -guidance system that supplies the car's autopilot with all the necessary data to compute the fastest and most economical route between departure point and destination. While on-line with ALI, independent sub-systems protect cars from collision, allowing the driver and passengers to lean back and relax while enjoying the latest trideo as their car takes them safely from Hamburg to Nuremberg. The autobahn speed limit is 130 kph, dropping to 90 kph for most other roads. Within city limits, the speed limit drops to 30 kph.

>>>>>[A few more points worth noting, people. From 22:00 to 04:30 hours, the autobahnen become combat zones. During that time, anyone on the road can become target practice for bikers or autoduellists, get flattened by a hovertruck cruising by at a cool 200 kph, or be led into an ambush by false, pirate ALI signals. After ten p.m., kill the ALI, turn on your radar, and keep your guns at the ready. And if the Bullen get you, be nice and pay your 200 loops for speeding. If you don't stop for the cops, you're risking an AV rocket up your exhaust pipe.]<<<<<<

—Jagdpanther (19:03:21/20-FEB-54)

## LAWS AND LAW ENFORCEMENT

Though many laws differ widely between the various states of the AGS, the following three areas of legal control apply more or less uniformly throughout the country. Even with regard to weapons, cyberware, and illegal or addictive substances, however, some variations in interpretation and penalties still exist from state to state.

### WEAPONS

Except for small, bladed weapons and tear gas, private citizens may not carry weapons without a special permit. However, some liberal weapon laws enacted following the Euro-Wars provide an interesting loophole. According to the Permission and Carrying of Arms Act, for example, private persons may possess, carry, and use various blades, pistols, and rifles "for self defense and the avoidance of substantive damage." Though a permit is still required for most blades and pistols, it is easier to get one.

In addition to the standard permit, larger-caliber weapons require a Führungszeugnis, a statement signed by the police force of the applicant's hometown stating that he or she has no criminal record. Permits for rifles are generally reserved for hunters, forest rangers, and private security officers; automatic weapons are only available to police and military units. Couriers, private investigators, and members of other similar professional groups occasionally also qualify for these weapons.

Private citizens may not possess military weapons such as machine guns, rocket launchers, tanks, and gunships. Explosives and any weapons capable of mass destruction are likewise restricted. Interpretation of the Permission and Carrying of Arms Act does, however, depend on local jurisdiction. The Länder (states) of Westphalia and Württemberg apply the most restrictive reading of the law, but a private citizen can carry almost any weapon without attracting attention in the Free City of Berlin or the Marienbad Council.

### CYBERWARE

At first glance, AGS statutes regulating cyberware appear less restrictive than in other European states. The AGS permits possession and use of most types of Class A cyberware, and prohibits decking only when likely to cause physical damage or financial losses. Under this liberal state of affairs, system owners whose files contain sensitive data commonly safeguard them with state-of-the-art IC. For the past ten years, deckers and system operators have indulged in an "arms race" between invasive and protective programs.

Despite these tolerant laws, those in favor of tighter regulation can rely on a boost from a rather unexpected source. Any type of machine brought into the AGS must

fulfill the requirements set by the telecommunications monopoly Deutsche Telekom and the Technischer Überwachungsverein (TÜV), a private organization of engineers charged by law with vetting technology for safety. Because these requirements tend to fall behind the state of the art by five years, roughly half the cyberware in current use in Germany is illegal. The sale or use of such items qualifies as a misdemeanor and is punishable by a fine of between EC 500 and 50,000. These requirements render Class B cyberware such as cyberspurs and program-carriers illegal. Cyberguns, retinal duplications, and cortex bombs are considered Class C cyberware, and are prohibited across the board.

As with weapons, the punishment for a crime against these regulations depends on the state in which the offense occurs. Westphalia has the most restrictive laws and largest fines, while Berlin, by contrast, seems like a virtually lawless zone.

### ILLEGAL AND ADDICTIVE SUBSTANCES

Opinions on what constitutes an addictive or personality-enhancing substance remain as divided in 2054 as they have been for the past 100 years. The Dissemination of Personality-Enhancing Substances and Instruments Act of 2049 divides such substances into several classes, with different legal penalties for misuse of each class. The possession of controlled substances, such as chips, is considered a felony in most of Germany, though interpretation of the law and the severity of punishment can vary widely. Possession and use of such Class A substances as alcohol or freely available sedatives such as Equilibrium III, Tranquon Forte, and so on carry no legal penalty, though any Class A substance aside from alcohol may only be sold in specially licensed shops.

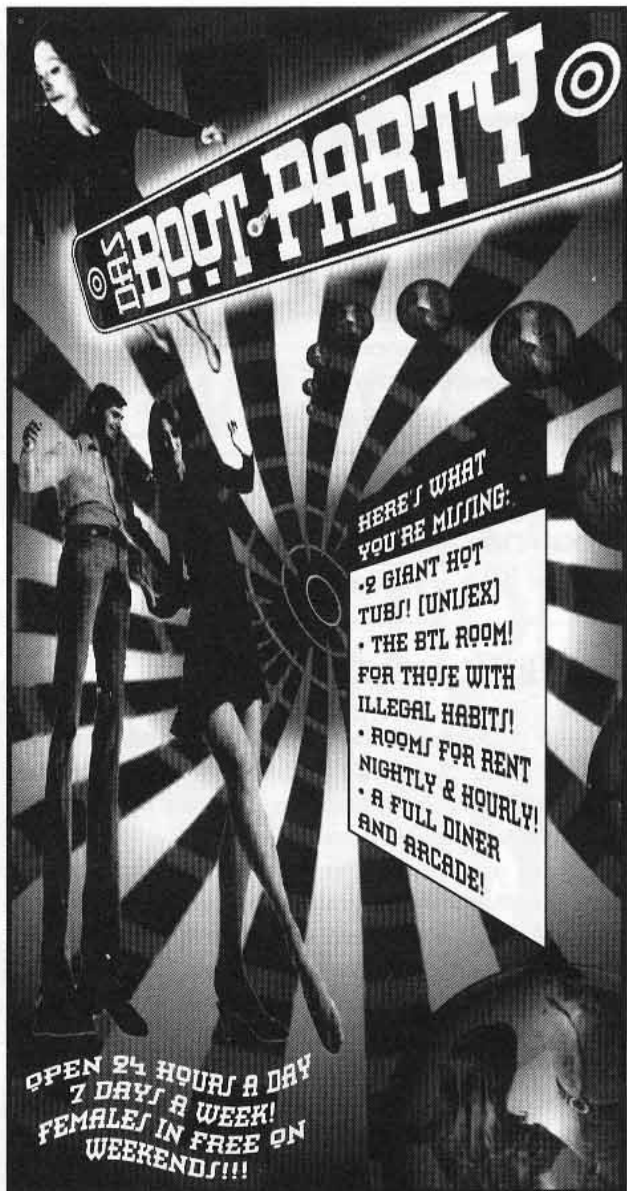
>>>>[Which pay their taxes on time and probably let the BIS check their client files as well.]<<<<<<

—Onkel Doktor (16:09:41/16-JUN-54)

Though the sale of alcohol to minors is prohibited, Germany has no UCAS-style legal drinking age. Minors may, for example, enter bars or pubs where alcohol is served even though they cannot buy a drink. In general, the government considers it the parents' job to keep young children from drinking.

>>>>[What do you expect from Europeans? The heathen influence of their so-called sophistication corrupts their entire society and does not >>1 MP DELETED BY SYSOP<<]<<<<<<

—Hiob (12:05:32/21-SEP-54)



>>>>[Thanks, sysop; if you hadn't done it, I would have. On a saner note, Germans simply have a more relaxed attitude about drink. What else would you expect from a country where beer is considered a staple?]<<<<<<

—Raghnal (00:30:02/10-NOV-54)

>>>>[I've attached a short list of typical offenses against the weapons, cyberware, and controlled-substance laws, as well as the average sentences. Obviously, the exact sentence depends on the judge you get. . .]<<<<<<

—Sandmann (00:50:00/18-MAR-54)

>>>>[. . .and the money you pays. . .]<<<<<<

—Konwacht (00:59:05/18-MAR-54)

>>>>[. . .and the length of your teeth!]<<<<<<

—Roland von Bremen (01:08:18/18-MAR-54)

**WEAPON FINES AND PUNISHMENT TABLE**

**Offense and Fine/Imprisonment**

Weapon Type	Possession	Use	Sale
(A) Small Bladed Weapon	EC 200	EC 1,000	EC 5,000
(B) Large Bladed Weapon	EC 500	EC 2,000	EC 10,000
(C) Blunt Weapon	—	—	EC 5,000
(E) Pistol	EC 2,000/1 yr	EC 3,000/2 yrs	EC 20,000/3 yrs
(F) Rifle	EC 3,000/2 yrs	EC 5,000/3 yrs	EC 30,000/4 yrs
(G) Automatic Weapon	3 yrs	3 yrs	EC 50,000/5 yrs
(H) Heavy Weapon	3 yrs	5 yrs	EC 100,000/10 yrs
(I) Explosives/Ammo	2 yrs	3 yrs	EC 100,000/10 yrs
(J) Military Weapons	5 yrs	5 yrs	EC 100,000/10 yrs
(K) Military Armor	—	EC 1,000	EC 20,000/2 yrs
(CA) Class A Cyberware	—	—	EC 20,000/2 yrs
(CB) Class B Cyberware	EC 5,000/1 yr	1 yr	EC 50,000/5 yrs
(CC) Class C Cyberware	EC 20,000/5 yrs	5 yrs	10 yrs
(M2) BTLs	EC 3,000/2 yrs	—	15 yrs

**VIDPHONE AND THE MATRIX**

The ISDNpro standard developed in Germany in 2041 allowed the German Matrix to integrate vidphone, fax, cable trideo, and simsense dataflows into a single system. Foreign visitors should pay particular attention to the icons representing integrated satellite uplinks and subunits of vidphone and cable trideo services. Approach any red columns and hemispheres with caution; these icons represent cable simsense-feeders and terminals. Entering such a subsystem by accident could prove fatal.

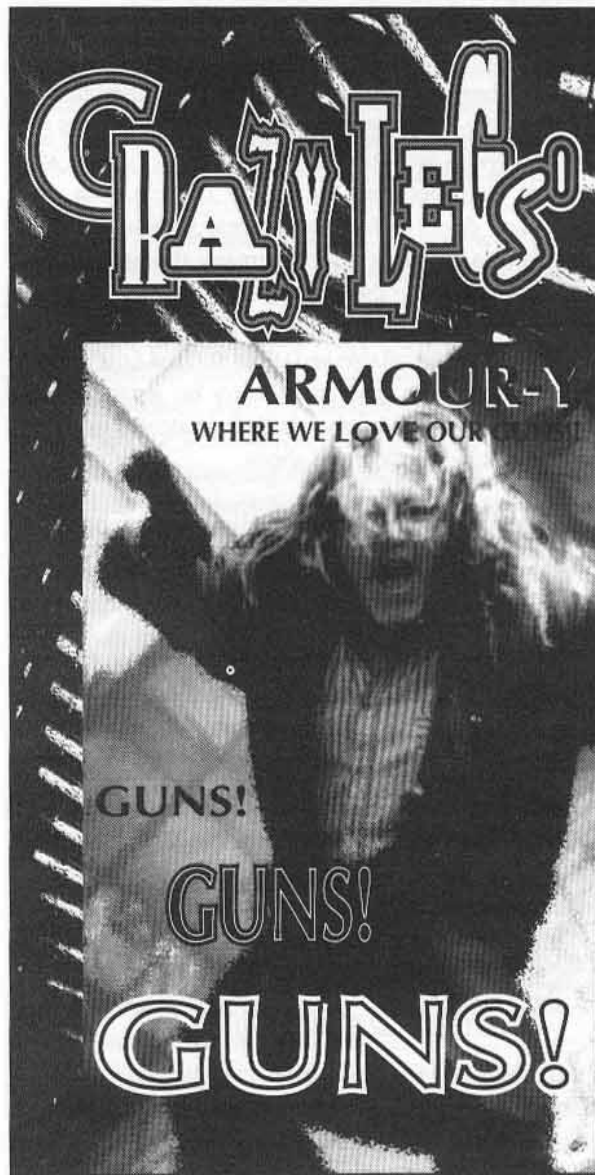
The secession of the South German Länder in 2038 prompted the subdivision of the Matrix into regional and local telecom grids, giving Germany a UCAS-style LTG/RTG system, though the area code (equivalent to an LTG) remains the dominant unit. The following list of RTGs includes area codes for major cities and megacorporate offices, as well as the color-number Matrix security ratings. The RTGs appear in parentheses following the name of the region to which they apply. The user/terminal number may be up to 8 digits long. For example, the SAN of the Confederate Press Office in Hannover can be reached at (01-22) 100-0278.

**Northern Germany (D-01 or 0491, Rating Green-3)**

- Hamburg: Area codes 20/23/24, Rating Green-4
- Berlin: Area codes 10/11/12, Rating Orange-3
- Hannover: Area code 22, Rating Orange-5
- Bremen: Area code 21, Rating Green-5
- Rügen: Area code 19, Rating Orange-5
- Arkoblock 1-4: Area codes 201-204, Rating Red-4

**Southern Germany (D-02 or 0492, Rating Green-4)**

- Munich: Area code 10, Rating Green-4
- Stuttgart: Area code 20, Rating Green-4



Nuremberg: Area code 30, Rating Green-3  
Heidelberg: Area code 40, Rating Green-3

**Rhine-Ruhr (D-03 or 0493, Rating Green-4)**

Essen: Area code 10, Rating Green-4  
Düsseldorf: Area code 20, Rating Green-4  
Cologne: Area code 30, Rating Green-3  
Dortmund: Area code 40, Rating Green-2  
Ruhr University: Area code 44, Rating Orange-4  
Ruhrmetall: Area code 27, Rating Orange-5  
Saeder-Krupp: Area code 11, Rating Red-5

**Greater Frankfurt (D-04 or 0494, Rating Green-4)**

Frankfurt: Area code 10, Rating Orange-3  
Mainz/Wiesbaden: Area code 20, Rating Green-4  
Mannheim/Ludwigshafen: Area code 30,  
Rating Green-4  
Frankfurt Bank Association: Area code 11,  
Rating Red-5  
AG Chemie: Area code 33, Rating Red-5

**SOX (0499, Rating Red-4)**

SOX-ÖffNet: Area code 10, Rating Green-3  
Information about the precise allocation of area codes/  
LTGs coded 11 to 47 is restricted by law.

**EMERGENCY NUMBERS**

The following list provides important emergency services numbers that can be reached from anywhere in Germany. All numbers listed below, as well as all area code 09 numbers, can be called free of charge.

**General Emergency:** Punch 111 or use an emergency column. These black- and yellow-striped columns function like PANICBUTTONS and are liberally distributed throughout the AGS on city streets.

**Emergency Medical Service (BuMoNa):** 909

**League for Metahuman Rights:** (01-10) 3333. The League provides armed protection and legal aid.

**Smog and Allergy Warnings:** 444

**Environmental Hotline:** 447

**Telekom Information Service:** 900

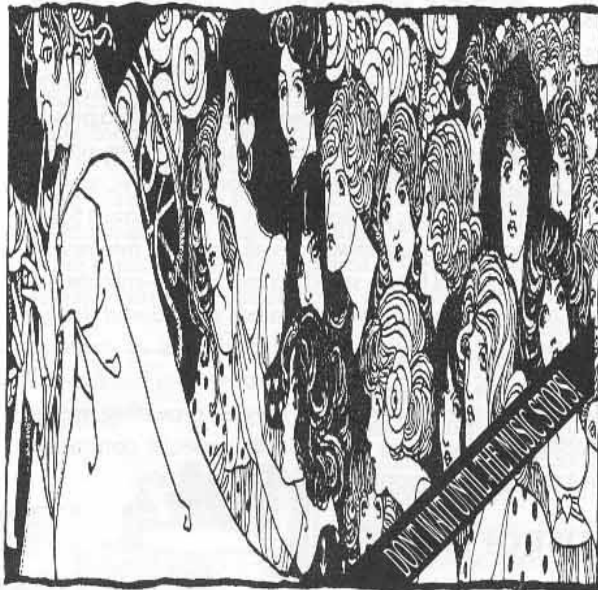
**Tourist Information:** (09) 1122

**Medical Treatment**

Several private and public organizations throughout the AGS provide medical treatment in both emergency and non-emergency situations. All German citizens pay for casualty service and general medical treatment through social security. Because the treatment available through public insurance is generally minimal, foreigners may wish to consider buying or retaining private insurance coverage during their stay.



THE GREATER CITY OF HAMLIN PRESENTS  
**LUGWID GANS**  
**WAGNER'S**  
**PRODUCTION**



**RATS!**  
**THE MUSICAL**  
PIPING INTO A THEATRE NEAR YOU.

**WHEN PARTS  
AREN'T JUST  
PARTS,  
THEY'RE YOURS!**

**BuMoNa**  
MEDICAL MATERIAL DISTRIBUTION SERVICES

**BUND für NOTFALL-ARZTEINSATZ**

**BuMoNa**

The only nationwide medical emergency service available to visitors is the Bund für Mobilen Notfall-Arzt-Einsatz (BuMoNa), loosely connected to DocWagon and Careline. Visitors insured by BuMoNa receive an emergency monitor supplied by their nation's embassy for the duration of their visit to Germany. BuMoNa insurance costs EC 30,000 annually, and its service includes tissue-cloning to provide replacement organs needed as a result of severe injury or the production of multiple organs for cryogenic storage. As with DocWagon, BuMoNa units arrive within 15 minutes of receiving an emergency call, and one free resuscitation is included in the standard fee. The 15-minute time limit applies even within those areas considered dangerous because of environmental conditions or excessive violence, but does not cover war or revolution. BuMoNa also offers a special service for mages, providing magical healing in a BuMoNa clinic. Such a special contract for mages costs a whopping EC 50,000 annually.

**COST OF LIVING**

In general, the cost of living in Germany is cheaper than in the UCAS. Food, clothing, accommodations, transportation, vehicles, and magical equipment are cheaper, while domestic and Japanese products tend to cost less than UCAS imports. However, electronics and weapons can cost considerably more. Weapon prices vary according to the merchandise in question and the local possession laws. German-produced cyberware, cyberdecks, and programs cost almost twice as much as Japanese or American imports, but tend to be of higher quality. The following list provides the average cost of common services. Prices may vary by area or city section.

**FOREIGN PRODUCTS**

Domestic variants of foreign products are generally available for 90-120 percent of standard price, as shown on the table.

**AVERAGE EXPENSES FOR ONE PERSON**

Coffin hotel	EC 5-40
Single room w/breakfast	EC 50-300+
Single room w/three meals a day	EC 200-1,000+
Chip shop meal	EC 2
Fast food restaurant meal	EC 5-25
Lunch at moderate restaurant, including tip	EC 40-200
Dinner at three-star restaurant, including tip	At least EC 250
Rental car, per day	EC 30+
Cab ride, inner city	EC 5 (approx.)
Bus or train ticket, InterRegional	EC 5/day
Entry to museum	EC 3 (approx.)
Ticket to rock concert/ soccer game	EC 15-50

**FOREIGN PRODUCT COSTS**

Product Type	Cost (% of standard price)
Weapons	200
Security Electronics	150
Entertainment Electronics	80-120
Cyberware*	
Japanese	100
American	200
Vehicles	
Japanese	90
American	200

\*See **Cyberware**, p. 16.

# HISTORY

**T**he real history is in my appointment book, but I guarantee you won't get your hands on that.

—Dr. Viktor Platen, former Chairman of the Board, AG Chemle

## PRELUDE

The rise of the Sixth World opened a tumultuous chapter in Germany's history. Economic collapse, environmental tragedy, and political instability marked the millennium and the beginnings of the 21st century for our country. Despite disaster upon disaster, Germany has somehow endured. And it is by looking to the past that we will build the Germany of the future.

>>>>[Such praise for such degeneration.]<<<<<  
—Dark Father (08:20:17/13-AUG-54)

The economic collapse of the Ruhr area just prior to the turn of the century heralded the nightmare events to come. Years of economic and political neglect led to the area's ruin in the 1990s. Though the federal government belatedly recognized the danger and pumped billions of deutsche marks into the region hoping to attract new investors to what remained of its economy, the effort failed. Too much of the local population had already migrated to southern Germany and the eastern Länder in search of jobs and security, leaving the sudden influx of government money little on which to build.

High unemployment and sporadic shortages of necessary goods led to bloody unrest in the Ruhr cities of Dortmund, Herne, and Essen. Hundreds died, and the few employers brave enough to consider investment in the

troubled Ruhr region backed off in the face of the violence. The Party of Democratic Socialism (PDS), successor to the ruling Communist SED of what had once been East Germany, managed a remarkable success in their last election as an independent party, but a return to communism could not stave off collapse. Within the first decade of the 21st century, the economic rot would spread beyond the Ruhr to engulf other parts of Germany.

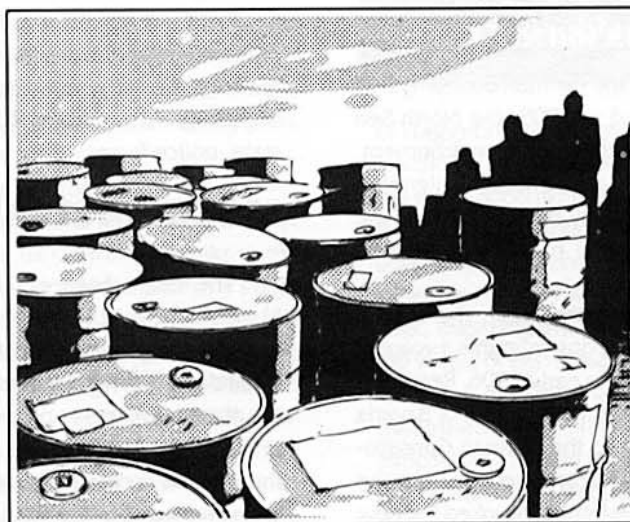
## FIRST ACT: THINGS TO COME

Between 2001 and 2004, a series of environmental catastrophes struck the Federal Republic of Germany. Long-forgotten landfills in the former East Germany began to leak poisons of every description into the ground water, leading the government to evacuate and seal off wide areas of the eastern Länder. Within a few weeks of these evacuations, a second area of Germany succumbed to environmental catastrophe when the Baltic Sea be-

came so poisoned with the brown sludge of toxic, caustic chemical deposits that the surrounding communities could no longer survive. It was not long before the advance of global warming and the cumulative effects of pollution triggered the same collapse in the North Sea, affecting the seaboard regions of Germany, Denmark, and the Netherlands. Political changes followed in the wake of the ecological nightmare, with a coalition of the social-democratic SPD and the liberal, ecology-minded Bündnis 200

(Compact 2000) sweeping the federal elections of 2002. Unfortunately, the changing of the political guard proved to be too little, too late.

On November 19, 2003, the worst flash flood in recorded history struck the North Sea regions of Germany,



bathing wide swaths of Hamburg as well as eastern and western Frisia in oily sewage. Though the government shut down the nuclear plants along the Lower Elbe River in time to prevent an even worse catastrophe, thousands died in the flood and then from chemical poisoning in the weeks following the disaster.

The North Sea catastrophe prompted the government to shut down all remaining German nuclear plants by the end of 2004. Despite the long-term benefits of this move, the speed of the operation created its own problems. At Biblis, near Mannheim in southern Germany, engineers working too quickly to close the plant released small amounts of radioactive gases into the atmosphere. An investigation of the incident, completed in 2007, reported that the complex had come within a hair's breadth of a meltdown.

In May 2005, political and social tensions in Eastern Europe erupted into the Border Wars, extended skirmishes between Russia, Ukraine, Poland, and the Baltic states that lasted almost six months and claimed 15,000 lives. The war in the east prompted Germans living uncomfortably near the conflict to migrate to Germany's southern and western regions. Refugees from the warring countries joined this flight. The Russian Republic's losses in the war bolstered isolationists within her government, which in turn brought calls for secession from the other members of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), from Siberia, and from other semi-autonomous areas of Russia. Its neighbor's turmoil affected the German economy, pounding one more nail into the lid of the coffin. Though the German government worked diplomatically to try to persuade the members of the CIS to resolve their differences and to strengthen their external economic ties, the damage to the German economy had already been done. By the end of 2005, the North Sea catastrophe, widespread despoiling of the environment, and the Border Wars had created such a flood of migration from northern and eastern Germany that the cities of the south could no longer handle the massive population explosion.

In an effort to maintain its voter base, the federal government passed legislation giving migrants a voice in local as well as general elections in early 2006. Responding angrily, the overburdened southern Länder of Bavaria and Baden-Württemberg went to the German Constitutional Court in Karlsruhe, threatening to secede from the Federal Republic unless the government revoked the new election law. This ultimatum triggered widespread protests that swiftly escalated beyond control. Pro-migrant politicians were gunned down in the streets in broad daylight, inflation rose dramatically, and for the first time in its history the deutsche mark dropped in value against other currencies.

>>>>>[Based on what I think I know about the Germans, I'll bet that fraggged more people than the rioting did. The Germans have always been very proud of their economy.]<<<<<

—Gelfin (08:01:14/11-09-54)

The general elections in July of 2006 gave a slim majority to a coalition of candidates from the leftist social democrat SPD and the USPD (Independent German Socialist Party), members of Bündnis 2000, and a few communists. Within months, however, the fledgling government found itself at loggerheads with Germany's powerful megacorporations. The corps, disturbed by government activities they perceived as threats to their operations, began to exert economic pressure to force the government to back down. At the same time that various pro-corporate legal decisions in the United States were extending corporate power throughout the world, the German government was succumbing increasingly to corporate involvement in its affairs. For example, the Berlin election of 2007 gave the city a government comprised almost entirely of cronies of the Daimler-Benz corporation.

By mid-2008, the coalition government collapsed under its inability to have any effect on the eighteen-month social and economic crisis. The USPD broke from the coalition, and the SPD filled their places by entering into partnership with the Christian Democratic Union. All this political maneuvering brought no change to Germany's miserable economy, however. Wildcat strikes continued, riots raged in the streets, and the people's demands became more and more radical. In an attempt to maintain its increasingly precarious control, the government began to rely heavily on the Federal Border Guards (Bundesgrenzschutz, or BGS) and Länder, or individual state, police forces.

## SECOND ACT: APOCALYPSE

The death knell of German democracy tolled on March 4, 2009. At 3:58 a.m., the nuclear plant at Cattenom in the French province of Lorraine lost both its primary and secondary cooling systems. Despite heroic attempts by the plant's workers to prevent disaster, meltdown began at 9:31 p.m. At 10:05, the superheated uranium burned through the containment vessel, within minutes producing a highly explosive gas. At 10:08, Block 2 of the plant exploded, releasing a radioactive cloud. Prevailing southwesterly winds blew the toxic cloud across the countryside and into nearby provinces of both France and Germany. Though at first hamped by the sheer magnitude of the disaster, German and French authorities eventually managed to evacuate the entire Saarland, the province of Lorraine, and the tiny nation of Luxembourg.

>>>>[Fact is, the first news of the accident to come through on the radio set off a mass panic that probably killed more people than the meltdown. People butchered each other just trying to get on the trains going out, and the roads were filled with the burning wrecks of massive pileups stretching for dozens of kilometers.]<<<<<

—Old Man (06:54:11/12-OCT-54)

According to official sources, the meltdown claimed 37,241 immediate victims. By the year 2045, victims of radiation sickness brought on by the disaster brought the toll to 135,728.

>>>>[Of which a total of 780 were still alive and hurting in 2053.]<<<<<

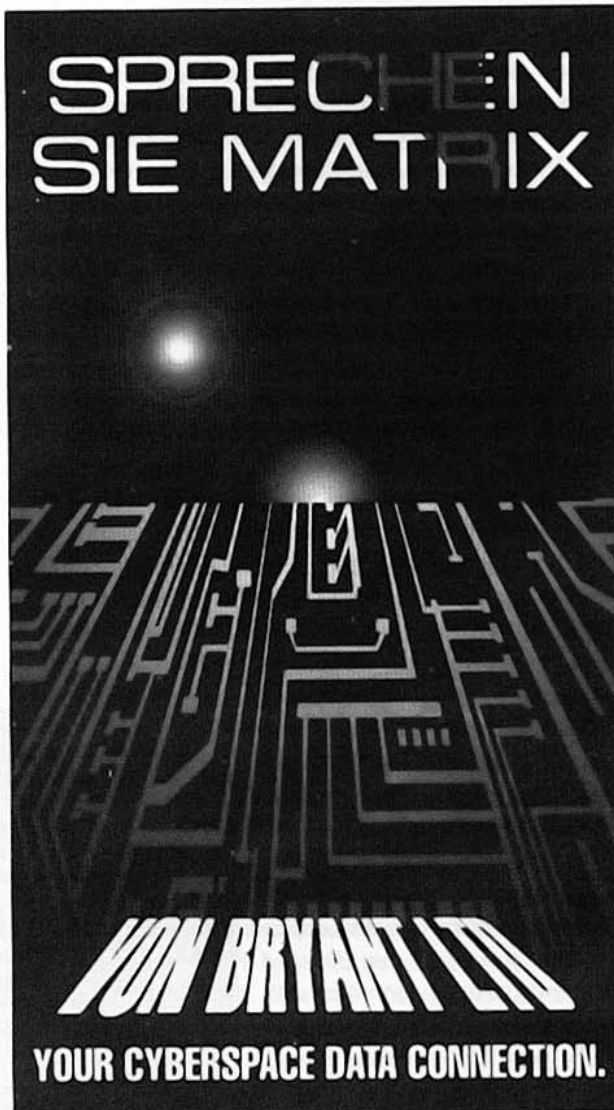
—Old Man (08:09:33/12-OCT-54)

The government declared the Saarland and the nearby administrative district of Trier disaster areas. Refugees from the stricken region flooded the Rhineland-Palatinate, the southern part of Hesse near the city of Frankfurt, and northern Baden-Württemberg. The government declared these areas eligible for disaster relief as well, but confronted with another influx of immigrants, Bavaria and Baden-Württemberg carried out their threat to secede.

On April 29, 2009, the Federal government struck back. Vesting its power in a military council chaired by General Horst Stöckter, the government dissolved all parliaments and Länder governments and established martial law. Amazingly, the population barely resisted. Only in secessionist Bavaria did the local police resist attempts to confiscate their weapons and efforts to occupy the Munich state chancellery, the seat of Bavaria's government. By May 4, however, the Bavarian resisters had surrendered, giving General Stöckter's military junta control of the entire German nation.

As the military began to consolidate its power over increasingly vociferous international objections, the first wave of the VITAS pandemic hit Germany. Thanks to the quarantine imposed by the military and to Germany's high level of medical care, the death toll was relatively low except in areas overpopulated by refugees from the evacuated Saarland. By the end of 2010, more than 4.5 million people had died of the mysterious, deadly disease. The German economy ground to a screeching halt, for some months teetering on the edge of its worst crisis since the ruinous inflation of 1923. The Stöckter government kept strikes and revolts to a minimum by providing free food and shelter for VITAS survivors, but the ever-worsening situation whittled away at the military regime's control.

As the VITAS plague decimated entire populations, the ravaged Earth struck back against centuries of human carelessness. On February 9, 2011, hurricane-force winds



of staggering power pushed the poisoned waters of the North Sea into the mouth of the Elbe River, precipitating the worst flood in human history since the Biblical deluge. In the midst of frantic evacuations, the dikes of North Frisia burst and the dams of the Dutch IJsselmeer gave way. When the tainted waters flowed back out to sea a week later, they brought with them most of the Netherlands, the whole of East Frisia, and large parts of North Frisia. The land that remained lay buried under toxic sludge that made the marches uninhabitable. The catastrophe claimed almost half a million lives, and nearly 45 million people in the Netherlands, Belgium, Germany, and Denmark lost their homes. In the city of Hamburg, the waters never receded, earning it the nickname "Venice of the North." With the city's legitimate economy shattered by the flooding, Hamburg developed a black-market economy that would turn it into a smuggler's paradise within a few short years. The flooding also hit defunct nuclear plants at Brunsbüttel and Brokdorf, turning the ruins into radioactive time bombs.

Though the military government's heavy-handed relocation and reconstruction measures sparked widespread resistance, no one can deny that the effort helped prevent tens of thousands of additional deaths. General Stöckter decreed a restructuring of the federal Länder, uniting the northern Länder of Schleswig-Holstein, Mecklenburg-West Pomerania, Lower Saxony, Bremen, and the northern part of Saxony-Anhalt to form the North German Federation. The military council also established the Special Legislative Zone in the Saar (SOX).

Germany's megacorporations took advantage of the chaos and subsequent reconstruction to absorb countless smaller companies and expand their own empires. Telecommunications, information, and computer-related businesses and industry settled mostly in southern Germany, leaving the North German Federation to heavy industry, agribusiness, and mid-level corporations pursuing high technology. On November 23, 2011, the Treaty of Passau settled all remaining disputes about the rights of national and international corporations, effectively guaranteeing extraterritoriality to any corporation larger than a certain size. With this treaty, the megacorporations had become the most powerful force in the new Germany.

## AWAKENING

On December 24, 2011, sightings of the first dragons and paranormal creatures heralded the dawn of the Sixth World. These creatures first appeared in areas of great and ancient power: in the Eifel and Harz mountains, the Bohemian Forest (Böhmerwald), the Giant Mountains (Riesengebirge), and the Allgäu Mountains. Though initially given little credence, the sightings received respectful attention as reports of similar occurrences began coming in from all over the world. By early 2012, four great dragons—Lofwyr, Nebelherr, Kaltenstein, and Feuerschwinge—had each appeared at least once in Germany. Kaltenstein disappeared before the end of 2012, apparently killed by Lofwyr and Nebelherr. Within two years, Feuerschwinge also disappeared, though rumor now places him in Iceland. Nebelherr retreated to the Eifel and Harz mountains, and Lofwyr involved himself in human affairs. Eventually, this great dragon would become lord and master of the Saeder-Krupp Electrical and Mechanical Corporation.

Throughout 2012, the media increasingly devoted their headlines to stories about magical occurrences, especially sightings of dragons and new nature spirits and elementals. Other new species such as barghests and devil rats also emerged, but their appearance was attributed not to the rise of magic but to mutations caused by the nuclear meltdown at Cattenom. When the first wave of Unexplained Genetic Expression (UGE) in 2021 produced a disproportionate number of dwarfs, many scientists at first believed they were also victims of nuclear

disaster rather than as harbingers of the Sixth World. In a backlash against the startling, frightening global changes wrought by the Awakening, vast numbers of people sought the comfort of religion and joined the Ecumenical Devotion Movement and Catholic fundamentalist groups. By 2014, slightly less than half the German population belonged to major religious organizations. Others explained the Sixth World's unsettling magical phenomena in scientific terms, distancing themselves from religion by doing so.

The year 2014 also saw the first active use of magic within Germany, by the Sinti and the Roma. Also known as gypsies, the Roma had begun settling permanently in Germany at the turn of the century and become German citizens. Scorned until now for their association with magic, the gypsies welcomed the new respectability that the rise of true magic brought them. Magically active members of the neo-feminist and nature-faith movements also took advantage of the power of true magic. Differing theological and philosophical explanations for the apparent reality of magic led to a split in many religious communities, the most bitter of which occurred within the German Catholic Church. Immediately following the Bishops' Conference of April 2014, the diocese of Münster broke from Rome and proclaimed itself the center of the True Church of the Lord God and His Saints. Rejecting the very idea of magic, this conservative diocese could not stomach even the Vatican's limited, cautious acknowledgment and tolerance of the world's newest source of power. The religious conflicts arising from this schism escalated into open violence on several occasions, prompting the final separation of church and state in Germany. Much to the chagrin of the Münster church, Roman Catholicism remained dominant among German Catholics.

## DEMOCRATIC RESTORATION

On August 22, 2014, parliamentary elections organized by the Military Council returned Germany to a form of democratic government. That didn't prevent such emergency laws as the loosening of the federal structure and the enhanced rights of large corporations from remaining enshrined in the new German Constitution, however. Despite the apparent return to democracy, social unrest continued and even escalated in certain areas.

The capital city of Berlin, the economic center of northern Germany, became a hotbed of political violence. Trying to quell the rebellion, the government declared Berlin an exclusion zone and encircled it with military units in April 2015, but the troops weren't able to keep motorcycle hooligans and mobs from the city's impoverished outlying areas from plundering Berlin and its fashionable suburbs. In an eerie echo of an earlier, darker time, the government constructed a temporary wall around

Berlin, Potsdam, Oranienburg, and a few other suburbs. The walled city's only remaining connections with the outside world were the heavily patrolled Transrapid and ECE high-speed train links and Berlin's three airports.

Except for the besieged Berlin, the years from 2015 to 2020 passed in relative quiet. Under newly elected Chancellor Meißner, the federal government launched a giant reconstruction program largely financed by the megacorporations. The United States pulled large numbers of troops out of Germany in order to fight its war against the Native Americans in 2016 and 2017, but most Germans hardly noticed their absence. Native American sympathizers occasionally demonstrated in front of or even attacked American embassies and institutions, but the American conflict provoked little strong public reaction. The German media scene showed brief excitement over the introduction of ASIST (Artificial Sensory Induction System) technology in 2018, but the euphoria over the new "simsense" quickly died down as the new technology became increasingly commonplace.

German shipping had begun to decline before 2020, as toxic spirits began to turn up more and more frequently in the North Sea. In 2021, the government declared the North Sea too polluted for widespread commercial use. Essential shipping lanes were kept open by special cleanup vessels, but most shipping companies switched to computerized ships for North Sea journeys, using live crews only for transatlantic voyages. The appearance of high-performance solar cells on the market in mid-2021, together with the use of ecologically sound building practices and the constantly shrinking power requirements of household appliances, began to change Germany's power supply from a centralized to a decentralized system. Having spent the previous five years rebuilding its shattered society, Germany finally seemed on the road to recovery when another crisis struck.

In mid-2021, about 15 percent of Germany's citizens underwent sudden, violent physical changes. Though some victims died in screaming agony, the rest became nightmarish creatures popularly dubbed orks and trolls. Though this "goblinization" was occurring throughout the world,

Germany—for reasons still unknown—produced a disproportionate number of trolls. At first, the victims of goblinization were treated like lepers. Some people even proposed establishing camps for them, a policy widely applauded by the general public. The goblinized Germans met this threat by organizing the now-legendary Mutant's Congress in Cologne, during which they threatened open revolt against the rest of German society if it dared to so set them apart. The situation might have gotten completely out of hand had not the second wave of VITAS chosen that moment to hit Germany.

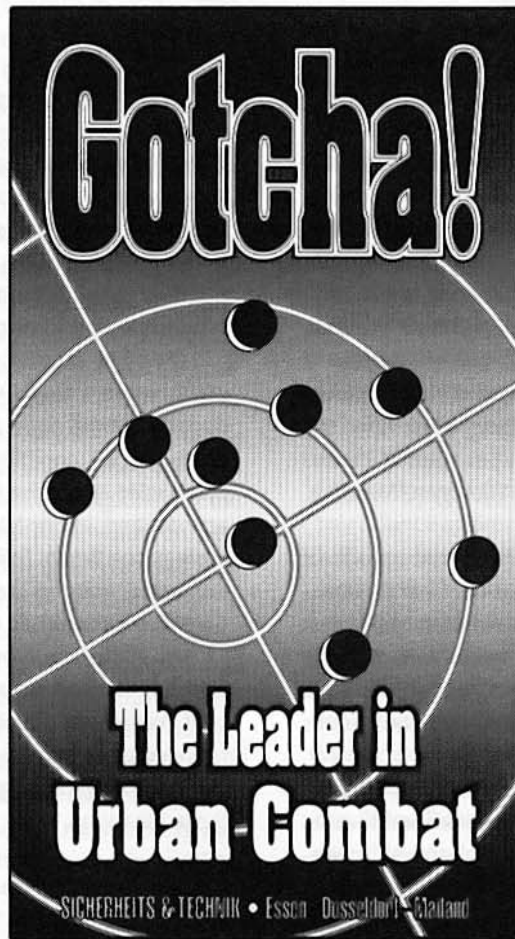
### THIRD ACT: FALSE DAWN

The ominous specter of death cast by the second wave of the VITAS plague silenced the voices of racism. This time the plague claimed 371,044 lives, but this was far less than the death toll of its virulent predecessor. As the world returned to a semblance of normal, the briefly

interrupted social unrest resurfaced with a vengeance. Demonstrations and street fights were breaking out everywhere, especially in Berlin. The capital city, whose slow slide into anarchy had begun in 2015, was now a lawless jungle of glass and chrome corporate high-rises and gigantic, government-built office blocks. In October 2022, members of the federal government quietly packed their bags and slipped away to Hannover to set up government anew in a kinder environment. Parliament followed in the spring of 2023. On April 29 of that year, Berlin exploded into violence and anarchy. With no real law enforcement left to stop the rioters, the ensuing chaos left 14 dead, more than 2,000 injured, 14,000 arrested, and damage estimated in the billions of deutsche marks.

The government's move to Hannover in the North German Federation provoked angry protest from the leaders of the Bavarian Länd. To placate the powerful southern state, federal authorities guaranteed Bavaria the right of veto over certain

decisions. Though this move quieted the protests, it would prove a costly mistake.





By the end of 2022, several German mages had formed the Doctor Faustus Society to campaign for recognition of hermetic magic as a science. A full six years later, they finally got their wish. After navigating a bureaucratic maze that included the Research of Paranormal and Paramedical Phenomena Act, the Enactment of Patent Law vs. Magical Formulas Decree, and the Control and Release of Paranormal, Parabiological, Magical, and Noncorporeal Entities Act, the University of Heidelberg established the first professorship of magic in 2028. Between 2028 and 2032, the universities of Göttingen, Tübingen, Marburg, and Berlin followed suit.

Though Berlin had survived the initial spasm of violence prompted by the federal government's abandonment, the former capital continued to suffer unrest throughout the 2020s. While the citizens rioted in the streets, members of the Senate, composed of both state and city government officials sponsored by the various megacorps, squabbled over petty divisions of power. Strikes repeatedly brought public services to a standstill, and greater numbers of the city's impoverished masses turned to anarcho-syndicist and neo-anarchist movements. When the city government used the paramilitary Federal Border Guards to suppress a public transport strike that coincided with the occupation of Berlin's universities, it was like throwing a lighted match into a powder keg. The city erupted in a virtual civil war that claimed hundreds of lives over several weeks, yet did not seriously affect the city's economy. Confident that their pocketbooks were safe no matter what happened, city

government officials saw no reason to change their ways. Those who could afford it ignored the violence in the streets while enjoying the new simsense cinemas or exotic designer chips. As long as the rich and jaded still got their piece of the pie, they left the men in charge of business and politics to their devices.

Another plague struck the planet on February 8, 2029, when a worldwide computer virus attacked and destroyed both state and corporate computer files. The Crash of '29 annihilated many of Germany's smaller companies and those that depended on electronic transactions and information exchange, especially ones in crisis-prone Berlin. Following the Crash, a second wave of corporate mergers set the foundation of modern-day Germany's economic structure.

In 2030, the North German Federation began resettlement of the devastated North Sea shore. The newly built habitats at Groningen, Emden, and Bremerhaven, financed by a German-Dutch-Japanese combine, became the foundation of the giant Arkoblocks now looming over those locations.

>>>>[Renraku owns about 25 percent, Sumitomo, Shell, and S-K about 15 percent each, and AG Chemie and ZetalmpChem own about 10 percent each. The remaining 10 to 15 percent of the ownership is still in question.]<<<<<

—MonopolyMan (21:09:44/23-JUN-54)

## FOURTH ACT: EURO-WARS

On May 19, 2031, Russian forces attacked central Europe. Desperate to secure vital industrial and agricultural resources, the Russians steamrolled across Belorussia and invaded Poland. Though the Poles put up fierce resistance, the Russian Air Force's brutal, unrelenting hammering of the Polish ground positions slowly broke the Polish lines. In August of that year, Warsaw fell to the Russian Army even as Germany and the remnants of NATO debated the proper response to Russian aggression. The collapse of Warsaw forced NATO to take action. Despite the lack of American and British troops that for so long had bolstered Germany's armed forces, Germany and NATO began to mobilize for a counterattack. Even a Russian strike against bases in eastern Germany as mobilization was just beginning could not slow the Allied war machine. The Russian offensive lost momentum, and for much of 2031, the fighting slowly ground into deadlock as attrition took its toll. In diplomatic efforts, the Russians negotiated with a provisional government of questionable legitimacy for the surrender of Poland in early 2032.

In late 2032, Russian forces broke the stalemate by launching a sudden, well-coordinated air strike against Berlin. Caught by surprise, the Allied force attempted to regroup and repulse this new threat, but the Russians took advantage of Allied confusion and disarray to press the offensive on all fronts. Spurred into action by Russian gains, the previously uncommitted British deployed ground forces into the flooded Netherlands and other Low Countries "to protect British interests." Russia responded with a declaration of war against Britain, threatening nuclear escalation of the conflict.

Then, in the wee hours of January 23, 2033, precision-guided missiles from a fleet of unidentified bombers shattered the scattered main and field headquarters of the Allied Forces and the Russian Army. Meanwhile, unidentified commandos were also murdering several hard-liner officers on both sides while the Matrix grids used by the military of both factions were succumbing to attack by a virulent expert system. Within hours, the disintegration of the combatants' command and control structures effectively ended the major fighting of the Euro-Wars, though lower-level conflict continued to simmer for years. Though no one has ever conclusively identified the bombers and commandos responsible for the attack, most believe that the forces in question were British *Nightwraiths* and SAS commandos.

>>>>[That is, of course, the German opinion—others differ. Two facts cannot be ignored, however. First, the attacks occurred through conventional means; no significant level of magic was used. Second, those responsible for all three phases of the attack—air, commando,

and Matrix—knew who to attack, where, and when. This suggests considerable inside information about *both* sides.

Who could do this? Who had the capability? You got me.]<<<<<

—Ranger (02:10:41/12-04-54)

The first part of the Euro-Wars ended almost without change to the European borders of 2030, except for a loss of German territory to the newly founded County of Rügen. The human cost of this pointless conflict, however, ran high: approximately 250,000 dead and four times that number wounded. The war brought new governments to both Germany and Russia. In Germany, the citizens voted in a USPD and ESP (European Social-Democratic Party) coalition, while the Democratic Recovery Alliance came to power in Russia. In conquered Poland, a so-called "Consolidation Council" governed under the watchful eye of the Russian military. Shortly afterward, the Council re-established the long-defunct Polish monarchy.

Unfortunately for Europe, this brief calm did not last. A number of Islamic states also experienced violent upheavals during 2032, giving way to fundamentalist rule. One resulting alliance that included Turkey invaded Europe through the Balkans, forcing Russia to post the bulk of her troops on her southern borders and ending much of the sporadic fighting of the continuing Euro-Wars. In early 2034, Germany's elite MET2000 together with a combined force of Hungarian, Czech, Austrian, and Ukrainian troops halted the Islamic invaders, though they could not roll back their territorial gains. The German MET2000, deployed for the first time in this conflict, acquitted itself with such distinction that many Germans believe that these forces won the battle for Europe.

The end of the Euro-Wars saw several new European states emerge, among them a reborn Austro-Hungarian Empire formed from the Austro-Hungarian-Czech military alliance against the Muslims. In the southern Balkans, half conquered and half free, a patchwork of Islamic city-states and Christian enclaves sprang up.

The hordes of refugees displaced by the Euro and Islamic wars converged mainly on Germany, producing a greater influx of immigrants into that country than at any other time in its history. Persecuted metahumans from the Islamic countries as well as ethnic minorities from the republics of the former Soviet Union poured into Berlin, the Rhine-Ruhr Megaplex, and Hamburg. Needless to say, this flood of poverty-stricken, displaced humanity placed severe, additional strain on the ailing German economy.

## FIFTH ACT: NO REST FOR THE WICKED

The end of the Euro-Wars brought no real stability to Germany. Though a wealthy Japan offered increasingly generous amounts of aid, Japanese money came with strings attached. In a backlash against increasing Japanese control, many European automotive and electronics firms merged to form multinational combines. Automakers Opel, Peugeot, Lancia, Skoda, and DAF merged into EMC, and the firms of Siemens, Nixdorf, Philips, and many others became the electronics giant ECC Eurotronics. Though these nascent megacorporations helped wean Germany from dependence on Japanese money, the German government had traded one master for another. The price for the megacorps' propping up of the economy was that they would no longer bow to government authority except in name.

Citizens alarmed by the Euro-Wars began arming themselves at a frantic pace. Street hawkers sold Kalashnikovs and Uzis on every corner, and public opinion polls showed that one in two Germans kept a pistol under their pillows. The lax arms laws enacted during the wars furthered the downward spiral toward a society armed to the teeth.

The trend toward a fully armed German society took an unexpected and sinister turn at the International Automotive Show of 2037, when Opel, Mercedes, and BMW offered automobiles equipped for operation by riggers for the first time. These armed and armored street models shot to the top of the market, and the autobahnen became battlefields for street gangs and auto-jousters. The borders between north and south Germany and between the North German Federation and Westphalia quickly developed into hotspots, where the gangs took advantage of the neighboring police forces' refusal to cooperate with each other and committed their mayhem unchecked.

In addition to the literal arms race, a figurative one took shape in the arena of computer security. During the mid-2030s, cyberdecks appeared in greater numbers, leading to a sharp rise in electronic break-ins. Data owners countered with increasingly effective electronic security measures. When the first lines of the ISDN2 Euro Grid became active in June 2036, the familiar technological race between offense and defense turned in a whole new direction. The debut of the new German Matrix escalated the pace of software development and gave German electronic firms a much-needed boost.

Politically, the years 2035 to 2038 saw a growing independence among the southern Länder of Baden-Württemberg, Bavaria, Rhineland-Palatinate, and Greater Frankfurt. It began with those states enacting stricter border controls and then imposing customs duties and limits on immigration. Too exhausted by recent events to



fight these developments, the federal government bowed to the inevitable. On May 21, 2038, the southern Länder seceded from the Federal Republic and formed the South German Federation, establishing its capital in Munich. Alfons Hunggarten, a member of the right-wing Bavarian People's Party (BVP), became the new Federation's first chancellor.

Despite the elevation of the BVP to power in the south, the worldwide Night of Rage in 2039 mobilized only a few right-wing radicals in Germany. The lives lost that night belonged almost exclusively to the ranks of the racist attackers, whose efforts to demonstrate against metahumanity met a wall of resistance from various anarchist and other groups patrolling areas with high metahuman populations. People protesting various forms of corruption and other inequities in Berlin banded together with those fighting against racism and launched a full-fledged revolt, a city-wide civil war that brought down the corrupt, corporation-riddled city government and replaced it with near-total anarchy.

Violent incidents sparked by the Night of Rage continued through mid-2040, but the general attitude toward metahumans changed little. The majority of the human population regarded their metahuman counter-

parts with a mixture of disgust and fascination, frowning on violence or overt bigotry against them but refusing to admit their equality with humans. The more right-wing south German politicians maintained repressive measures against the Awakened "for reasons of public health."

In the year 2041, the Duchy of Pomorya succeeded in revitalizing the Baltic Sea with a combination of newly developed biobacteria and magical support. Also in that year the Austro-Hungarian Empire dissolved into its component states of Austria, Hungary, the Czech Republic, and Slovenia, but this upheaval in its neighbor state had surprisingly little impact in Germany.

In March 2042, the events that had rocked the United States decades before finally reached Germany. As the U.S. had done with the Native Americans, the South German Länder began to herd metahumans into camps, and the South German parliament came close to adopting a eugenics program. Before the South German Länder could enact this repressive measure, a series of volcanic eruptions ravaged the entire Eifel Mountain region. Lava flows blocked the Rhine River, causing the Neuwied Depression to flood. Koblenz and other towns in the flood plain were abandoned as the Rhine overflow formed a new lake stretching from Remagen to Lahnstein. At the same time, a series of severe earthquakes struck the Upper Rhine Graben. Though no one claimed to have orchestrated these disasters by magical means, popular opinion ascribed them to vengeful, magically active metahumans. Apparently concurring, the governments of the south German states quickly shelved their proposed eugenics laws and granted full rights to metahumans. But the metahumans had seen the proverbial handwriting on the wall. South German dwarfs soon began to emigrate to the Eifel and Hunsrück hill regions, while orks and trolls chose to resettle in the almost inaccessible valleys of the Black Forest, the Upper Palatinate Forest, and the mountainous areas of the Bohemian Forest.

>>>>[You should at least mention the horrors that goblinization inflicted on us mid-level entrepreneurs who invested in the production of garden gnomes!]<<<<<

—Alfons Hurrle, former entrepreneur (16:45:27/19-MAR-54)

>>>>[Garden what???]<<<<<

—Apex (03:24:33/20-MAR-54)

### NEW GERMANY

On February 19, 2043, the Troll Kingdom of the Black Forest proclaimed itself a separate Land of the Federal Republic, establishing its capital at Freiburg. A short time later, the regions settled by dwarfs announced the formation of the Grand-Duchy of Westrhine-Luxembourg. After



the South German Länder failed in their attempts to reconquer the lost territories vigorously defended by the metahumans and the nature spirits they summoned, they eventually gave up.

On the heels of this latest secession crisis, Chancellor Alfons Hunggarten precipitated his own government's downfall in May of 2044 by attempting to break the monopoly of foreign corporations. On May 10, all South German datagrids ceased to function, and stayed down for 72 hours. By the fourth day of the matrix blackout, the economy stood on the brink of collapse and the Association of German Unions (AGV) called for a general strike. Twenty-four hours later, several dragons flew in formation over the cities of Munich and Stuttgart, which many residents took as a bad omen. On the sixth day of the crisis, foreign governments worldwide froze any assets of the South German Federation being held in their banks. The following day, the security force MET2000 dissolved its contract with the South German government, effectively depriving it of an army. Finally, on the eighth day of the crisis, Hunggarten was forced to resign.

>>>>[Rise and fall of a corporate creature.]<<<<<

—Don Cartello (23:09:43/11-MAR-54)

In response to the collapse of the South German government, the German states called a constitutional congress to establish new rules for cooperation between the German Länder. The congress remained in session until the end of the year, during which time several delegates relinquished their seats "for health reasons." The departing delegates made room for more "progressive" replacements.

On May 8, 2045, the new constitution established the Allied German States (Allianz Deutscher Länder) in place of the old Federal Republic of Germany. The new Alliance enhanced the independent legislative powers of the Länder at the expense of the confederate government in Hannover. The Länder borders of 2045 and the extra-territoriality of megacorporations were enacted into law, and several troublesome or disputed areas received special, associate status. These "associate members" included the recently established Troll Kingdom and the dwarf Duchy of Westrhine-Luxembourg, the elven Duchy of Pomorya, the tiny, individual states of the Upper Palatinate Forest, the Saarland Special Legislative Zone (SOX), and the Free City of Berlin. The new constitution formed the basis for a solid economic upswing that slowly gained momentum in the following years.

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## CODA

The past nine years of the German Alliance's existence have seen a rebirth of hope and desire for achievement throughout the German states. In 2049, the first Nobel Prize for magic was awarded to a team of mages from Germany and the Czech Republic. In that same year, German scientists developed the first maritime fusion engines. The Vulkan Wharf in Wilhelmshaven immediately began constructing a new class of fusion-powered surface and submarine freighters, soon followed by the shipbuilding giant Blohm & Voss.

In 2050 and 2051, a corruption scandal led to needed government reform. Cleansed of its "business-as-usual" members, the Hannover government normalized relations with Russia, signed a treaty permitting cultural and economic exchanges with its former enemy, and made the first attempts at détente with the Alliance for Allah. The opening of the first great Arkoblock on the north German plain heralded the beginning of land reclamation in the tainted North Sea region. A second Arkoblock opened six months later to great public fanfare. General elections held just last year boasted an impressive voter turnout of 62.9 percent. Big gains by the Christian-Democratic CVP and the laissez-faire LDFF persuaded Alliance President Kortmann to entrust them with forming a government. After decades of turmoil, the worst seems to be over.

>>>>[Hah!]<<<<

—Mr. Optimistic (03:20:18/09-AUG-54)

# GOVERNMENT

**R**éal gell, livin' in a democracy, mann. Where else have you got a free choice between poverty and wealth?

—Baldeney-Fred, well-known Essen eccentric

The Germany of 2054 is a closely woven web of political and economic relations, far less centralized than the old Federal Republic but unified by economics and shared culture.

>>>>>[In effect, the AGS is not a federation, but a confederation. In recognition of this fact, I have changed all references to "federal" into "confederate" throughout these files.]<<<<<

—Ragnal (00:21:01/14-NOV-54)

The German Alliance represents a confederation of several small, semi-autonomous units called Länder (singular, Land). The confederate government determines foreign policy and oversees collective defense. It controls a scant few centralized institutions and systems, among them the Bundeswehr (Confederate Armed Forces), the Bundesgrenzschutz (Confederate Border Guards), the Umweltbundesamt (Confederate Environmental Office), the autobahnen, a national train system, and the Matrix and vidphone grid. The individual Land governments deal with every other aspect of governing and law. In theory, however, the Länder must also abide by the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights of 2039 and the Confederate Constitution of 2041. Too-blatant defiance of these laws may provoke occupation by the Bundeswehr.



## CONFEDERATE GOVERNMENT

Political life in the German Alliance, still greatly influenced by the dear departed Federal Republic of Germany, bears the mark of the political parties elected to the Bundestag (confederate parliament) and the Landtage (state parliaments). Though general interest in national politics has declined, people discuss the minute details of the gains and losses of the various parties as avidly as they rehash last year's soccer play-offs.

>>>>>[The low voter turnout at general elections proves how few people give a frag. A total turnout of 62.9 percent would have been considered disastrously low in the heyday of the Federal Republic.]<<<<<

—Ragnal (00:22:13/14-NOV-54)

Every four years, a general election is held to choose representatives to the confederate parliament, the Bundestag. Elections to fill its 1,001 seats follow a modified version of the proportional-vote system. The metahuman-controlled states of the Duchy of Pomorya, the Grand-Duchy of Westrhine-Luxembourg, and the Troll Kingdom of the Black Forest retain a guaranteed number of seats determined by separate voting methods.

>>>>>[The basic election system hasn't changed since the days of the Federal Republic. Every citizen has two votes: one for a party, the other for a candidate standing in his elective district. Every district elects one candidate

in a first-past-the-post system, but the number of districts is smaller than the number of seats and so the rest get filled from party lists in such a way that the number of seats reflects the overall percentage of votes each party got.]<<<<<<

—Raghnal (00:24:39/14-NOV-54)

The Bundestag currently consists of representatives of the following parties: the Anarcho-Syndicalist Union (ASU), the Independent German Socialist Party (USPD), the European Social-Democratic Party (ESP), the German Liberal-Democrat Federalist Party (LDFFP), the Christian People's Party (CVP), the German National Party (DNP), and the Party of National Renewal (PNE).

The party with the largest parliamentary faction heads the government, but a single party rarely gets an absolute majority. More often than not, the two (or more) parties with the highest representation rule by coalition. The executive branch of the confederate government consists of a chancellor (prime minister) and a cabinet of 14 to 24 ministers to handle specific areas of governance. This cabinet determines foreign policy and formulates laws to be adopted by the Bundestag. The confederate government controls only three areas of domestic policy: infrastructure, social security, and defense. The principal members of the current cabinet are the following:

**Chancellor:** Mr. Bernd Mertens (CVP)

**Minister for Foreign Affairs and Vice Chancellor:** Mr. Albert Reinsbach (LDFFP)

**Minister of the Interior:** Ms. Herta Brügggen (CVP)

**Minister of Finance:** Mr. Dietmar von Preitz (BVP)

**Minister of Commerce:** Mr. Sigmund Berg (LDFFP)

**Minister for Social Affairs:** Mr. Francesco Gallardi-Hingsdorf (CVP)

**Minister of Transport:** Dr. Ursula Ströbach (CVP)

**Minister of Telecommunications:** Ms. Petra Dierbach (CVP)

**Minister for Metahuman Affairs:** Mr. Marcus Nebelglanz (uncommitted)

**Minister of Research:** Dr. Franz Kohlhammer (BVP)

>>>>>[Well, well, well. That's about 200 years of hard labor congregating at the bar there, as we say in these parts: profiteering, tax evasion, and criminal abuse of power.]<<<<<<

—Sandmann (03:24:49/13-SEP-54)

### CONFEDERATE PRESIDENT

The nominal head of state is elected for a five-year term by a nationwide vote. The current office-holder, 77-year-old constitutional lawyer Dr. Robert Kortmann of the ESP party, returned to office for a second term in 2051. Unlike the UCAS president, the confederate president serves a largely ceremonial function.

>>>>>[Kortmann is a bleeding laissez-faire blabberbutt trying to be all things to all folk. And that fragging morality bug seems to be part of the job, somehow.]<<<<<<

—No Fun (05:34:12/19-JUN-54)

### BUNDES RAT

The most powerful institution of the new confederate democracy is the former second chamber of the Bundestag, the Bundesrat (Confederate Council), which represents the various Land governments. The Council's 101 seats are divided up among the member Länder according to their populations and gross domestic product. Because the governments of the various Länder are elected according to wildly varying local systems, the party interests of the Bundesrat representatives occasionally overpower the interests of the Land that sent them, making for a dynamic balance of power in this parliamentary chamber.

The following Länder have representatives in the Bundesrat. Each Land's Anglicized name is given first for the convenience of American readers; the German name appears in parentheses following.

#### Bavaria (Bayern)

This presidential democracy boasts a high degree of industrial development, mostly in the aerospace and automotive industries, balanced by large rural areas full of thriving small farms. The Hunggarten coup of 2044 cost Bavaria former special privileges, such as the right of veto, that had made it a decisive factor in German federal politics for years. The present government, located in the capital of Munich, is a BVP/LDFFP coalition.

#### Franconia (Franken)

This civil democracy, a product of Franconia's recent secession from overbearing Bavarian control, developed around the Nuremberg/Fürth/Erlangen metroplex. The central plex and capital of Nuremberg supports several high-tech industries, leaving the surrounding areas dominated by agriculture. The present government is a coalition formed by the ESP and CVP parties.

#### Württemberg

Like its neighbors Bavaria and Franconia, Württemberg is home to several high-tech corporations, most of them manufacturers of tools, electronics, and cyberware. Though nominally a democracy, the CVP-controlled government imposes strict social conformity from its seat in the capital of Stuttgart. Police presence is ubiquitous, and so-called "moral reeducation" to cure people of BTL habits and other social ills is part of everyday life. Megacorps and such quasi-Christian sects as the Knights of Christ wield immense influence in this state.

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### **Troll Kingdom of the Black Forest (Trollkönigreich Schwarzwald)**

This realm of trolls and orks provides many metahuman victims of persecution with a new, safe home. The sparsely populated Black Forest kingdom is a feudal monarchy, its economy based on agriculture and light manufacturing. The current king, Berthold I, rules from the capital of Freiburg.

### **Greater Frankfurt (Gross-Frankfurt)**

Taking its name from that of its capital city, the second-largest metroplex in the AGS spreads from Wiesbaden and Mainz in the west to Hanau and Aschaffenburg in the east, and from Frankfurt in the north to Mannheim/Ludwigshafen in the south. Except for a few, scattered parks, the area is densely populated. Sometimes nicknamed the AGChem Sprawl because that particular megacorp exercises influence over the region second only to the Frankfurt Bank Association, Greater Frankfurt is the German center of biotechnology and neurochemical research and production. AGChem's influence is so strong that rumor has the LDFFP-dominated government asking approval of AGChem headquarters in Frankfurt-Hoechst for every decision it makes. Heidelberg, in the southern part of the metroplex, is one of Europe's premier centers of hermetic magic; this state hosts many companies dealing with magic and alchemy.

### **Badensian Palatinate (Badisch-Pfalz)**

This largely rural area covers much of the ancient German Palatinate, reaching to the SOX in the west and encompassing the southern part of the former Land of Hesse to the north. After a period of unrest sparked by the founding of the Troll Kingdom to its south, the Badensian Palatinate now enjoys relative peace, except for the Karlsruhe Special Legislative Zone (see **South German States**, p. 86). The present government, in the provisional capital of Pirmasens, is an ESP/CVP coalition.

### **Hesse-Nassau (Hessen-Nassau)**

The areas forming this Land—old Northern Hesse, Taunus, and Westerwald—are among the German Alliance's economically shakiest regions. What little industry exists is located in the Lahn River valley in and around the capital city of Gießen-Marburg. Presently governed by the ESP party, Hesse-Nassau survives on tourist revenues and the sterling reputation of Marburg's magical research.

>>>>[What's that Greek β character doing there? Is that a glitch in the prog, or what?]<<<<<

—Stein (06:27:40/04-12-54)

>>>>[Didn't bother to read the glossary, did you? It's a special character used in German to signify a sharp s—an "s"-sound like in "so" or "mess"—following a long vowel. Sometimes it's written as double s.]<<<<<

—Idle Savant (6:33:13/04-12-54)

### **Grand Duchy Of Westrhine-Luxemburg**

#### **(Grossherzogtum Westrhein-Luxembourg)**

Most of Germany's dwarfs migrated to this Land, where they currently make up about 40 percent of the sparse population. The Grand Duchy encompasses the Hunsrück and Eifel hill countries, as well as the lowlands around Charlemagne's coronation city of Aachen. Though volcanic eruptions turned the once densely forested Eifel into a wasteland of cold lava and ashes in 2042, the region remains a popular haunt of magicians, as does the still-forested Hunsrück region. The state's capital does not lie in the romantic little spa town of Bad Neuenahr, but in the nearby nuclear fallout shelter once used by the federal government.

Though the Grand Duchy is nominally a constitutional monarchy, the general population uses electronic voting to determine many government policies. The USPD wields considerable influence over the government, as do anarchist groups and various mystical lodges. As an example of how the Grand Duchy's politics really work, a hung parliament recently allowed Mr. Karl Hammer of the RVP to be elected prime minister over vociferous objections from several sides.

>>>>[Hey, Idle, if you know so much about German, how do you pronounce Eifel?]<<<<<

—Stein (6:40:10/04-12-54)

>>>>[It's pronounced "eye-fell." In German, "ei" is always pronounced "eye." The same goes for "ey," "ai," and "ay," by the way. Those're all different spellings for the same sound.]<<<<<

—Idle Savant (6:41:04/04-12-54)

### **Thuringia (Thüringen)**

Thuringia's stable government, politically active citizens, and civilized disputes between its various political and societal groups all mark this Land as a paragon of democracy. Though governed by the ESP from the capital of Erfurt, the region's various Protestant sects and magical groups heavily influence public debate. The state boasts very few major industries; science, magic, and mid-size manufacturing dominate the local economy. Thuringia plays up its reputation as a stronghold of Central European sorcery.



#### Duchy of Saxony (Herzogtum Sachsen)

The Duchy of Saxony, which includes the southern part of old Saxony-Anhalt, is the only non-metahuman monarchy on German soil. The confederate government repeatedly calls the local government to task for human rights violations and for its expansionist designs on its neighbors. During the congressional convention that gave rise to the AGS and set the borders of the Länder in 2045, the confederate government gave the entire Spreewald hill country to the neighboring Land of Brandenburg. As a result, relations between Brandenburg and Saxony remain tense to this day. After the heavy and chemical industry in the regions near Dresden and Leipzig-Halle, Saxony is best known as a topflight training ground for soldiers and security agents.

The nationalist DNP dominates the present puppet parliament in the capital of Dresden, but a coup seems imminent. The population appears unwilling to endure continued political repression with so little economic security.

#### Northrhine-Ruhr (Nordrhein-Ruhr)

Europe's largest sprawl crowds 25 million people close together. Though this Land also contains the rural hill areas of Sauerland and Bergisches Land, the state's population and commerce are concentrated in the Rhine-Ruhr crescent around the administrative centers of Cologne, Düsseldorf, Essen, and Dortmund. Within this gigantic city, all of Germany exists in microcosm: high-tech enclaves, abandoned industrial sites and prohibited areas, ecologically protected regions, maglev trains, traffic breakdowns, street gangs, smog, and so on. The present coalition government is made up of USPD and ESP members.

#### Westphalia (Westphalen)

To outside observers, the Free State of Westphalia appears to be a democracy. In reality, the puppet parliament of nationalist DNP and fiercely conservative CVP members is out-powered and out-politicked by the bishops of the German Catholic Church. Within this totalitarian, globally discredited theocracy, the use of magic is prohibited, elves are personae non grata, and other metahumans barely tolerated. Westphalia's fertile soil and large farms supply about 30 percent of Germany's food. The capital of Westphalia is Münster, famous as the site of the schism between the Roman and German Catholic Churches.

>>>>[Münster, eh? All right, Idle, tell us about those umlauts.]<<<<<

—Stein (7:08:15/04-12-54)

>>>>[Briefly!]<<<<<

—Chucky (7:08:17/04-12-54)

>>>>[Philistines! German has three umlauts: "ä," also written as "ae"; "ö," also written as "oe"; and "ü," also written as "ue." "Ä" is pronounced like the English short "a" in "bad," whereas "a" in German is always pronounced like the "u" in "fun." "Ö" is pronounced like the "u" in "murder." The "ü" is a bit difficult because the sound it represents isn't used in English. If you've ever heard someone speak French, you've heard this umlaut. It's the French "u," as in "cul de sac" or "fumer." That brief enough for you?]<<<<<

—Idle Savant (7:10:42/04-NOV-54)

#### Brandenburg

The civil democracy of Brandenburg, named for the region's current capital city, has suffered serious economic upheaval since its inception. The loss of its former capital of Potsdam to the Free City of Berlin is merely a symptom of the problems caused by its strained economic relations with that giant metroplex. Brandenburg

has almost no industry. Berlin, like a malignant magnet, has drawn most industry in the area to itself. Attempts to turn the region surrounding the Havel and Spree Rivers into a resort have met with a certain amount of recent success, prompting a modest economic upswing. The ESP controls the present government.

#### **North German Federation (Norddeutscher Bund)**

The North German Federation, formed by the union of Schleswig-Holstein, Lower Saxony, Mecklenburg-West Pomerania, Bremen, and the northern part of Saxony-Anhalt, took the brunt of the often violent changes during the past fifty years. Almost no industry exists in the Land beyond its major cities, including the confederate capital of Hannover. Japanese and German-Japanese corporations dominate the state's economy. Currently governed by a liberal USPD/ESP coalition, the North German Federation is prone to political crises, with another change of government likely within months.

#### **Free and Hanseatic City of Hamburg (Freie Und Hansestadt Hamburg)**

Hamburg politics is a complex web of civil democracy, corporate ruthlessness, and anarchy. Large parts of the city remain under flood waters, providing countless hideouts for smugglers and hover-pirates. Hamburg also serves as the main seat of the Klabauterbund, a magically and technically oriented policlub widely held responsible for local and national piracy.

#### **ASSOCIATE REGIONS**

The Free City of Berlin and three territories lying on the borders of the AGS are represented in the Bundesrat with up to three seats. These associated states maintain economic ties to the rest of Germany and participate in all AGS-wide networks such as streets, railroads, energy systems, and the telecom grid.

#### **Saar Special Legislative Area**

Also called the Saar Zone, SOX, or simply the Zone, this area irradiated by the Cattenom meltdown includes the former Saarland, the former Grand Duchy of Luxembourg, and parts of the former Rhineland-Palatinate, as well as large areas of the French provinces of Alsace and Lorraine. Most of the population who remained in the area live in a few small, isolated arcologies, research laboratories, and factories. In addition, heavy industry and chemical companies run manufacturing installations in the SOX.

Corporations set aside major sections of the SOX for their exclusive use. A megacorporate combine consisting of AG Chemie Europa, the International Vehicle and Machine Union, Ares Macrotechnology, Renraku, Saeder-Krupp, and Ruhmetall has administered the Saar Zone ever since its formation during Germany's reconstruction.

#### **Duchy of Pomorya**

The Duchy of Pomorya provides a base for Germany's elves who are working to revitalize the Baltic Sea. This small kingdom's capital is at Saßnitz, and its territory contains the islands of Rügen, Usedom, and Wollin, plus a sizable chunk of former West Pomerania. Elves make up more than 40 percent of the duchy's small population of 180,000, and their thrifty lifestyle helps the duchy remain self-reliant for energy and food.

#### **Marienbad Council**

A confederation of small monarchies in the mountain areas of Bayerischer Wald (the Bavarian Forest), Böhmerwald (the Bohemian Forest), and Erzgebirge (Ore Mountains), this region, populated largely by metahumans, encompasses several baronies just a few square kilometers in area. Border wars, coups, and marauding bandit knights constantly threaten to tear apart the Marienbad Council, and its more polluted areas seem thick with toxic spirits.

#### **Free City of Berlin**

The only real anarchist state in the world, Berlin struggles under the control of members of countless rival groups: anarcho-syndicalists, neo-anarchists, mobsters, and anyone else who feels like taking a hand in the so-called government. Chaotic within, its relations with the outside world paralyzed by constant dispute, Berlin's crazy vitality attracts those who find it a fine place to live

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In spite of—or perhaps because of—the near-total lack of order. Interestingly enough, the anarchist structure of the city includes a niche for free enterprise that the megacorps have rushed to fill. Roughly 60 percent of Berlin's population are metahumans and other so-called minorities.

### SPECIAL INTERESTS

A few non-territorial interest groups have a seat in the Bundesrat along with the Länder, but no vote. Like the associate states, these groups play a part in discussions and maintain representation in those committees that concern their area of competence. These organizations include the Allgemeiner Gewerkschaftsverband (General Association of Unions, or AGV), the highest levels of the Catholic, German Catholic, Protestant, and Muslim religious organizations, the Federation of German Industries, and diplomatic representatives from Germany's neighboring nations.

## POLITICAL ORGANIZATIONS

The ever-shifting array of political parties and interest groups in Germany may look chaotic to the outsider, but it has the benefit of preventing any one group or person from garnering inordinate power and influence. The unrest of the early 21st century and the chaos of the EuroWars severely damaged parliamentary democracy in Germany. In general elections, voter turnout has fallen to 65 percent, and drops even lower for Land elections. Membership in political parties is down as well, but an enormous number of new groups has formed over recent years. All are trying to earn legitimacy by placing at least one representative in parliament. By contrast, such non-parliamentary interest groups as action committees, policlubs, and secret societies have enjoyed a surge in membership.

### MAJOR POLITICAL PARTIES

After the restoration of German democracy in the early 2040s, the political situation was chaotic. It required three successive elections to establish a parliament proportionately representative of the 46 parties on the ballot. This prompted the newly restored federal government to reintroduce the modified proportional system used in the old Federal Republic. Included in those election reforms was a requirement that a party must win a 3-percent minimum of total votes cast to win a seat in a confederate or Land parliament. At the most recent general election, held in June 2053, the parties listed below won more than 3 percent of the total votes cast and thus are represented in the Bundestag. The German name of each party is given first, followed by its acronym in parentheses.

>>>>[Before the listing starts, one caution to American readers: in general, the political connotation of the word "liberal" in Germany is laissez-faire capitalist or Manchester liberal. The politics described as liberal in America, particularly as used in the United States before the Awakening, would be termed centrist to moderately left-wing in Germany.]<<<<<

—Raghnal (04:12:27/02-NOV-54)

### Anarchosyndikalistische Union (ASU)

Though an anarchist standing for parliamentary elections may seem like a contradiction to an outsider, it is nothing new for Germany. Ever since the 2020s, sectarians of various anarchist splinter groups have gone trolling for votes, but rarely receive a mandate.

The ASU (Anarcho-Syndicalist Union) was founded in 2045, not as a political party per se, but as an election platform for various local syndicates. It functions as the parliamentary mouthpiece of the syndicalist union, but will not enter into coalitions.

**Approximate Membership:** 39,000

**Confederate Chair:** Syndicalist executive council

### Unabhängige Sozialistische Partei Deutschlands (USPD)

Though it rarely has a voice in government, the USPD (Independent German Socialist Party) has become Germany's leading left-wing force. Anti-monopolist, pro-civil rights, and pro-environment without being anti-technology, the party enjoys widespread support among the poor. The USPD's popularity among "revolutionaries and undesirables" prompted the Länder of Saxony and Westphalia to ban the party from their borders. Though it functions as the main opposition party in the Bundestag as well as in most Länder parliaments, the USPD frequently cooperates with the ASU and ESP.

**Approximate Membership:** 185,000

**Confederate Chairs:** Martin Deerhoff, Angela Janisevic, Richard Steinfest

### Europäische Sozialdemokratische Partei (ESP)

The ESP (European Social-Democratic Party) was formed from the social-democratic SPD, parts of the laissez-faire capitalist FDP, and the ecological left-of-center Bündnis 2000 party. It forms the social-democratic-liberal center of the German Alliance's political spectrum. The ESP supports broadened civil rights, reduced megacorporate influence, social security, and a moderate foreign policy. In its strongholds in the North German League and Brandenburg, the ESP has entered into coalitions with both the USPD and CVP, with whose policies it agrees in certain areas.

**Approximate Membership:** 227,000

**Confederate Chairs:** Dr. Petra Gassen, Dr. Mehmet Schulz-Tüfekci

**Liberaldemokratische Föderalistische Partei (LDFP)**

The darling of the megacorps, the LDFP (Liberal Democrat Federalist Party) represents pure laissez-faire capitalism. Most party members come from middle and upper management, including entrepreneurs. Of course, every German citizen reading a newspaper or newsmagazine knows that LDFP members sit on company boards, receive huge corp "donations," and feel no qualms about hushing up occasional scandals with the aid of expensive lawyers.

The Frankfurt LDFP, a governing power in its own right, offers the fastest route into parliament for upper-level executives, managers, and entrepreneurs. In Bavaria, the LDFP governs in coalition with the BVP.

**Approximate Membership:** 46,000

**Confederate Chair:** Dr. Volker Behrens

**Christliche Volkspartei (CVP)**

Shaped by the Catholic social doctrines of the 19th century, the CVP (Christian People's Party) tempers capitalism with an active social conscience. Moderately conservative, the CVP has entered coalition governments with the ESP, LDFP, and occasionally even the nationalist DNP. Despite its grounding in Catholic doctrine, the party regards cyberware and magic as useful features of modern life and uses them frequently.

The CVP controls the government in Württemberg. The party is also strong in Bavaria, where it goes by the name of the Bavarian People's Party (Bayerische Volkspartei or BVP).

**Approximate Membership:** 348,000 (62,500 are BVP)

**Confederate Chair:** Dr. Herta Brüggem, Alois Hundhammer (BVP)

**Deutschnationale Partei (DNP)**

The nationalist, conservative, German Catholic DNP (German Nationalist Party) is especially favored by large-scale farmers and church authorities. The DNP receives so much support from the German Catholic Church that the words of its chairman, Freiherr von Döberein, are read from church pulpits, and membership in any other party is declared a sin. This tactic works well among less educated and pious Christians, beefing up DNP representation in many Land parliaments.

Not surprisingly, German Catholic Westphalia is a DNP stronghold. In the Länder of Brandenburg, Saxonia, Franconia, and Bavaria, the party gamers frequent headlines by leveling accusations and threats at neighboring Poland and the Czech Republic. Unwilling to accept the German Alliance's present-day borders, the DNP claims the regions of Pomerania, Silesia, and the Sudetenland as German territory.

**Approximate Membership:** 11,000

**Confederate Chair:** Justus Hagen Freiherr von Döberein

>>>>[What's with those people? Is it a membership requirement to be over 150 years of age, or do some people just never learn?]<<<<<<

—BattleCzech (03:12:28/07-AUG-54)

>>>>[I don't think it's a membership requirement, but only the terminally stupid would even think of joining that bunch of losers.]<<<<<<

—Streetwizz (04:10:34/07-AUG-54)

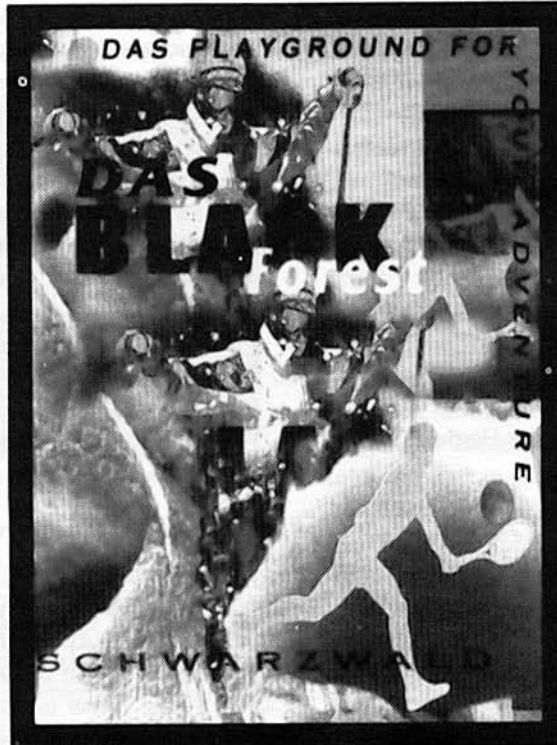
**Partei Der Nationalen Erneuerung (PNE)**

In the splintered confederacy that is Germany, no one political party can guarantee the general welfare. In Germany, as in any other patchwork nation, any group that promises work and bread to the impoverished masses and claims to hold a simple solution to all economic and social problems can find widespread acceptance.

In the German Alliance of 2054, the fascist PNE (Party of National Renewal) fills this distasteful role.

Its "suggestions for healing the German people" recall those that spread terror 120 years ago. The PNE endorses work camps for metahumans, immigrants, and "anti-social elements"; national organization of every kind of work; reduced rights for non-German corporations; and strict enforcement of "law and order" through a virtual police state. The PNE has spawned its own right-wing polyclub, the Siegfriedbund, and has connections to the Nationale Aktion terrorist group.

These neo-Nazis garnered 7.2 percent of the vote in the recent Brandenburg elections, and held membership in coalition governments in Hesse-Kassel from 2047 to 2051 and in Saxony from 2048 to 2052. In a frightening





trend, growing numbers of well-educated, wealthy voters have begun to join the PNE or openly sympathize with its aims.

**Approximate Membership:** 24,000

**Confederate Chair:** Dr. Richard Ebeling

### SPLINTER PARTIES

The following groups boast representation in some Land parliaments, but have no national influence.

#### Die Grünen

Though re-established in 2007 after its dissolution in 1996, the Green Party never regained its former position as Germany's leading ecological power. The new Green Party has degenerated into a preservationist pollclub with no definite political program. Though active, it possesses no power in this megacorporate age.

**Approximate Membership:** 12,500

**Confederate Chairs:** Dr. Marion Kuntz-Herdorff, Simon Wiedmann

#### KPD/MLM

An amalgamation of the old German Communist Party (KPD) and the Marxist-Leninist-Maoist Party (MLM), this group has little influence in any Land parliament. Its support for the discredited idea of a planned economy governed by the state to ensure the general welfare is obviously anathema in a country where the economy steers the government. The megacorps and their government supporters use every possible means to discredit the party and its members, hoping to prevent its expansion. Trotskyist, Stalinist, and Maoist factions are constantly at each other's throats within the organization. Rumored to have connections to the terrorist Anti-Imperialist Army (AIA), the KPD/MLM is banned in Saxony and Bavaria.

**Approximate Membership:** 7,000

**Confederate Chair:** Jürgen Deinertz

#### Partei Des Neuen Bewusstseins (PNB)

The extreme right-wing New Consciousness Party is the political branch of the New Consciousness Church, a

fascist pseudo-religion that preaches creating a 'new man' using electronic brainwashing, intensive psychiatric therapy, and other methods to repress the individual personality. The New Consciousness Church originated in the former United States, and the headquarters of the church's political affiliate are said to be on a decommissioned carrier vessel somewhere in the Atlantic Ocean. Only the PNB's connections in influential political and megacorporate circles have kept it from being banned in Germany.

**Approximate Membership:** Estimated 3,000; no official figures available

**Confederate Chair:** Believed to be Mr. Gerd Mahlmann

#### Volksdeutsche Reinheitspartei (VRP)

The VRP (German People's Purity Party), a splinter group of former PNE members, may only operate in seven Länder. More extreme than the neo-Nazi PNE, VRP members include cyber-engorged neonskins, black-shirted thugs, beer-bellied misfits in traditional German costume, and other such admirable people. As the primary political arm of right-wing terrorism in Germany, the VRP is, unfortunately, more than a laughable assortment of lunatics and marginal citizens.

**Approximate Membership:** 1,800 (active)

**Confederate Chair:** Hermann Olbrichs

### POLICLUBS

Most policlubs find few adherents outside Berlin; a majority of the German people prefers to join political parties and secret societies. The following policlubs, however, enjoy widespread acceptance across the German Alliance.

#### Siegfriedbund

This debating society, a branch of the neo-Nazi PNE, tackles topics such as 'The Racial Threat to the German People,' 'The Right of Every Healthy German Citizen to Bear Arms,' 'How to Stop Polish Car Smugglers,' and other enlightening subjects. Despite this club's obvious neo-Nazi origin, members of the DNP and BVP frequently speak at Siegfriedbund meetings. Serving as a clearinghouse for all right-wing groups within the German Alliance, the Siegfriedbund has far-reaching connections to international groups with similar fascist leanings.

>>>>[It also serves as a front and unofficial meeting place for Nationale Aktion Killers.]<<<<<

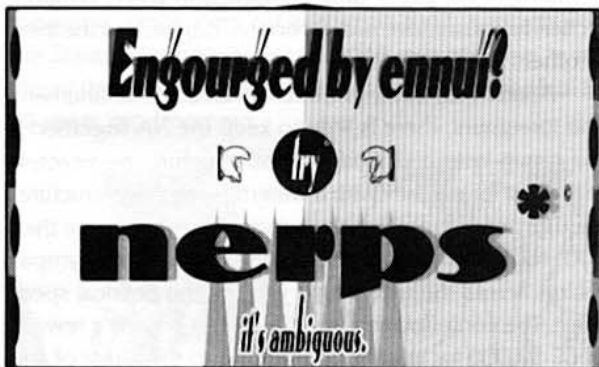
—Kater Carlo (23:24:54/21-DEC-53)

#### Klabauterbund

Active in Hamburg and the North German Federation, this policlub takes its name from the Klabauterman, a kobold (fairy being) of German maritime legend. Ac-

ording to widespread rumors, the Klabaubund has close connections to Green War and to North Sea pirates. Its own figures place Klabaubund membership at 7,000, of which 5,000 live in or near Hamburg. Openly anarchist and pro-ecology, the policlub opposes megacorps and preaches a natural way of life, free of high technology. Many metahumans and sorcerers, as well as a number of prominent artists and representatives of Germany's active subculture, belong to the Klabaubund.

The Klabaubunders defend piracy as legitimate self-defense against megacorp activity, as long as it does not personally enrich the pirates. As a precedent for this conduct, the club's founders refer to the Vitalienbrüder pirates active during the time of the Hanseatic League. They claim that these pirates took justifiable action against the oppressors known as the "Hanseatic Peppersacks." Members of the Klabaubund also believe that one day all the ship's kobolds will awake and take revenge for (meta)humanity's misuse of the world's oceans.



#### Mutter-Erde Policlub

The Mother Earth Policlub represents one of the few European societies devoted to shamanic magic. Witchcraft and shamanism, pantheism, feminism, and the propagation of a world-spanning ecological consciousness form the focus of debates, lectures, and actions. Membership stands at about 10,000, of which 70 percent are women. Members of Mutter Erde commonly belong to other, like-minded groups such as the feminist secret society Sie and the eco-terrorist Green Cells.

#### Schockwellenreiter

The anarchist policlub known as the Schockwellenreiter (Shockwave Riders) evolved from the Chaos Computer Club, the only policlub to exist solely inside the Matrix. Schockwellenreiter does not hold meetings or events in the real world, confining its activities to computer-generated reality. The Shockwave Riders offer data protection to ordinary citizens, and conduct industrial espionage. The club is particularly infamous for regularly uncovering and publicizing corporate crimes via newsmag channels. Its core membership consisting of the semi-legendary CCC, Germany's best deckers, the club

also acts as a sort of decker aid association for gridrunners in distress. Of the 4,000 or so registered members active in the legal part of the organization, a mere 50 are hardcore deckers.

#### SECRET SOCIETIES

Magical circles and other groups numbering ten to a thousand members have become a popular way to meet people with like interests. The organizations listed below run the gamut from small societies to leagues that span the world and meet only sporadically. Because none of them propagate their ideas via leaflets, trideo commercials, or other public media, members of these groups consider themselves part of an elite, and this sense of belonging appeals strongly to the German psyche.

>>>>[Don't tell me: revolutionary revelers? A conservative faction within the Martinsday parade? Mystical choir groups? Tell me I'm dreaming!]<<<<<

—Kater Carlo (05:02:54/12-FEB-54)

#### Doktor-Faustus-Verbindung

The Doctor Faustus Society, a confederacy-wide circle of hermetic mages, provides a forum for members to discuss new and unconventional approaches to hermetic magic. Whether a mage requires certain literature, special magical materials, or colleagues for a ritual sorcery team, he can appeal to the Doctor Faustus Society for help. The Faustians also offer financial aid for those interested in founding new branches of the society. Candidates to the society are accepted only through the recommendation of a member in good standing, a standard left to the discretion of the local circle.

The Doctor Faustus Society has members on the faculty councils of every university-level magic department in Germany, and in many companies and other organizations involved in magical research. Though the Society lacks the power to ensure that only its members receive well-paid jobs in the field or acceptance for doctorates in thaumaturgy, no one of whom the Society disapproves can hope to work legitimately as a mage. As a whole, the Faustians tend toward liberal political views and are open to new ideas, though they are not politically active.

>>>>[Open to new ideas? Hardly. Faustus is a boys club, violently opposed to anything hinting at feminism. It receives most of its money from the AGC, and it still hasn't grokked the true revolutionary power of magic in the Sixth World.]<<<<<

—Gretchen (14:55:04/30-JUL-54)

#### Bavarian Illuminati, Adam Weishaupt Lodge

Few people know anything about this world-spanning Freemasons' lodge. The lodge nevertheless boasts

vast cash reserves and far-reaching connections, and some people suspect that it works toward global supremacy. Whenever law enforcement reaches a dead end in cases involving bribery, corporate scandal, banking disasters, and even murder, the Bavarian Illuminati serve as a convenient scapegoat. Experts usually refuse to estimate this group's membership, but it is definitely less than 100.

>>>>[Facts at your fingertips, people: members are, among others, Lofwyr and Nebelherr, [ERROR] ities at Ru[ERROR]oup of 204[ERROR] .... fr[ERROR] [ABORT] ———[+++Line Error on 203-445. External rerouting on 223-900 (SimLinkAdult). Trace refused. Emergency Shutdown and immediate System Stop. All Data saved.+++]<<<<<<

—INtruderTRACing Expert System (23:09:44/17-JUN-54)

>>>>[Well-known decker HAL9000 was found dead at his console yesterday evening. The coroner's report read "sensory overload through illegal simlink." Today, EC 200,000 mysteriously materialized in our account, together with a politely worded request to report the incident on-line. No comment.]<<<<<<

—Sysop (14:32:25/18-JUN-54)

#### Freemason Lodges

Various societies of Freemasons, such as the Scottish Rite, Rosicrucians, Lodge of Light, and so on, serve as welfare associations to aid metahumans or exist to spread pantheistic teachings. A few function as commercial gentlemen's clubs, where members use lodge meetings to coordinate their corporate strategies. The estimated membership of all known Masonic lodges within the confederacy stands at 6,000.

#### Sie

The widespread feminist association Sie (She) consists mostly of witches and followers of the Great Mother. Men may not attend meetings or become members. The association aids feminist projects, promotes witchcraft, and funds non-hermetic magical research. Occasionally, Sie members strike out against companies and individuals perceived to be sexist and/or racist, usually through illegal distribution of sensitive or damning information, but sometimes via computer viruses or even hired killers. Sie's estimated membership throughout Germany stands at 2,000.

#### TERRORIST GROUPS

Certain groups, not content with influencing the political process through parliament and backstairs deals, resort to illegal means to attain their goals. The groups

listed below are officially classified as terrorist associations according to the Staatssicherheitsgesetz (State Security Act) of 2046 and the amendments of 2049 and 2052.

>>>>[Under any other criteria, more than half of the organizations previously described in this chapter also qualify as terrorist groups.]<<<<<<

—Backup (04:05:54/22-JUL-54)

This listing does not include the dozens of small, occasionally active terrorist groups such as the Croatian Salvation Front, the Revolutionary People's Army (Cadre), Humanis Germany, the CorpBusters, and so on.

#### Nationale Aktion (NA)

Formed at the end of the Euro-Wars, the actions of these fear-inspiring, right-wing extremists make the news almost daily. Through such atrocities as the refugee massacre at the Munich Olympic Village in 2043 and the bombing of the Labor Union Congress in 2047, National Action terrorists have proven time and again that the lives of others mean nothing to them.

Apart from a common, intense hatred of metahumans and foreigners, there is little to keep the NA together. If the group lacks a unified political structure, however, it makes up for this lack with a watertight military structure. Though actual membership is estimated at no more than 500, National Action often draws support from sympathizers across the entire right wing of the political spectrum. The confederate government has posted a reward of EC 50,000 for information leading to the arrest of any of the 37 known members of the NA's command.

#### Antlperialistische Arme

Like the NA, the AIA (Anti-Imperialist Army) is a small group of perhaps 1,000 active members supported by roughly 20,000 sympathizers. Unlike the NA, the AIA is a firmly left-wing organization, concentrating its attacks on megacorporate facilities, police and military installations, and politicians from (in their opinion) repressive German states.

Basing their political agenda on Neo-Leninist theories, AIA members view themselves as soldiers for the Third World, carrying the great North-South conflict into the centers of imperialist, capitalist power. Most members of the AIA, in fact, come from Third World aid societies, including a healthy number of disgruntled development workers. Most known members of the active cadres are well-educated.

Rumor has it that Amazonia and the Maghreb states of the Federation of Islamic States supply the AIA's top-flight weapons and military gear, as well as much of its money. AIA commando cadres are active in the United Netherlands, Italy, and Scandinavia as well as within the German Alliance.

**Green War Europe/Grüne Zellen**

These eco-terrorists attack pollution-intensive industries. Their aim is always to damage property and other assets, avoiding taking meta(human) life whenever possible. Green War is an international organization of approximately 3,000 activist "commandos" and at least 5 million sympathizers. It recruits its allied Grüne Zellen (Green Cells) mostly from dabblers in eco-terrorism, does not maintain a hierarchical command structure, and restricts its activities to Europe. Despite its loose organization and small membership, the organization's activities show an effect on the intended targets, and continue to garner strong public sympathy.

Green War International's most infamous accomplishments include the sinking of the last Japanese whaling fleet in the Pacific and the occupation, shutdown, and demolition of the Ukrainian nuclear plant at Chernobyl. The German Green Cells achieved similar notoriety by conducting unrelenting sabotage against chemical giant AG Chemie, culminating in a nighttime missile attack on the empty showrooms of Chemexpo 2047. According to the Staatssicherheitsgesetz of 2046, membership in either of these two organizations carries a sentence of up to 15 years imprisonment.

**Deutsch-Katholische Kirche**

The German Catholic Church, also known as the True Church of the Lord God and His Saints (Wahre Kirche Gottes Des Herrn Und Seiner Heiligen), takes pride in its reactionary views regarding cyberware, magic, and social advances in the Sixth World. Led by Archbishop von Heeremann, the church has its headquarters in the Westphalian capital of Münster, and most of its adherents come from that Land. Its political branch is the Ritter Christi (Christian Knights).

**Panislamische Union**

Though its name conjures up pictures of an innocuous assembly of Islamic believers, the Pan-Islamic Union is a radical, fundamentalist Shiite organization attempting to expand its influence over Muslims within the AGS through religious schools, trideo libraries, and its own radio and trideo stations. The Pan-Islamic Union has close ties to the radical Damascus League, also known as the Alliance for Allah, and has skated close to the edge of being banned more than once. Led by Mr. Hamid Mekhneem, it uses Jihad gangs—Jihad X throughout most of the German Alliance and Jihad B in Berlin—as armed enforcers.



**RELIGIOUS GROUPS**

The separation of church and state drastically reduced the influence of all religious groups, and these groups now resort to the same means as policlubs and corporations to regain their power. The two religious groups described below currently enjoy the greatest impact on German public life.

**FOREIGN POLICY**

The Foreign Ministry of the confederate government handles relations with the other nations of the world, though a few of the Länder have attempted to enter world politics by signing separate treaties with other countries. Bavaria and Württemberg, two Länder known for their

separatist foreign policies even before their formal secession in 2038, are particularly active in foreign relations.

The Alliance of German States pursues vigorous trade relations with few countries. In most cases, specific circumstances dictate whatever diplomatic or other relations exist between the AGS and other political entities. Only those countries that the AGS considers significant in some way are dealt with in this section. The present state of relations between the AGS and its major trading partners, allies, and enemies are described below.

### AMAZONIA

All German states regard Amazonia as the single source of all terrorist activities against them, a view held even in top government circles. Trade with Amazonia is severely restricted, and citizens of this nation can rarely obtain an entry visa.

### AUSTRIA

Because both nations speak the same language and their populations have historically close ties, relations between Austria and the AGS remain cordial. Though neither nation wants formal unification, at times it seems as though the border between Austria and Germany is virtually nonexistent.

### AZTLAN

Aztlan, along with several other South American nations, is one of Germany's biggest customers for weapons and sophisticated technology. The nationalization wave of 2044 left Aztlan's German-owned corporations largely unscathed, and trade continues to flourish. The government in Hannover nevertheless keeps a wary eye on the growing Aztlan corporate state. A movement within the AGS to limit or restrict relations with Aztlan on humanitarian grounds is slowly gaining support, and may cool relations in the future.

### BALKAN STATES

Though Germany has warm relations with Slovenia, it regards Croatia and her arch-enemy Serbia as barely civilized. These two nations, defined almost entirely by religion and nationalism, hold back from unrestrained bloodshed only because they fear the incursion of the numerous Islamic statelets at their southern borders more than they hate each other.

The Islamic mini-states, some of which are owned by multinational combines with German participation, have constantly shifting borders. Some states disappear, to be replaced by new small countries, but little actually changes. Should any of the minor conflicts between them reach the level of a full-scale war, the someone will use MET2000 to confine and end the violence.

### CIS REPUBLICS

Tied to Germany by economic aid and multinational corporate connections ever since the Euro-Wars, the former CIS states of Belarus, Ukraine, and the Baltic republics maintain warm relations with the AGS. Military assistance treaties and cultural agreements between Germany and these republics provide for student exchanges and tourism. In Ukraine, growing numbers of German visitors make the tourist trade increasingly important.

### CZECH REPUBLIC AND SLOVAKIA

German-Czech relations go far beyond standard economic and diplomatic contacts. Cultural and personal exchanges as well as frequent cooperation in the fields of magical and scientific research have created a level of amity seen previously only in German-French cooperation. Germany's relationship with Slovakia is much more reserved, mostly because of Slovakia's decades-old suspicions of its mighty neighbor.

>>>>[A suspicion not always unwarranted.]<<<<<  
—Tyder (21:19:57/13-JUL-54)

### ENGLAND

After the Czech Republic, England is Germany's most important industrial, military, and law-enforcement partner. Automated vessels ferry large supplies of goods back and forth across the North Sea, and many German tourists visit London every year. Despite this outward friendliness, however, Britons regard Germany's growing strength with suspicion, and the German government takes an equally dim view of the powerful English druids.

### FRANCE

The events of the last half century strained German-French friendship. Their scientific and military cooperation continues as before, but cultural exchange has diminished. The formation of the German Alliance further strained Germany's relationship with France, even provoking occasional border conflicts in the French province of Alsace.

### HUNGARY

As the focus of trade between the Western world and the Islamic nations, the Hungarian capital of Budapest has become the center of espionage and illegal transactions on a global scale as well as the hub of legitimate intercultural diplomacy. The German government and the megacorporations have "strategic vested interests" in Hungary, and keep it well supplied with money and trade goods.

## ITALY

The German Alliance cooperates with Italy in fighting organized crime in both countries. The Italian economy faces serious challenges, however, and the AGS appears unlikely to offer financial assistance. The pollution of the Mediterranean and the transformation of southern Italy into a desert brought tourism to a halt, prompting the country's economic slide. Only the strong ties between German and Italian families, carried over from the last century, keep relations from drying up altogether.

## KÖNIGSBERG

The Free State of Königsberg, formerly Kaliningrad, only recently appeared on the map of Europe. This extra-territorial corporate enclave, founded in the former East Prussia as a tax haven after the chaos of the Euro-Wars, houses Germans, Russians, Poles, Lithuanians, Latvians, and Estonians working together in close cooperation. It enjoys close ties with the German Alliance; many multinational corporations with German elements own the research laboratories and automated factories located here. The young state is governed by the board of the Baltic-East Prussian Recovery Corporation and protected by MET2000 and corporate troops.

## NORTH AMERICA

The splintering of the United States and Canada into UCAS, CAS, CalFree, the NAN nations, and Tir Tairngire failed to disrupt the historically cordial relations between Germany and North America. Despite the pullback of U.S. troops during the Indian crisis, sufficient personal as well as economic ties remained to form a continuing basis for mutual contact and support between Germany and all the North American states, save the Native American and elven nations. Germany maintains neutral to friendly relationships with the latter two political groups.

In general, Germany has a somewhat warmer relationship to the UCAS than to the CAS, with the exception of the cultural exchange between the CAS and Bavaria. Mutual economic contacts with Japan create warm relations between Germany and the California Free State.

## POLAND

Germany's greatest influence in Poland lies not with the AGS government, but with the Saeder-Krupp megacorporation, which organized most of the aid for Poland's reconstruction efforts following the Euro-Wars. Poland's conservative religious views also tie it closely to Westphalia, most visibly expressed in a steady exchange of goods between the countries via the canals of central Europe.

## RUSSIA

Following the end of the Euro-Wars and the ouster of the regime responsible for them, German-Russian relations normalized with remarkable speed. The present Russian government is pursuing an isolationist policy, but German corporations remain that nation's favorite trading partners.

## SCANDINAVIA

Closely allied with the nations of Scandinavia via numerous economic cross-holdings, the AGS also promotes close contacts with its Scandinavian neighbors through cooperation in such environmental projects as the revitalization of the Baltic Sea. The Baltic Sea venture has created particularly important and strong relations between Sweden and the Duchy of Pomorya.

## SPAIN

No longer the top vacation spot for German tourists, Spain now holds more interest for AGS megacorps than the government. Many of the megacorps have moved part of their production to the Iberian peninsula to take advantage of cheaper labor, and now enjoy cozy cooperation with Spanish corporations. Occasional eruptions of religious fundamentalism do little to disrupt corporate relations.

## SWITZERLAND

Switzerland's neutrality, financial stability, and conservatism have made it a beacon of stability in the heart of Europe. Home of the renowned Swiss banking system and the United Nations, Switzerland remains as important to Germany as to the rest of the world.

## UNITED NETHERLANDS

The German Alliance is competing with France, England, and Switzerland for influence over the royal house of Orange, the only remaining symbol of national identity left to the citizens of this state. Only the economic aid of neighboring countries allows this remnant of the Netherlands and Belgium to exist.



# GERMAN SOCIETY

**T**wenty-first century Germany is a multicultural society in which an exciting plethora of contrasts can sometimes explode into violent contradictions. Though it's true that life in major cities such as Munich differs little from the sprawls of Seattle or Tokyo, a much looser style exists in the provinces. This marked difference reflects the regionalism native to the German national character, which is also seen in the loose political structure of the German Alliance. The array of lifestyles may sometimes seem bewildering, yet it seems to have produced a remarkable stability, currently and throughout history. Today's German citizen may live how and where he likes, and everyone can find a niche.



>>>>>[Came on my own, thanks.]<<<<<<  
—Greiner (05:24:31/19-JUN-54)

## EVERYDAY LIFE

Whatever its other shortcomings, the German Alliance has one of the most all-encompassing social safety nets in the world. Any member of society willing to accept a System Identification Number (SIN), which brings with it the necessity of paying taxes and other fees, is entitled to unemployment benefits, subsidized education, a guaranteed pension, and universal public health care. The confederate government is also developing an electronic balloting system that works off the SIN, effectively disenfranchising the SINless. In the government's view, of course, only criminals and persons of dubious trustworthiness refuse to accept a SIN.

>>>>>[Hey, she's talking about us!]<<<<<<

—Matrixmaster (03:37:41/14-JUL-54)

>>>>>[Diversity, my butt! Listen up, jammer, it's got nothing to do with diversity or culture. Everybody just does whatever they like around here, and doesn't give a frag about what the authorities think. That's the really good news from "21st-century Germany."]<<<<<<

—Fritz the Blitz (22:59:03/16-MAR-54)

>>>>>[Exactly! And all that dross about a "multicultural society" isn't true, either. The fascists used to rant against foreigners. These days, they do it against metahumans. Metahumans are persecuted and discriminated against. That stinks!!!!]<<<<<<

—Greiner (21:34:56/18-JUN-54)

>>>>>[Who the frag let YOU in?!]<<<<<<

—Blue Max (00:47:18/19-JUN-54)

>>>>>[Nah.]<<<<<<

—Blue Max (19:44:12/16-JUL-54)

>>>>>[And about two-thirds of all persons earning more than EC 100,000 a year.]<<<<<<

—Deckjack (03:57:19/17-JUL-54)

>>>>>[And a lot of people who neither know how to spell SIN nor realize that such a thing even exists.]<<<<<<

—Kumpel Anton (06:00:38/17-JUL-54)

>>>>>[Here's an interesting nugget of information. Those 98.3 million AGS suits listed in the population statistics are a pure guess. The most recent census, in 2046, used the SIN and counted 97.2 million. Even then, at least 5 million SINless folk fell by the wayside, and that number hasn't gone down since then.]<<<<<<

—Sandmann (02:09:45/23-SEP-54)

## HOUSING

In the past 50 years, already-scarce living space has become even scarcer. These days, even mid-level corporate employees may have to live in a boarding house for up to three months after moving to a new job unless the company owns its own apartment blocks or an arcology. The housing problem becomes almost insurmountable for families with children. This housing crunch affects every populated area throughout the German Alliance, and any apartments, office buildings, and areas of town left unoccupied become easy targets for housenappers.

>>>>>[General duration of occupancy is 5 months. At that point, some real estate speculator usually calls the Bullen. A thirty-second item in the news mentions 2 dead and 40 arrests, and the others move on.]<<<<<<

—Sandmann (02:56:37/23-FEB-54)

The trouble does not end when people find legitimate housing, whether temporary or permanent. Property owners can and do charge exorbitant rents. A two-room apartment costs a minimum of EC 250 per month, a four-room apartment EC 600 and up. Luxury apartments, far beyond most people's pockets, start at an average price of EC 1,500 per month. A boarding house room starts at EC 300 per month, a hotel room costs EC 15 to 500, depending on location and quality, and even a cheap coffin hotel costs an average of EC 5 per night.

## Arkoblocks

Perhaps the development of Arkoblocks will one day help solve the housing shortage. Rising above the smog and acid clouds that blanket certain regions of northern

Germany are two Arkoblocks and the beginnings of a third. These giant habitats cast their shadows on the sites where the cities of Cuxhaven, Wilhelmshaven, and Emden stood before the Great Flood. The habitat of Bremerhaven, forerunner of the Arkoblocks, lies to the south of Cuxhaven and to the east of Wilhelmshaven.

Designed to house three million people, these gigantic structures have foundations averaging 500 by 1,500 meters in width and length and they rise to heights of more than 1,700 meters. Work on the habitats of Emden and Bremerhaven was begun in the year 2030, and in 2038 the building program was expanded to include Cuxhaven and Wilhelmshaven. So far, only the construction teams have been inside any of the Arkoblocks. According to rumor, the lower 200 floors are meant for living space and business purposes, while the upper 110 floors will remain off-limits to the public.

The first Arkoblock is expected to open in early summer of 2054; the second and third blocks will open in 2055 and 2057, respectively. A somewhat smaller habitat at Helgoland is projected to open in 2056.

The government chose to use drones and expert-system-controlled robots on a wide scale to construct the Arkoblocks, mostly to keep down the costs of the complicated security arrangements and detox installations required for human work-

ers. A major accident is alleged to have occurred during the work on Block III in 2047, but there is no existing public record for verifying the details.

## FOOD

Despite the best efforts of Germany's countryside communes and eco-farmers, the production rate of natural, unpolluted foodstuffs remains too low to satisfy demand. For the time being, natural food only shows up on the tables of the rich. The German Alliance produces food from two sources: the forced-growth meat and vegetable "factories" of Westphalia's Münsterland region, and ersatz, or artificial foods, from factories in the truest sense of the word. Meat is the most popular ersatz food product.

## • DEAD TRUNKEN •

PRODUCTIONS PRESENTS:

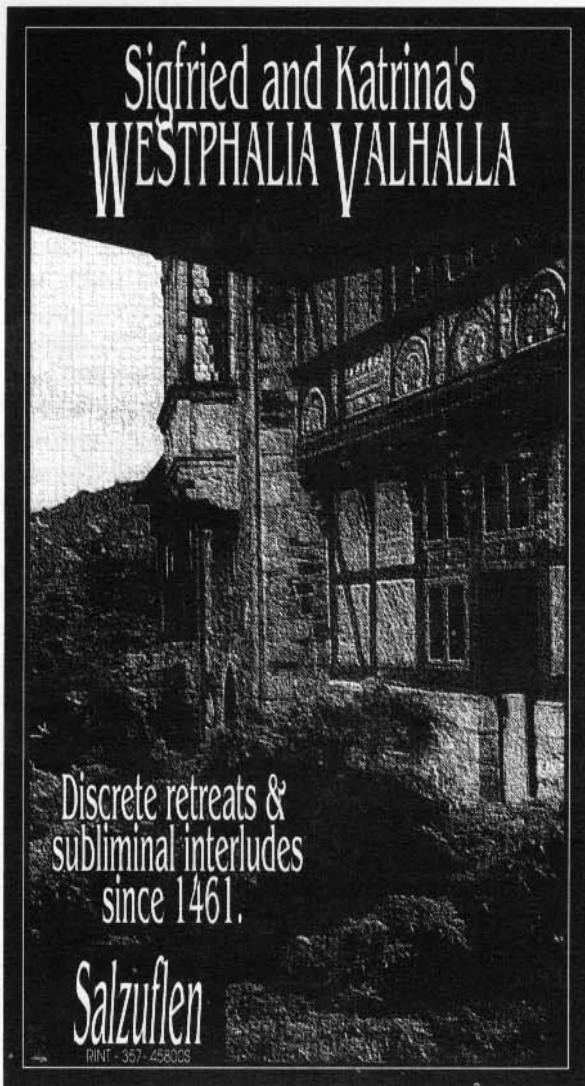
THE "SKULL KRUSHIN' NOISE" OF...

## TANKER ZOMBIE LIVE



- Friday Oct. 17th, 24th, and 31st!!!
- Shows start at 9:00. (Doors open at 7:00.)!NO WAFFEN ALLOWED! Body weaponry is permitted on a case-by-case basis! I.D. required (16 & over.)

1011 ZAUNBURG STRASSE, BERLIN 01-4635-011



With few exceptions, imports are restricted to tropical fruits and soy products.

The fast-food sector has become the average German's regular eating place, and Germany's multicultural society offers tremendous variety. Fast-food cuisine from the Near and Far East is currently in vogue across the nation, though regular restaurants offer regional cooking as the latest version of modern haute cuisine.

As always, beer, coffee, tea, and wine remain staples of the German diet, though skyrocketing prices for real coffee have revitalized the market for ersatz coffee from roasted grain. The German breweries, many located in the Rhine-Ruhr region, are increasing their output every year.

**HEALTH CARE**

The traditionally high standards of German health care helped its people survive the two waves of VITAS and the Euro-Wars in much better shape than the rest of Europe. Subsequent years have seen the expansion of the national network of hospitals and practicing specialists to a total of 1 doctor for every 244 citizens and 1 hospital bed for every 78 citizens.

AVERAGE FOOD PRICES	
Item	Price (in EC)
Soyburger	1
Turkish takeaway	3
Chinese lunch	5
Japanese lunch	7
Brunch	12
Multi-course meal	20+
in a three-star restaurant	80+
Cheap junk food	12
Average quality	20
Organically grown	50
Glass of beer, .3 liters	2
Glass of wine, .25 liters	4+
Glass of brandy, .05 liters	2+

>>>>[My, my, such optimistic numbers. Makes me wonder about the source.]<<<<<<  
 —Conrad (08:52:13/02-DEC-53)

>>>>[And let's not forget Uncle Shadowdoc.]<<<<<<  
 —Nukleus (12:47:27/01-DEC-53)

SINless or SINner, every resident of and visitor to the AGS enjoys the right to basic medical care in case of accident or acute illness. Any treatment beyond that, such as replacement limbs, long-term therapy, and so on, requires integration into the social safety net or else private health insurance. Public health care does not pay for improvements not medically necessary, such as electronic or biogenetic cyberware. Rescue helicopters and an extensive network of emergency medical teams guarantee that medical help will reach the scene of an accident or poisoning within less than half an hour. Germany's private medical service, BuMoNa, reaches emergency victims even faster, within 15 minutes.

Unfortunately, the socialized system allows profound regional variations to exist. For example, medical care conditions are considered especially poor in the Troll Kingdom and the Marienbad Council. Surprisingly, the same is true of many regions in Bavaria and Franconia.

>>>>[As the proud owner of a phäntastic replacement leg, let me tell you that BuMoNa couldn't care less about your SIN. Their contract covers basic health care as well as emergency service, and they subsidize cyberware. Get it now, and don't leave home without it.]<<<<<<  
 —Jagdpanther (02:45:12/31-JAN-54)

**PUBLIC TRANSPORT**

As mentioned earlier in **Fast Forward**, p. 13, the private car remains the average German's favorite toy. Between them, 98 million citizens own 49 million cars. Only ALI, the topnotch, computerized traffic guidance system, prevents gridlock from setting in nationwide. ALI makes the situation just bearable, as does the fact that most city centers ban cars. The national network of autobahnen and government-maintained roads connects almost all German towns with more than 2,000 inhabitants.

>>>>>[As usual, the party line casually ignores ALI's intermittent routing failures, I see. Trust me, readers; even though the system generally works, the (admittedly occasional) glitch can lock up traffic for hours at a time.]<<<<<<  
 —Karl Kornerstone (04:10:15/13-MAR-54)

Because buses bog down in city traffic, public transport in the AGS means train or tramway. During rush hour, commuters pack the trains so densely that they keep each other from falling down. For medium and long-distance travel, the publicly owned Deutsche Bundesbahn ÖAG railway continues to hold off all private competitors. Though local rail lines are considered far less comfortable than the long-distance trains, they make up for this lack of luxury with an impressive safety record.

**MEDIA**

The electronic media have finally pushed printed newspapers and magazines to the fringes of the market, and only the yellowest press and a few nationwide dailies still appear exclusively on paper. The yellow-print press faces increasingly heavy competition from Junkfax and ScreamFax services.

As of May 29, 2053, the German telecom grid boasted 19 simsense stations, 47 trideo stations, 21 private, 2DTV stations, 38 radio stations, and 51 NewsFax/EFax/ScreamFax services. In addition to the legitimate channels, 21 ground-based 2D TV stations, 14 ground-based radio stations, 11 TV and 19 pirate radio stations broadcast illegally across the AGS. Roughly the same number of illegal stations is available via satellite.

>>>>>[Including the pirate satellite Korona III, which broadcasts death races, gladiator fights, hardcore porn, and other such niceties on four channels. Unfortunately, no one can shoot down this particular purveyor of manure because it is parked right next to NavStar 9.]<<<<<<  
 —Urban Guerrilla (02:34:44/17-JUN-54)

The popularity of the electronic media is exceeded only by simsense recordings. Indeed, more than 20 million simsense players have been sold within the AGS to date.

>>>>>[Ever notice that the first simsense tanks bore quite a resemblance to a video peepshow cabin?]<<<<<<

—Doktor Schiwago (14:44:27/23-JAN-54)

The most popular simchips provide intense sensory experiences. Relaxation sims sell less well, but education and active travel programs on such subjects as hang gliding across the Grand Canyon are quite popular.

**MUSIC**

Apart from those few private concerts still sponsored by right-wing fanatics, the pseudo-folk music that dominated much of the German-language music business over the past century has disappeared, along with the home-grown German versions of American pop songs, the Schlager. Nowadays, only professional samplers produce this kind of music, for export to Japan.

>>>>>[You ever hear the PsyKore cover version of "Herzlein"? That'll really send you spinning!]<<<<<<

—MC Aloysius (20:15:12/03-JAN-54)

Next most popular in sales to the omnipresent "muzak" that echoes even through the sewer system is rock music with German, English, Japanese, or Arabic vocals. At present, the speedethno and cyberpsycho genres dominate the market, but, as in any generation, other styles also enjoy popularity. The rising interest in rock music throughout the population is largely a product of the trideo stations MVV and EuRock, which bombard their viewers with music, interviews, and special features 24 hours a day. MVV broadcasts what is currently considered mainstream rock almost exclusively, while EuRock features more obscure, underground musical styles during approximately a third of its broadcasting time.

**SPORTS AND LEISURE**

The most prominent leisure activity in the AGS is channel surfing—simply put, most people spend too much time glued to the idiot box. The disgraceful state of housing in all the Länder has made apartment-hunting an endurance sport. Because so many people spend so many of their free hours searching for a place to live, member-

AVERAGE ENTERTAINMENT PRICES	
Item	Price (in EC)
Simsense chip	10 to 60
Music chip	15
Cinema ticket	8
Disco cover charge	5+
Ticket to rock concert	20+

ship in sports clubs and other such organizations has fallen dramatically. However, most average citizens make a point of visiting a health club or body building studio on a daily basis.

>>>>[Actually, the second most popular leisure sport is having sex 2.7 times a week.]<<<<<  
—Gucky der Mausbiber (10:56:58/29-DEC-53)

This attention to personal well-being cannot be considered a national obsession: many companies require their employees to be fit and attractive. These companies willingly subsidize health club visits during working hours as long as their employees return to work immaculately dressed and groomed.

Despite the horrific demands placed on individuals' vanishing leisure time, attendance at professional and amateur sporting events has actually increased in recent years. Regional soccer leagues, the Teuton Bowl elimination tournaments, Urban War, combat biking, hoverball, and corp maneuvers rank among the most popular spectator events.

## FASHION

The designers in Paris, Milano, and Düsseldorf keep busy by creating a new fashion trend every season, and producers of ready-to-wear fashions slavishly copy each trend, often reproducing each design in a multitude of unique fabrics.

>>>>[Keeps the slave laborers in Malaysia, Angola, and Romania working, too.]<<<<<  
—Nucleus (07:44:27/11-APR-54)

In the summer of 2052, German fashion mimicked the clothing style preferred by French aristocrats. The winter of that year saw the fashionable set dressed in neo-baroque style, with an emphasis on shades of canary yellow and pink. The dominant styles of 2054 rely on natural colors, a selection that unfortunately includes several quite disgusting shades.

>>>>[A marvel to be seen—dysentery green.]<<<<<  
—No Fun (00:14:02/13-MAR-54)

Double- and triple-breasted suits made from fine natural fabrics, usually lined with bulletproof kevlar, remain a fashion constant for bankers and corporate executives. Suits who fancy themselves a little rebellious in their off-hours affect various punk fashions, often combining avant-garde hair, jewelry, and makeup styles with Japanese kimonos. Cosmetic operations to change the iris, jewelry implants in the skin, and luminous tattoos are also very popular.

## SUBCULTURES

Germany's diverse culture supports many alternative lifestyles. For the urban Joe Average, most subcultures seem odd, but not remarkably so. Two particular subcultures, the lowtech romantics and the jousters, comprise the exotic fringe. Most citizens pursue far more mundane interests.

### LOWTECH ROMANTICS

The creeping growth of urban conglomerations such as the Rhine-Ruhr megaplex created a backlash in parts of Germany. Whole groups of young people, most espousing left-wing, ecological views, left the cities and occupied rural areas unsuited for agro-industrial use. They formed so-called lowtech communes, villages committed to making a living from the production of natural bioproducts and using as little modern technology as possible.

>>>>[Hee, hee, hee.]<<<<<  
—Gucky der Mausbiber (03:34:21/19-JUL-54)

Decades of population shift into the cities had depopulated entire regions, and so these idealists, dubbed "lowtech romantics," found plenty of empty farms and even whole villages open for housenapping. Often, they did this with the blessing of the local Land government.

>>>>[Housenap?]<<<<<  
—Frazier (13:24:17/01-NOV-54)

>>>>[The term refers to squatting, the practice of illegally entering and occupying buildings left to rot by real estate speculators. Actually, the German language has two distinct terms for squatting: "hausbesetzung," the usual kind of squatting, and "instandbesetzung," or housenapping. In the case of housenapping, the new, illegal tenants repair the damage done by the previous owner's neglect. These days, housenapping is the more prevalent practice.]<<<<<  
—Raghnal (00:10:43/02-NOV-54)

Lowtech romantics usually find favor with their neighbors. People willing to reclaim and refurbish abandoned property tend, by nature, to be conscientious (if not aggressively so) and accepting of social mores. Local law enforcement usually watches these groups closely until assured that they intend to be productive members of society.

Two of the largest and best-known communes are the "Hermann der Cherusker" community in East Westphalia-Lippe, and the "Läbensgünschtler" in the Erzebirge Mountains. The Cherusker commune takes its name from the Germanic chieftain Arminius, who de-

feated three Roman legions near the Teutoburg Forest in 9 A.D. "Läbensgüschtle" is a dialectal rendering of the German word for "bon vivant."

>>>>[Statistically, twice as many romantics as suits end up in the loony bin.]<<<<<<  
—Backup (21:37:34/17-DEC-53)

## JOUSTERS

Though they exist on the furthest fringe of German society, the jouster subculture is growing in popularity, despite the dangers of their illegal activities. Bikers and street gangs first used armed vehicles for turf fights, but the true beginnings of jousting began in villages and small towns left half-depopulated by urban migration.

In the 2030s, leading automotive corporations began producing cars with heavy weapons mounted on the chassis. Unable to find enough test drivers for new production models, the corps turned to the street gangs, finding many members ready to pick up high pay for a thrill. The corps chose to stage these violent test drives in semi-deserted towns, attracting considerable attention from bored, rural youths. Commercial tapes of these "test drives" turned into mass-market hits, and jousting evolved into a popular sport despite the fact that it remained illegal in most Länder. Eventually, the fast-growing number of jousters exhausted the supply of small towns in which to fight and they started looking for other opportunities to pursue their violent pastime.

Today, jousts exist to suit every taste. So-called "stock car races" between unarmed vehicles form a part of every trideo channel's programming, usually slotted with youth programs. The illegal "death races" between heavily armed and armored cars are shown as well. In these races only one driver may leave the arena alive, and spectators wager large bets on the survivability of their favorite combatants. Reproduced on tapes, chips, and simsense, jousts rank among the entertainment industry's top adrenaline-boosters. Not surprisingly, rumors are rife that a number of media corporations secretly sponsor the death races.

>>>>[Yo! And for another variation, check out the free demo fights on the German autobahnen!]<<<<<<  
—Speedracer (23:02:45/16-JAN-54)

>>>>[What do you mean?]<<<<<<  
—Greiner (16:59:23/18-JAN-54)

>>>>[The pig's loose on the bahn, I tell you. Lots of those adrenaline junkies are actually staging their own private jousts, using heavy MGs for lances. They usually slot it at night, and if a rival gang wanders into their sights, you can see the fireworks for kilometers around.]<<<<<<  
—Jagdpanther (05:57:19/03-FEB-54)

## GERMAN MATRIX

Like the Japanese and American Matrix grids, all icons and constructs in the German Matrix obey the rules of the Universal Matrix Specifications set down by Fuchi at the Tokyo conference of 2039. However, the German grid also includes a few special icons required to operate this multi-level Matrix.

### DEVELOPMENT

The development of the Integrated Services Digital Network 2 (ISDN2), also called ISDNpro, began in the last century, but became established in its present form in 2041. The system's original planners envisioned the consolidation of telephone, fax, viewphone, permanent data systems, and cable television lines within a single, densely integrated grid. As technical innovations began to appear practically one after another following the introduction of simsense technology, the developers of ISDN had to adjust their plans roughly once a year, finally agreeing to adopt the standards set by Fuchi at the Universal Matrix Specifications Conference held in Tokyo in 2039. During this development phase, the designers of the German Matrix consistently built basic grid structures capable of handling five times the node capacity predicted as necessary for 2041.

By 2051, the Matrix exceeded its built-in capacity, and whole LTG areas now break down on a regular basis, a particular problem over the past three years. The grid's owner, Deutsche Telekom ÖAG, promises to increase Matrix capacity to ten times its present level by 2055, but the leaps and bounds being made in software capacity almost every few months may have already rendered this goal obsolete.

>>>>[As long as the systems remain consolidated, nothing will change. And there won't be any deregulation as long as Telekom is partially financed by DeMeKo.]<<<<<<  
—Konwacht (21:59:26/14-MAY-54)

>>>>[Until the system expands or a miracle happens, stay out of the grid between 06:00 and 22:00 unless you think it's chilly to reboot every few minutes.]<<<<<<  
—Dator (23:01:53/14-MAY-54)

Germany's present Matrix system is made up of three separate virtual universes: the basegrid, the Simlink, and the ALI traffic guidance system. The border between basegrid and Simlink is fuzzy. Simlink units are simply standard grid elements that use a slightly different coding in data transfer. Basegrid and ALI, on the other hand, share only a few connections and are divided by a clearly defined intervening space if observed from the right position.

**BASEGRID**

The basegrid configuration equals the UMS standard, with a few minor exceptions for basic Telekom services. Yellow pyramids represent digital phones, rainbow-colored columns represent input sources for cable trideo, and rainbow-colored pyramids denote 3V display units. Most international links to overseas grids are satellite-based and their respective transposers equipped with special security measures. The satellite uplinks appear as blue parabolic antennas.

>>>>[Lines via Intelsat 19-22 support Orange-3 security. Those via Eurocom are Green-3, those via NipSat Orange-5. There exist private satellites with higher security codes, but these are only accessible from within their respective systems. Forget entering cable trideo. It's easy enough to manipulate, but the memory-intensive software is slooow.]<<<<<<

—Dator (03:53:30/26-JAN-54)

**SIMLINK**

The Matrix grid's four simsense channels occupy a large chunk of the system transfer capacity. An increasing number of Matrix-service blackouts have been traced to an overload of simsense data. However much this problem inconveniences the general public and small businesses, the media giants who own the simsense channels have no motivation to change the status quo as long as their channels make a profit.

Simsense input units appear as red columns, output units as red hemispheres. Transferring data packs inside a line normally poses no danger to gridrunners, but the combined presence of simsense data, various persona icons, and IC within a node always carries the potential to create a local overload or even a subsystem crash. Entering the simlink dataflow is not only prohibited, but potentially fatal. The similarity between simsense and Matrix data, coupled with the sheer mass of the dataflow, can easily result in a total failure of input units and immediate brain death.



>>>>[HANDS OFF!]<<<<<

—No Fun (04:26:34/01-MAY-54)

>>>>[They say MSI is working on a wiz new black IC called Terminal Dumper that grabs a persona and dumps it into the nearest simsense display unit. Of course, the Data Security Act makes that illegal, but it sure as hell would make an effective security H-bomb. Fortunately for us, it'll take years before a system like that hits the open market.]<<<<<<

—Sandmann (23:43:10/29-MAY-54)

>>>>[Good thing the simlink systems use Red-6 or equivalent security. Even a dump program won't find that easy to crack.]<<<<<<

—Dator (05:23:19/23-JUN-54)

**ALI**

The ALI traffic guidance system, the grid's third level, is only connected to the Matrix grid in a few spots. This remarkable construct within the Matrix controls traffic throughout Germany; its icon is an antique VW Beetle floating above the grid. To reach the ALI, a decker must travel through the appropriate SANs until he reaches the "empty space" that marks where ALI begins. Under normal circumstances, ALI's high security codes make it impossible to intrude from

any other place within the Matrix.

>>>>[The relevant nodes are at least Red-4 and iced from top to toe. I've seen MSI Highlanders, Fuchi Wolves and Samurais, and even a Haarman Black Vulture there.]<<<<<<

—Apex (02:37:31/19-APR-54)

However, any system as vast as ALI has potential weak points. To protect those points and guard against intruders, ALI Operation Police (ALIOPs) supervise the system around the clock. These dedicated cyberjocks also monitor road traffic.

ALI's capacity to reroute traffic offers many benefits when used as intended; it prevents traffic jams and accidents, saving both money and time. Such a system also lends itself easily to misuse, however. Simply copying the data packs (which represent actual vehicles) can confuse the rerouting system into counting illusory vehicles as real, and prompt it to redirect traffic according to false data. The ALIOPs' function is to prevent the consequences of such tampering, and so they have to be the best deckers money can buy.

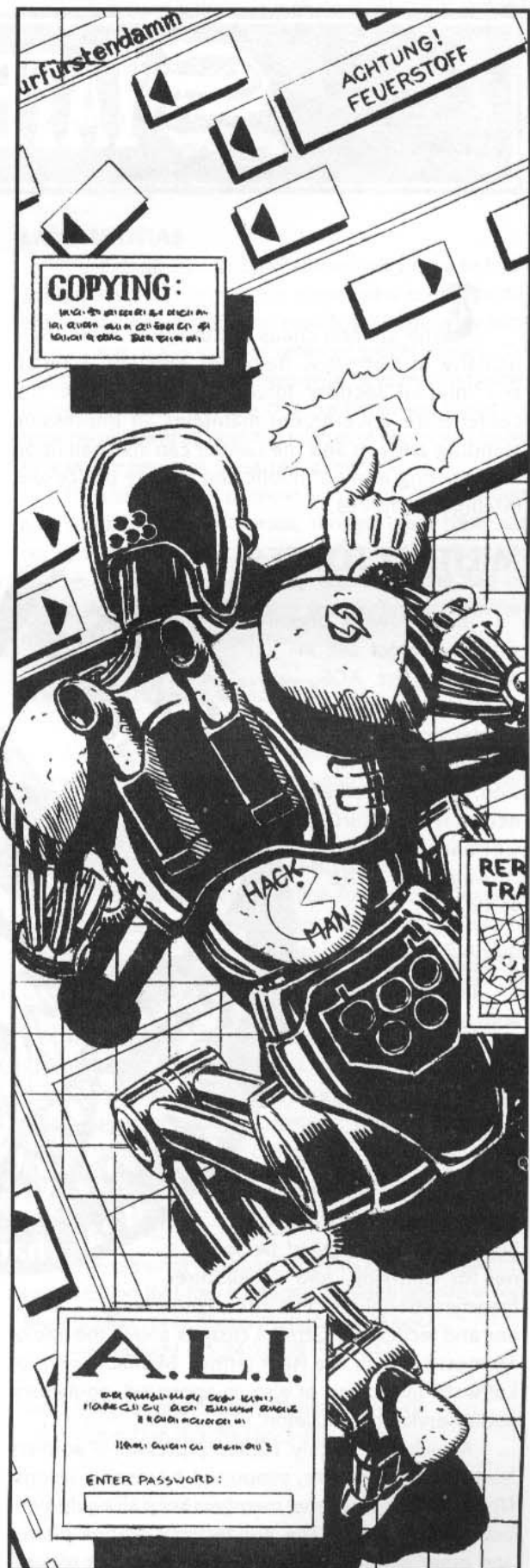
>>>>>[Exactly, because we cannot be bribed.]<<<<<<  
 —Nemesis (Chaos XXIII) (time stamp deleted)

To help free the ALIOPs from purely routine tasks, ALI supports various automated supervision systems, for example, to prevent "ghost cars" from appearing and to delete them quickly. The entire system exists in duplicate, and the supervision subsystems and deckers also constantly check it against its twin to detect ghosts.

ALI's guidance system is decentrally organized, with the actual CPU and the requisite giant memory unit physically present in the ALI administration headquarters, and all other parts of the system distributed within ALI-equipped vehicles. The connections between ALI vehicles and the ALI administrative headquarters are built into the road surface. Guidance elements in buses, trains, and ships also use ALI within certain locales. To prevent tampering, the connecting node inside every ALI-equipped car includes special IC that monitors illegal entry into the ALI grid. When an illegal call occurs, the IC directs the ALI vehicle to the nearest police station at top speed.

>>>>>[The IC is effectively Red-6.]<<<<<<  
 —Nucleus (00:04:27/03-JUL-54)

>>>>>[Lucky for us the highway code revision proposed by the CVP got blocked. That little bill would've made ALI equipment mandatory in every new vehicle.]<<<<<<  
 —Dator (03:51:55/23-MAY-54)



# STATE SECURITY

The general chaos of Europe in 2054, particularly in Germany, demands efficient external and internal security forces. For that reason the confederate government maintains an impressive standing army. It and the Länder can also call upon a staggering array of public and private police and intelligence forces.

## MILITARY FORCES

The following organizations protect the integrity of the AGS and/or its individual Länder from external attack or invasion, and serve, when necessary, to further German interests throughout the world.

### BUNDESWEHR

In accordance with the European arms reduction talks of 2041, the Bundeswehr (Confederate Armed Forces) exists purely to defend German national territory. The arms talks imposed a ceiling of 250,000 enlisted personnel for Germany, and so all three branches strongly emphasize defensive weapons and tactics. All German citizens above the age of 18 must serve in the Heer (army), Marine (navy), or Luftwaffe (air force), or else an approved, equivalent social service organization.

A cadre of roughly 10,000 professional soldiers leads the Bundeswehr, supported by reserve troops. Upon discharge, reserve members keep all equipment but their weapons. The Bundeswehr battles pirates and other external threats, but does not act to sup-

press revolts. Such internal security problems fall to the jurisdiction of other organizations.

>>>>[Keep in mind that many officers are cyber-enhanced; comes with the territory, so to speak. Watch out for the boys and girls in green!]<<<<<  
—Fritz the Blitz (21:34:27/19-DEC-53)

### MET2000

One of the largest mercenary organizations in the world, the rapid-action force MET 2000 (Mobile Eingreiftruppe) comprises a complete military; army, navy, and air force. Organized as ÖAG, a partly public corporation, MET 2000's several shareholders include the confederate government (34 percent), IFMU corporation (21 percent), Ruhrmetall (18 percent), other large shareholders including Ares Macrotechnology (19 percent), and thousands of small shareholders (18 percent).

MET2000 provides work for thousands of men and women from various countries. MET2000's navy is by far the smallest of its three branches, but makes up for its size in the quality of its recruits and materiel. All MET2000 soldiers receive exceptional military training, and the organization equips many of its troops with powerful cyberware. MET2000 equipment represents the newest and best in modern military hardware. Because the MET charter stipulates that at least half its troops must be at the disposal of the AGS government, one of MET2000's primary barracks lies at the SOX border and in the North German Federation. The remaining 50 percent of the troops are for hire, but several restrictions determine where they can and cannot serve.



MET2000 units have fought with success in the Balkans, India, Central Africa, Russia, and South America. As a rapid action force, MET2000 is best suited to combat external military threats. Its shareholding corporations supply the force with the latest weapons and equipment as well as some prototypes manufactured by those corporations, giving MET an impressively high level of technical support.

>>>>[Let's say it straight out: MET2000 is the successor to the Foreign Legion, but better trained and equipped. If the drek hits the fan somewhere and German interests are in danger, you can bet your bottom nuyen the Black Berets will show up.]<<<<<

—Jagdpantser (04:28:56/23-MAY-54)

### BUNDESGRENZSCHUTZ

Toward the end of the 20th century, the collapse of the Berlin Wall and the reunification of West and East Germany deprived the then-Federal Border Guards of their principal reason for being, but gave new importance to the Guards' secondary role as a federal police force. The creation of the AGS reestablished protection of German borders as an important task, but the BGS (Confederate Border Guards) primarily functions as the paramilitary arm of the Confederate Criminal Police (Bundeskriminalamt) and Office for Internal Security (Bundesamt für Innere Sicherheit). BGS hit teams, known as Grenzschutzgruppen, or GSG, battle guerrilla fighters and terrorists, and their skills and cold-blooded efficiency strike fear into criminals even beyond Germany's borders.

>>>>[Meaning they serve (illegally) in foreign parts. They're tough!]<<<<<

—Fritz the Blitz (20:44:18/07-NOV-53)

### BUNDESKRIMINALAMT

The Bundeskriminalamt, or Confederate Criminal Police, represents one of the few holdovers from the days of the Federal Republic. The creation of the AGS transferred most of the BKA's powers to the Länder; the modern-day BKA wields jurisdiction only over criminal acts involving two or more Länder. The BKA concentrates mainly on international crime, fighting within the framework of the Interpol treaty of 2027 and paying particular attention to the international Mafia and BTL merchants operating from the Far East.

>>>>[And because we all know how helpless international crime is against the highly paid professionals of the international police forces, we are all quaking in our boots!]<<<<<

—Slasher (22:57:51/19-AUG-54)

>>>>[I've seen yaks and mobsters with your attitude lying in their own blood in Hungary.]<<<<<

—Hitman Harry (00:02:34/20-AUG-54)

>>>>[And I've seen families of BKA agents crying at funerals. Live by the sword, die by the bullet.]<<<<<

—Don Don (03:14:51/23-AUG-54)

### LAND MILITIAS

The Constitution of 2045 allows every Land to build a volunteer militia, its size not to exceed one-thousandth of the total population, and prohibited from using such heavy weapons as combat tanks or fighter planes. The militias of Saxony and Württemberg have reached maximum manpower; the free cities of Berlin and Hamburg have no militia at all, and the militias of the other Länder vary in size between these two extremes.

The Land militias' purpose is to secure Land borders and suppress internal revolts, though none have had occasion to fulfill such purposes. In practice, the Land militias occupy themselves by presenting the flag on official occasions and providing security for Land government buildings and major institutions.

### INTERNAL SECURITY

The following police and intelligence agencies handle domestic law enforcement and counter homegrown threats to the national and Land governments.

#### BUNDESAMT FÜR INNERE SICHERHEIT

The BIS (Confederate Office for Internal Security) performs domestic counterespionage throughout the German Alliance. Not surprisingly, BIS personnel include more than a few hermetic mages who use their talents for surveillance.

The successor to the Federal Republic's Bundesamt für Verfassungsschutz (Federal Office for the Protection of the Constitution), the BIS now handles covert surveillance of all megacorps within Germany. If the BIS must act against a corp, it may call on special agents of the Bundesgrenzschutz (see above) to form a rapid-response force.

>>>>[From what I've heard, the BIS is the only security organization that has managed to place agents in top-level positions in various megacorps.]<<<<<

—Konwacht (05:24:28/08-FEB-54)

>>>>[My funeral comments stand.]<<<<<

—Don Don (03:20:15/23-AUG-54)

## ARGUS

Technically a subsidiary of MET2000, Argus is a topnotch secret service. Composed of a mere few hundred agents, this military intelligence service performs espionage and counterespionage for all AGS nations and corporate shareholders in MET.

Like their mercenary counterparts, Argus agents boast top-grade gear and training, and operate anywhere in the world for a fee. In the service of the AGS, they perform all tasks previously executed by the old Federal Republic of Germany's Military Intelligence Service.

>>>>[I've heard they initiate spying missions for their private interests too; not just to pave the way for MET actions, but to broaden their own power base.]<<<<<<  
—Jagdpanther (00:47:12/03-JAN-54)

>>>>[I've heard they do work for the UN, mostly assassinating so-called tyrants all around the globe.]<<<<<<  
—Novo Ordo Saeclorum (02:19:27/03-JAN-54)

>>>>[If you kill the UN reference, the bit about assassinations is close to the truth. . .]<<<<<<  
—Fritz the Blitz (03:37:49/03-JAN-54)

## LAND POLICE FORCES

Every Land supports a police force (polizei) to perform the standard police duties required to maintain a modern society. The major differences between the German Alliance's various member-states become sharply apparent when examining the budgets available to the various forces and the different laws limiting or favoring police actions.

>>>>[Tell me about it. Almost no one outside Westphalia realizes that one of the "education measures" favored by the local police is the use of public stocks—no, not financial measures. The stocks we're talking about here are the kind from the bad old days—the wooden frames with holes cut to fit appropriate limbs that were set up in town squares so that other, better people could insult whoever got caught, and throw various disgusting substances at them. Nowadays, of course, they build the stocks out of something that even the most soulless cyberjock couldn't escape. I think the disgusting substances must also be less real.]<<<<<<  
—Sankt Byte (21:56:52/23-JUN-54)

Regardless of local variations in budget or level of law enforcement, all Land police forces support special-action teams (SEKs) to combat civil unrest and terrorism. Many of these teams have a reputation for brutality.

## PRIVATE SECURITY SERVICES

In addition to maintaining its confederate and Land forces, the German Alliance has long-term contracts with several specialized private services to perform jobs for which government forces are not well suited. One of the duties of the Bundesamt für Innere Sicherheit is the supervision of these private security providers. The best-known security services are described below.

### ProSecuritas

The unobtrusive personal protection ProSecuritas (PS) provides is unsurpassed in Europe. This organization pumps most of its resources into serving megacorporate and government officials.

### Lock and Key (Verband der Wach und Schließgesellschaften)

The VWS handles site and perimeter protection for government and corporate installations. Its employees are highly trained but lightly armed.

### Knight Errant

One of the few foreign security services operating in the AGS, this wholly owned subsidiary of Ares Macrotechnology consistently lives up to its worldwide, sterling reputation in all aspects of security.

### Deutscher Sicherheitsdienst

The Deutscher Sicherheitsdienst (DSD) cars travel the autobahnen as couriers and escorts who prefer outrunning trouble to outgunning it.

### SecuriTech International

SecuriTech International (STI) handles Matrix security, and has emerged as a major player in the fight against computer crime.

## CRIME

Though Asian gangs such as the yakuza and Seoulpa Rings run a few operations in the German Alliance, the Mafia has by far the largest presence. The Mafia and the confederate government keep an uneasy peace, in which the mob stays out of politics and the government turns a blind eye to most of the Mafia's criminal enterprises. Though it is now legal to bribe public servants, the Public Servants' Supplementary Earnings Taxation Act of 2044 made it unprofitable for the recipients. Such traditional funnels for bribes as Nebenerwerben des Beamtentums (BNeStG), the police force's Widows and Orphans Fund, are subject to taxation, and individual tax brackets are based on all income received, regardless of source. Only large corporations can afford to buy whole governments and courts these days, and their payments usually take a different form than the straightforward bribe of the past.



The Mafia still controls petty crime, prostitution, and protection rackets, but currently considers gun-running and chip-dealing unprofitable. Famous for their bloody feuds, various branches of the Mafia have finally made their peace with one another, and now control well-defined territories with remarkably little dispute. The Russian Mafia theoretically controls Berlin and most of rural Germany, and the Serbian Mafia holds sway in the big sprawls and metropolises. All Mafia recognize this division of power, and so the respective group need enforce their borders only occasionally.

>>>>[Which they do by launching "minor" firefights in which nobody uses anything bigger than a rocket launcher. Real fraggin' honorable opponents, here.]<<<<<<  
 —Hazzard (11:27:00/16-AUG-54)

In a rather strange economic twist, a single, unknown individual has controlled the entire BTL market since 2046. Import, production, and distribution of BTLs in Germany take place under this mysterious master criminal's aegis, and no single team or organization has been able to break his or her hold on the market. The consumer benefits from this situation with guaranteed price levels and chip quality. The government must worry, however, at the thought of harboring within its borders an unknown economic power of this size. Not only does this criminal's financial empire lie beyond their control, but the government cannot prepare a defense against an enemy it cannot identify.

### STREET GANGS

Almost every city quarter is run by gangs, most organized in strict hierarchies. These gangs control all criminal activities on their turf, from burglary to picking pockets, from rigged bets to assassination—the gangs will do anything for the right price. Non-gang members who plan to indulge in criminal activity in any given city quarter would do well to seek permission from the local boss and prepare to give up a substantial share of the profits. Potential criminals who fail to follow the "proper procedure" may end up face-down in the gutter.

>>>>[A decent flexbooster and a fat gun serve the same purpose. Those street-gang louts are just little blowhards.]<<<<<<  
 —Shutdown (04:33:10/17-FEB-54)

>>>>[Little blowhards with assault guns, and one in three of us is chromed to the max. Be seeing you, darling!]<<<<<<  
 —Kid Creole (04:40:52/17-FEB-54)

Rather than claiming turf and protecting it, motorized street gangs get their fun (and make a living) by terrorizing residents of ritzy neighborhoods, screaming around town in cars or on motorbikes, pillaging and looting as they go. Generally consisting of psychopaths, often metahumans who goblinized late in life and went mad because of it, these gangs rule the streets of the sprawls after nightfall. Anyone unlucky enough to witness a pack of these maniacs cutting a swath through defenseless bystanders, all the while howling like barghests, learns to appreciate the relative safety of the well-protected street gang turf.

The "robber knights" (Raubritter) are a less psychopathic but equally dangerous motorized gang. These heavily armed thieves maintain numerous hide-outs along the autobahnen from which they attack trucks and passenger vehicles for cargo, kidnapping victims, and sometimes just for fun.

To lure unsuspecting motorists into an ambush, the Raubritter indulge in such technical trickery as sending false signals through the traffic guidance system, and sometimes rely on old-fashioned methods, such as camouflaging stretches of the autobahn with fake, inaccurate information boards. They also frequently try to force entry into moving vehicles from other cars and hovercraft. The Raubritter will generally give safe passage to anyone who peacefully hands over his property and pays the ransom

demanded because the gang wants to avoid unnecessary bloodshed for fear of a large-scale government crackdown. Rival gangs, random jousters, and other armed opponents and armored vehicles rarely survive an encounter with the Raubritter in one piece, however. The "Ritter vom Loe zum Loe" who operate in the Northern Rhine-Ruhr sprawl proudly boast that only three vehicles have managed to escape from them during the last five years, and other groups of robber knights claim equally impressive records.





Only the establishment of the Alliance of German States allowed Germany to recover sufficient internal stability to conduct business as usual. Though her geographical place at the heart of continental Europe still gave the German Alliance an economic advantage, the declining demand for coal and lignite was a blow to the mining industry and left Germany with one less natural resource to exploit. Forced by circumstances to change its economic base, Germany used its central location to rebuild its economy on trade, processing, and technical expertise.

The autonomy corporations enjoy in the confederacy makes the German Alliance an attractive site for multinational megacorporations, but numerous medium-size companies active in research and development also make their homes in Germany and helped launch the country's current economic boom. In turn, the innovation and creative thinking exemplified by these smaller, more flexible companies lures investors to Germany, and so increases profits. Most of these smaller companies have managed to resist determined takeover attempts by the megacorps. On occasion, several competing small businesses forget their differences long enough to unite in the fight against megacorporate incursions into their territory and livelihood.

When most of the smaller firms balked at outright takeover attempts, the megacorps resorted to bribing away their best employees. This rash of head-hunting has, at times, almost matched the worst excesses of military recruiters in the early 19th century, who kidnapped and forcibly enlisted young men in the army and navy. Those engineers or managers who refuse to be bought face increasingly dire consequences; corporate recruiters quickly resort to pressuring their families and spreading particularly ugly rumors in attempts to force the best and brightest to change jobs.

>>>>>[And if that don't work either, you blow them away. The whole idea is to hurt the competition, right? Case in point: Martina Czernik. The AIA didn't geek her. It was Gianfranco Albini—and he's expensive. Ten to one it was a corp hit. What personal interest would a mafioso have in icing a rocket engineer?]<<<<<<

—Frankenstein (21:44:37/23-JUL-54)

The state has little impact on the economy, limiting its participation to running a few services necessary to the national infrastructure, such as the railways and the autobahnen, on private-sector terms.

>>>>>[Private sector! Don't make me laugh! Their systems and technical equipment are so outmoded, particularly Telekom's, that the people who run them should be blasted to the high heavens for incompetence. We of the "small companies" can show them how a modern infrastructure functions!]<<<<<<

—DIHT (00:50:32/22-AUG-54)

## PRINCIPAL INDUSTRIES

Major German industries include chemistry, biochemistry, alchemy, mechanical engineering, auto manufacturing, aerospace technology, microtechnology, and environmental technology. Each of these industries adds strength to the German economy.

The alchemy industry promotes research into the development of magic-inducing potions, poison-resistant plants, new plastics with the properties of metals, and ultra-high-temperature superconductors. German fusion reactors, automated factories, and armored vehicles represent the best-known products of the mechanical engineering industry, though less sophisticated machines for use in developing countries also sell well. As was true historically, the German auto industry concentrates on manufacturing luxury limousines, trucks, and heavy-duty motorbikes. Aerospace technology produces transport helicopters, fighter planes, guided missiles, orbital factories, and communications satellites. Microtechnology produces micro-machines, precise laboratory equipment, prosthetics, and also handguns. Environmental technology includes such innovations as solar energy stations, electric vehicles, breathing masks, and waste-water purification plants. Some biotech companies plan to complement this technology with genetically engineered bacteria and soil-friendly plants to purify and enrich earth, water, and air.

Weapons continue to be a major German export, as export regulations remain lax under the confederate government. Even if government policy changes, all

observers expect the extraterritorial megacorps to continue the lucrative and lethal arms trade originating on German soil.

>>>>[Hey, we didn't make the export laws, okay?]<<<<<<  
—Wagedeck (02:37:14/12-JUL-54)

## MAJOR CORPORATIONS

The following profiles briefly describe Germany's major domestic and foreign-owned corporations. Profitability is measured by tax returns, which creates a natural margin of error. For corporations with headquarters based outside the German Alliance, annual profits incorporate the totals of all subsidiaries operating on German soil.

### AG CHEMIE EUROPA

**Home Office Location:** Frankfurt-Hoechst, Greater Frankfurt

**President/CEO:** Meinhard G. Beilstein

#### Principal Divisions

**Division Name:** General Genetics Worldwide Inc.

**Division Head:** Cyrene Hollister

**Chief Products/Services:** Human genetics (research), pharmaceuticals

#### Business Profile:

AG Chemie Europa, a merger of the 20th century's biggest German chemical corporations, produces paints, plastics, pharmaceuticals, pesticides, biotechnical replacement parts, and poison gas. Many of these products are manufactured by specialized subsidiaries, whose relationships to the corporation's Frankfurt headquarters are hidden by such a maze of shareholdings, sub-holdings, cross-holdings, and holding companies that the BIS assigned a special investigative team to monitor only this corp's activities. Its publicly held subsidiary, General Genetics, indulges in research technically prohibited in the German Alliance. However, the confederate government in Hannover apparently feels no qualms about accepting the millions of tax ecus this wholly owned AGChem subsidiary generates every year.

>>>>[There must be a reason why none of the research subjects the company hires for field testing in Haiti and the Dominican Republic are ever seen again. . .]<<<<<<  
—No Fun (00:46:12/21-MAR-54)

Aside from General Genetics, AGChem owns stock in the BuMoNa private health service, Besser Leben, Darmstadt Bioptics, Magdeburg Compound Materials, and several Swiss pharmaceutical companies. AGChem also owns most of Frankfurt in one form or another,

through real estate, home and highway construction companies, insurance companies, retail chains, and through <<BLOCK DELETE!!!! 21Mp>>

>>>>[Let's skip the euphemisms and say it out straight—through direct involvement in all decisions made by the Land government.]<<<<<<  
—Pyrolator (03:00:32/22-APR-54)

>>>>[By the way, the few bits of Frankfurt not owned by AGC belong to the Bankenverein.]<<<<<<  
—Der Alte Ägypter (22:59:43/27-APR-54)

In the arenas of chemistry and micro-chemistry, the British firm Zeta ImpChem offers AGChem its only serious European competition. The noisy public competition between these two chemical giants is actually a carefully orchestrated façade; Zeta ImpChem holds a majority of shares in one of AGChem's three core companies. Both companies staked their various claims to segments of the chemical industry long ago, and present a united front to unwanted competitors. Industrial espionage between the two has taken on the spirit of a sporting competition.

#### Security/Military Forces:

AG ChemEurop mounts top-drawer security on all levels. The corp employs skilled combat mages and mercenaries wielding cutting-edge equipment. Massive amounts of gray and black IC protect all high-capacity Matrix nodes. Every few months, a new rumor circulates that tells the tragic tale of some poor soul who tried to break into AGChem, only to be discovered brain-dead in a hotel coffin or bullet-riddled and dangling from a high-voltage fence.

>>>>[I'd say half of that is fiction. Maybe.]<<<<<<  
—Der Alte Ägypter (19:22:56/21-MAY-54)

### ARES MAKROTECH EUROPE

**Home Office Location:** Copenhagen, Denmark

**President/CEO:** Søren Johansson

#### Principal Divisions

**Division Name:** Ares Integrated Solutions

**Division Head:** Alwin Errrich

**Chief Products/Services:** Machine tools, micro- and nanotechnology

**Division Name:** Knight Errant Security

**Division Head:** Sibylle Mertens

**Chief Products/Services:** Courier/escort services, personal security

**Business Profile:**

This well-known megacorporation rarely ventures into new fields, preferring instead to turn a steady profit in a secure niche of its own. Though Ares occasionally makes obvious attempts to play off various industrial giants and sometime competitors Ruhrmetall and Saeder-Krupp against each other, it usually keeps its machinations unobtrusive.

Ares Integrated Solutions, located in Hanau, Greater Frankfurt, manufactures machine tools and production units for micro- and nanotechnology intended for sale within Europe. One of the corporation's greatest strengths is its ability to supply fully automated, mobile production and repair facilities for light and medium weapons, which is why MET2000 is among its customers. Knight Errant is one of the few foreign security services with a good reputation in Germany, providing mainly courier and escort services. Ares is headquartered in Cologne, in the Land of Nordrhein-Ruhr.

**Security/Military Forces:**

Ares relies totally on Knight Errant, and can call on the entire arsenal of its UCAS headquarters in an emergency.

**AZTECHNOLOGY**

**Home Office Location:** Mexico City, Aztlan

**President/CEO:**

Juan Atzcapotzalco

**Principal Divisions**

**Division Name:** Aztechnology International Technological and Magical Development (Europe)

**Division Head:** Vittoria Cascorele Main

**Chief Products/Services:**

Magical research

**Business Profile:**

Aztech Europe concentrates on research and technical exploitation of magical phenomena. The corporation owns several research laboratories in the Bavarian Alps,

near Heidelberg in Greater Frankfurt, and at the Kyffhäuser in Thuringia.

According to rumor, Aztechnology's current research involves toxic spirits and combat spells. Whether or not that is true, the corp's research labs are remarkably unobtrusive, rarely even recognized as such by the local population. Aztechnology declines to make its research results public in Germany, instead sending them off to disappear inside the Great Pyramid in Aztlan. In Germany,

Aztechnology markets simple household utensils and ersatz food, as well as a few spell foci, all sold exclusively through a corp-owned chain of department stores.

**Security/Military Forces:**

Aztechnology maintains the same first-class corp troops in its European branch offices as it does elsewhere in the world. Well trained and equipped, these troops participated in recent SOX maneuvers with considerable success. Aztechnology also maintains its own air force, equipped with fighter planes and ultralights for the purpose of espionage. Every installation also has access to the services of shamans and hermetic mages.

**DEUTSCHE MEDIEN UND KOMMUNIKATIONS AG**

**Home Office Location:** Free City of Hamburg

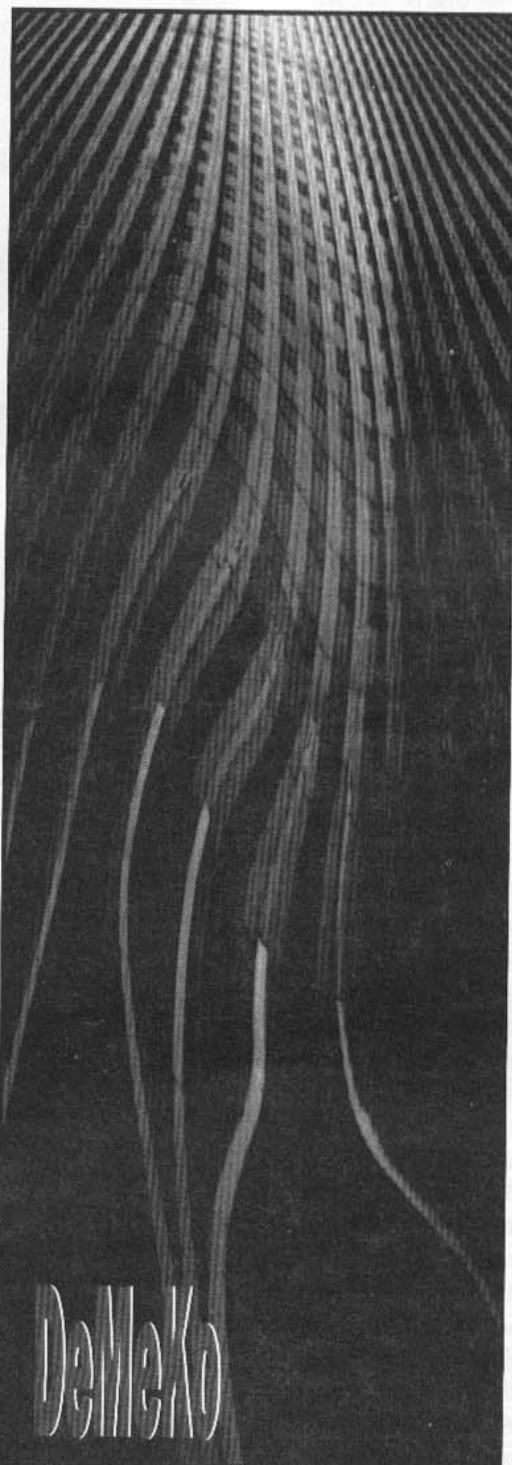
**President/CEO:** Fritz X (Friedrich Xaver Mooshuber)

**Chief Products/Services:**

DeMeKo sells, leases, produces, and censors anything remotely connected with the media, from daily newspapers to hardcore simsense to trideo commercials and party leaflets.

**Business Profile:**

DeMeKo is the parent company of approximately 1,200 newspapers, magazines, electronic news services, junk fax services, MatrixMail services, radio stations, video and trideo stations, and much more. It wholly or par-



tially owns 40 percent of all media services within the German Alliance, and owns various foreign ventures as well. DeMeKo's "ancestors gallery" in the Hamburg headquarters includes photos of Axel C. Springer, Rupert Murdoch, Leo Kirch, Hoho Yamakane, and Orson Welles as Citizen Kane. This corporation believes in growth and will use any means necessary to promote it. Its hire-and-fire politics affect everyone and everything associated with it, from data-entry wage slaves to individual journalists or actors to entire printing companies and broadcasting stations. People working for any part of DeMeKo know they could be out in the gutter at anytime in the interest of profit.

#### Security/Military Forces:

Nothing is as old as yesterday's paper or the past hour's trideo news, so DeMeKo has no reason to keep many secrets. However, its famed corporate policy of truly equal employment, whether of neo-Nazis, rabbit-breeders, fashion czars, or eco-guerrillas, leaves its production facilities vulnerable to attack by fanatics of all kinds. DeMeKo hires local security services to provide most site protection. Within the Matrix, however, only the Hamburg headquarters has anything like adequate protection, except for temporary security measures mounted to protect certain simsense factories during the final days before DeMeKo releases such hot new products as *Nagasaki Toxic Spirits Meet Darci Lords 3*.

#### DEUTSCHE TREUHANDANSTALT FINANZTRANSAKTIONS-UND CONSULTINGÖAG

**Home Office Location:** Düsseldorf, Northrhine-Ruhr

**President/CEO:** Alfons Reurath

**Chief Products/Services:** Industrial real-estate financing

#### Business Profile:

The German Trust Institution Public Financial Transaction and Consulting Corporation holds a unique position in the German national economy. Originally established to administer and dispose of the countless state-owned companies of the former East Germany, it found its niche in the wake of the disasters of the early 21st century: the Cattenom nuclear accident, VITAS, the North Sea coast flooding, and the Euro-Wars. As part of the negotiations to establish the AGS, the separate Länder of Germany agreed that Deutsche Treuhandanstalt would handle every transaction involving industrial real-estate grounds, buildings, and investment goods. This agreement, which was designed as a measure to balance the autonomy of multinational corporations, requires all companies to buy from DT the grounds on which they wish to build as well as any buildings already in existence, and then to resell them to DT if the company fails or closes the facility for any reason.

**CYBERDEX  
DYNAMICS**

Custom filters for your cyberdecks.

>>>>[With the exception of megacorps; see Passau Treaty, §19a.]<<<<<

—KonWacht (21:08:22/31-NOV-54)

This revolutionary concept at first provoked considerable distrust and hostility, especially from cities and towns losing valuable property titles to the measure, but practical experience has demonstrated no negative effect on the economy from this limited state monopoly.

The German Alliance holds 41 percent of Deutsche Treuhand's shares, with another 14 percent held by several Land governments. The Frankfurt Bank Association owns 22 percent, various large investors own 19 percent, and the remaining 4 percent belong to small shareholders.

The Treuhand is not averse to innovative solutions. In other words, it keeps its distance from most standard transactions and serves mainly as a supervisory body. If a company falls behind in its scheduled payments to the DT, a Treuhand restructuring officer assumes control of the company; depending on the company's financial situation, Treuhand either takes it over lock, stock, and barrel or liquidates it in order to sell corporate grounds, buildings, and machines. Volkswagen and the Schumacher & Brandt department stores are the most famous companies to be absorbed by Treuhand in this fashion, both during the Crash of '29.

>>>>[Innovative solutions usually involve more or less substantial gifts and donations to the venerable partners of Greed & Avarice, beginning with the local inspector and continuing all the way up to Oberoberkassel.]<<<<<

—Don Cartello (18:43:00/17-APR-54)

>>>>[. . .]<<<<<

—Enigma (18:55:05/17-APR-54)

#### **Security/Military Forces:**

The Treuhand may call on most state security services, and therefore maintains none of its own.

>>>>[The Bundeswehr for protection of property, the BGS to evict squatters. . .]<<<<<

—Fritz the Blitz (20:03:44/28-AUG-54)

#### **ECC EUROTRONICS**

**Home Office Location:** Turin, Italy

**President/CEO:** Norman F. Kautz

#### **Principal Divisions**

**Division Name:** Cyberdynamix

**Division Head:** Annegret Berger

**Chief Products/Services:** Software, cyberdecks, computer systems

**Division Name:** Consumer Electronics Amalgamated

**Division Head:** Rick Dijkstra

**Chief Products/Services:** Cyberdecks, entertainment electronics

#### **Business Profile:**

Cyberdynamix, located in Ingolstadt, Bavaria, is the European competitor to the omnipresent Fuchi Corporation. Any product that ECC produces with even a tangential relationship to the Matrix is sold by ECC subsidiaries under the brand name Cyberdynamix; this includes software as well as cyberdecks and complete Matrix systems. Though the European equipment tends to hold up better than Fuchi products, Cyberdynamix consistently finds itself one to two years behind in development. It counters this disadvantage by selling its goods at vastly lower prices.

The CEA factories in Eindhoven, United Netherlands, produce entertainment electronics for all price ranges under the brand names Xenon, Polaris, and Phillips. The company also owns shares in a number of simsense studios, chip factories, and privately owned trideo and simsense stations. The cyberdecks offered by CEA under the Xenon MatrixMan/MatrixMaster brand name are clones of the Fuchi Series III/Series IV cyberdeck.

In addition to its two major subsidiaries, ECC sells mainframes through Central Data Systemtechnologie at Erfurt, Thuringia, and also owns the Swedish DrakenSys company that produces military expert systems. To effectively compete against Fuchi, ECC uses every legal and quasi-legal means at its disposal, from price wars and handshake deals with government agencies to industrial espionage and sabotage.

#### **Security/Military Forces:**

The various companies are guarded appropriately, with forces ranging from a few night watchmen to a complete mercenary unit supported by gunships and combat mages. In general, ECC uses physical heavy ordnance only reluctantly. In the Matrix, however, the corporation always uses its biggest guns.

#### **EUROPEAN MOTOR COMPANY**

**Home Office Location:** Prague, Czech Republic

**President/CEO:** Jean-Claude Roubillon

**Chief Products/Services:** Vehicles of all kinds

#### **Business Profile:**

EMC, whose operations are almost a monopoly in the German market, currently owns the manufacturing sites and production facilities formerly owned and operated by automakers such as Opel, Peugeot, Lancia, Skoda, and DAF.

**Security/Military Forces:**

The actual production and administration facilities mount only a light defense, but the Matrix systems of EMC's research labs pack heavy IC.

**FRANKFURTER BANKENVEREIN**

**Home Office Location:** Frankfurt, Greater Frankfurt

**President/CEO:** Monika Stüeler-Waffenschmidt

**Chief Products/Services:** Finance

**Business Profile:**

The Frankfurt Bank Association is actually a club whose members represent 36 private German banks and a number of foreign financial institutions. Though the FBA seeks to project an image of a consumer-friendly, distinguished service corporation, it actually holds a prominent place among Germany's most expansionist megacorps. The Bankenverein lends money to companies and administers their shareholdings, but its preferred method of operations is to acquire corporate holdings, real estate, and bonds in its own name. Its top managers include some of Germany's most skilled stock market players, men and women whose efforts virtually guarantee a fat payoff. Large amounts of the bank's capital are bound up in shares of innumerable other companies from all areas of the economy; 27 nations face the task of repaying billions of nuyen of debt to the Bank Association. Overall, the Frankfurt Bank Association owns so many different companies that even another financial disaster on the order of the Crash of '29 would only marginally affect it.

**Security/Military Forces:**

Because the Frankfurt Bank Association deals mostly in cash-free, electronic transactions, Matrix security is staggering. Even the smallest branch office boasts the latest in legally available IC to protect its system, and the Frankfurt headquarters offers a number of nasty illegal surprises for inquisitive deckers.

**FUCHI INDUSTRIAL ELECTRONICS**

**Home Office Location:** Tokyo, Japan

**President/CEO:** Richard Villiers

**Principal Divisions**

**Division Name:** Fuchi Pan-Europa

**Division Head:** Korin Yamana

**Chief Products/Services:** Microtronics, cyberdecks

**Division Name:** Neue Bavaria Fuchi Simsense Studios

**Division Head:** Gerhard Kiesmayr

**Chief Products/Services:** Simsense, pop music

**Business Profile:**

Fuchi Pan-Europa, based in Bochum, Northrhine-Ruhr, oversees all of Fuchi's European interests, as well as

manufacturing and distributing microtronics, cyberdecks, and neuroelectronic interfaces. Its competition forces the European arm to wage constant legal battles against the various companies producing clones of Fuchi standards, particularly ECC Eurotronics and Muller-Schlüter InfoTech. As European courts rarely adjudicate these cases completely impartially, Fuchi's European influence and market share have been on the wane for some time. Frustrated by the prospect of an eternal string of fruitless legal battles, the corporation occasionally resorts to violent out-of-court settlements.

In startling contrast to the woes of the Fuchi Pan-Europa division, Fuchi Simsense Studios lead the market in Germany by a wide and increasing margin. The studios of Neue Bavaria produce more than a third of all simsense chips offered on the European market, as well as a hefty proportion of the pop music and softcore trash genres. Current top sellers include an amazing series of aerial shots of medieval Europe and a crime series recorded using Fuchi's patented CharacterShift process. The profitability of these products and other commercial hits enables the studios to also produce more marginal properties such as documentaries and educational films.

**Security/Military Forces:**

As far as anyone knows, Fuchi maintains few corporate troops in Europe, preferring to hire experienced mercenaries for special missions. Internal security for Fuchi installations is provided by Fuchi IntSec.

**INTERNATIONALE FAHRZEUG- UND MASCHINENBAU-UNION AG**

**Home Office Location:** Munich, Bavaria

**President/CEO:** Arthur Delitzsch

**Principal Divisions**

**Division Name:** Daimler-Benz

**Division Head:** Otfried Jennings

**Chief Products/Services:** Automobiles and trucks

**Division Name:** Messerschmitt-Kawasaki Flugzeugbau (M. K. Airplanes)

**Division Heads:** Paul Birkhofer, George Tanaka

**Chief Products/Services:** Helicopters, boats, hovercraft

**Division Name:** Gesellschaft für Technische Entwicklung (Technical Development Company)

**Division Head:** Pjotr I. Wassilenko

**Chief Products/Services:** Financing building projects

**Business Profile:**

Drivers all over the world recognize personal and transport vehicles graced with the three-pointed star, the mark of Daimler-Benz manufacture, as perfect examples of the finest in German engineering. Vehicles produced by

this division of IFMU in Stuttgart, Wurttemberg, range from mid-sized sports cars to heavy-duty military trucks. Messerschmitt-Kawasaki in Munich, Bavaria, primarily manufactures helicopters, but is also researching and testing improvements to other means of transport, from boats and hovercraft to supersonic airplanes and even space shuttles. The Gesellschaft für Technische Entwicklung division, based in Dresden, Saxony, co-sponsors many reconstruction projects in various developing and East European countries, particularly those hardest hit by the Euro-Wars. Especially in Poland, GestE competes directly with Saeder-Krupp in this field. In addition to a large number of smaller companies, IFMU owns several shares in Airbus, the partly state-owned ISRO, the Zeppelin works, and MET2000. An active stock market player, IFMU seems to have a gift for finding, acquiring, and exploiting small, innovative companies. Rumors suggest that its 'gift' is nothing more than a well-staffed industrial espionage unit.

#### Security/Military Forces:

IFMU maintains extensive corporate security forces to guard its production facilities. The corporation also owns a rapid action force, and can call on MET2000 in an emergency. For magical and electronic security, IFMU hires specialists and relies on cutting-edge IC imported from Chiba, Japan.

#### MITSUHAMA COMPUTER TECHNOLOGIES

**Home Office Location:** Kyoto, Japan

**President/CEO:** Toshiro Mitsuhamma

#### Principal Divisions

**Division Name:** MCT Deutschland AG (answering to MCT Western Europe, Geneva)

**Division Head:** Yohiro Tanashika

**Chief Products/Services:** Chip and interface development for industrial machines and installations

#### Business Profile:

Known for innovation, Mitsuhamma successfully surprises its competitors every year. A combination of brilliant minds to regularly develop new products and the kind of internal security necessary to prevent information leaks has allowed the corporation to carve out a niche in installation control, a market segment largely dominated by European companies.

#### Security/Military Forces:

The MCT Deutschland facilities, located in Düsseldorf, employ local security services of sometimes dubious reputation. Their computer systems, on the other hand, boast state-of-the-art IC.

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— Kirt Vessercom, Tridspiel

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**"OI!!"**

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## MUELLER-SCHLÜTER INFOTECH

**Home Office Location:** Frankfurt, Greater Frankfurt  
**President/CEO:** Robert Schlüter, Jr.  
**Chief Products/Services:** Simsense, software, hardware

### Business Profile:

MSI products integrate virtual reality, simsense, and Matrix software and hardware. Famous for its almost indestructible persona chips and service-independent small systems, MSI's corporate history proves to every young entrepreneur that dreams can come true. Formed in 2007, the company secured a large share in the growing Matrix market solely on the basis of its high-quality products. It published VIREOS, its own version of a worldwide standard operating system for Matrix grid use before Fuchi's UMS, but when UMS was adopted as the standard, MSI adapted quickly enough to hold its market share in Europe. MSI announces new products only when ready to ship, a marketing technique that drives the competition to tear out its hair for at least six months after each release.

### Security/Military Forces:

SecuriTech International personnel guard the three MSI research centers and the Frankfurt production facilities; MSI owns 22 percent of the security company's stock, and takes advantage of that special relationship. As might be expected, MSI Matrix security is known for literally roasting intruders and their equipment.

## Injured in cyberspace?

You need a lawyer who's  
not afraid of the Matrix!



**WOLFGANG VON HALEN**  
Attorney at Law

## RENRAKU COMPUTER SYSTEMS

**Home Office Location:** Chiba, Japan  
**President/CEO:** Inazo Aneki  
**Principal Divisions**  
**Division Name:** Renraku Deutschland AG

**Division Head:** Mariko Wabanati  
**Chief Products/Services:** High-density memory chips, expert systems, mainframe architectures

### Business Profile:

Renraku Deutschland AG in Düsseldorf answers to Renraku Europa in Paris. It provides four to six companies per year with customized hardware and software, and makes a comfortable profit from this business alone. The corporation does not market its products extensively, and apparently has no plans to expand its customer base.

### Security/Military Forces:

Renraku secures its installations at Mönchengladbach (Northrhine-Ruhr), Göttingen (Hesse-Nassau), and Erfurt (Thuringia) with corporate troops, hiring support from local security firms when necessary. Renraku mainframes mount IC that is among the best available in the international market.

## RUHRMETALL

**Home Office Location:** Essen, Northrhine-Ruhr  
**President/CEO:** Martina Gehrke  
**Chief Products/Services:** Industrial machines and installations, pipes, drilling platforms, compound materials, ship engines, nuclear installations, weapons, train engines, construction machinery, and so on

### Business Profile:

The Ruhrmetall AG is the result of one of the earliest mergers between big German corporations. All the big-name steel companies of the Ruhr area, with the single exception of Krupp, united under this new management, along with several suppliers. Ruhrmetall also holds shares in other heavy industries, both within and outside Germany. Though Germany's heavy industry market supports more than one megacorporation, IFMU, Saeder-Krupp, and Ruhrmetall all subsidize their operations by maintaining profitable businesses in other branches of industry. The megacorps also feel the need to fight for percentages of the machine and installation markets with gloves off. According to rumor, the corp war games within the SOX sometimes degenerate into a bloody reality when the troops of these competing corps meet on the field.



**SAEDER-KRUPP**  
THE FUTURE OF GERMANY.



**DONT  
LET THEM  
TURN YOUR  
NEIGHBORHOOD  
INTO A  
BATTLEGROUND!**



**• VOTE FOR ACTIVE "BIS" CONTROL IN YOUR AREA! •**

**Security/Military Forces:**

The Ruhrmetall corp owns a large percentage of shares in MET2000, and so can call on its well-trained security personnel and heavy equipment at a moment's notice. Ruhrmetall maintains a significant standing security force that includes mages and deckers, organized into several mobile units. Computer security is where Ruhrmetall falls short. With the single exception of the systems inside the SOX, the IC and deckers protecting Ruhrmetall systems offer no threat to any reasonably talented intruder.

**SAEDER-KRUPP MASCHINEN UND ANLAGENBAU**

**Home Office Location:** Essen, Northrhine-Ruhr

**President/CEO:** Lofwyr (Great Dragon)

**Principal Divisions**

**Division Name:** Ruhrnuklear (Ruhr Nuclear)

**Division Head:** Hassan Necir

**Chief Products/Services:** Fusion reactors, compact slow-inclusion units, "cold" fusion reactors

**Division Name:** Krupp Sondergerätebau (Krupp Specialist Engineering)

**Division Head:** Dietmar Zöfeld

**Chief Products/Services:** Orbital factories, spacecraft engines, aquanautical installations

**Business Profile:**

In addition to its major divisions, the Saeder-Krupp corporation owns more than 200 small and medium-sized companies worldwide, mostly suppliers to the "big three": S-K Heavy Industries, Barytech, and Ruhrnuklear. Saeder-Krupp ranks as one of the world's ten biggest megacorporations.

>>>>[Actually, Saeder-Krupp is the largest corporation in the world, if not by much. Congratulations to all concerned.]<<<<<

—Media Man (08:20:10/12-10-54)

>>>>[Thank you.]<<<<<

—Lofwyr (01:29:16/12-15-54)

Ruhrnuklear, based in Witten, is Europe's largest producer of fusion reactors, and Krupp Sondergerätebau in Mönchengladbach manufactures a bewildering variety of complex engineering components.

All Saeder-Krupp subsidiaries deal aggressively with their competitors. Saeder-Krupp's so-called "active security," its industrial espionage team, is equipped with the most modern equipment and best agents available, and its members use any means at their disposal to get what they came for.

**Security/Military Forces:**

Worldwide, Saeder-Krupp maintains a battalion-level armed force recruited from the best mercenary and regular armed forces of each branch office's home country. These forces use state-of-the-art equipment, including heavy and super-heavy weapons and vehicles. Magical and Matrix security are equally tough, making Saeder-Krupp one of the best-protected corps in the world.



# RHINE-RUHR MEGAPLEX

**R**ay, ey! I just came off the bahn. Ey, mann, ey! I made it from Dortmund to Essen in just two hours! Really gell, ey!

—Hannes Markowski, courier

## VITAL STATISTICS

**Population:** 25,304,000

>>>>[I'd put it closer to 33 megs. . .]<<<<<  
—Drivin' Mona Lisa (07:09:00/12-MAY-54)

Human: 73%  
Elf: 2%  
Dwarf: 7%  
Ork: 12%  
Troll: 5%  
Other: <1%

### Density in Populated Districts:

Residential: 3,214 per square kilometer  
Business: 2,872 per square kilometer

**Annual Per Capita Income:** EC 33,200

>>>>[Very funny!]<<<<<  
—Drivin' Mona Lisa (07:10:00/12-MAY-54)

**Population Below Poverty Level:** 27%

**Telekom Code:** D-03 or 0493

### Education:

High School Equivalency: 38%  
University Equivalency: 21%

## INSIDE THE MEGAPLEX

The Rhine-Ruhr Megaplex is much the same as other German sprawls in many ways, but it also has many features that make it unique.

### GEOGRAPHY

Northrhine-Ruhr contains the Ruhr area, the Sauerland, Bergisches Land, the Cologne-Bonn urban sprawl, and the Lower Rhine area from Neuss/Mönchengladbach to Kleve. The core of this land, the Rhine-Ruhr megaplex, stretches from Bonn in the south and Neuss and

Mönchengladbach in the west via Leverkusen, Wuppertal, and the cities of the Ruhr to Marl in the north and Unna in the east.

### Fallows

The main geographical feature of the Rhine-Ruhr sprawl—which most school texts and tourist brochures conveniently fail to mention—is the hundreds of 'industrial waste areas,' less colloquially known as dumps. These brachen, or fallows, have spawned their own bizarre ecologies that support every misbegotten fragger imaginable, from Green War camps to mutant squatters, toxic spirits to the occasional toxic shaman. All of these slags have two things in common—they all know the latest buzz on the ecologies, politics, and criminal activities in their areas, and they're all easily pissed off.

>>>>[Some of them pull the trigger if you whiz on their lawn. . .]<<<<<  
—Local Hero (17:54:33/19-JUL-54)

### GOVERNMENT

The Städtetag of the Ruhr municipal association and its affiliated cities governs the Rhine-Ruhr metroplex. Though technically a Regierungspräsident, or district president, presides over this parliament, the district the archaic title refers to (Northrhine-Westphalia) ceased to exist in 2014.

>>>>[It's Regierungspräsident if the office is held by a man, and Regierungspräsidentin if it's held by a woman.]<<<<<  
—Raghna (14:02:54/2-NOV-54)

>>>>[Aren't we politically correct?]<<<<<  
—H. & F. (14:02:59/2-Nov-54)

The affiliated cities elect city councils every four years, who in turn appoint the 123 members of the Städtetag.

The current district president is 'Red' Erika von Bergerhausen, district chairwoman of the USPD. No one expects her to remain in power very long, because, unlike her predecessors, she refused to 'take orders' from Saeder-Krupp.

>>>>[They have a proverb in the UCAS: Never deal with a dragon.]<<<<<

—Kumpel Anton (20:19:09/29-MAR-54)

### GETTING THERE

The major cities of the Rhine-Ruhr megaplex—Cologne, Bonn, Essen, and Düsseldorf—each have their own transport systems, as well as air, rail and autobahn hubs connecting the region to the other German Länder.

#### By Plane

Northrhine-Ruhr's two large passenger airports are Düsseldorf's Lohausen and Cologne's Wahn. Lohausen offers daily connecting flights to almost every large city on the globe and numerous smaller ones as well. Cologne-Wahn Airport offers daily connections to all large European cities and flights to all major cities in the world every two or three days. Both airports offer regular transorbital connections.

>>>>[And drek-hot security. These slags can find guns no matter where you put them. And in the VIP zones and first-class lounges, detectors automatically "deactivate" cyberimplant weapons—unless you're a corp goon sporting a protective circuit, of course. The last slag who got "deactivated" was sent home in a shoe box.]<<<<<

—Bomber (03:44:21/04-OCT-54)

In addition to Lohausen and Cologne-Wahn, almost every city in the Rhine-Ruhr megaplex has its own airport. Generally, these airfields handle private planes, small passenger aircraft, and tilt-wing craft. For those with time and nuyen to burn, an airship port at Mülheim/Ruhr offers luxury trips to any destination in the world.

#### By Car

The autobahn network serves the entire Rhine-Ruhr sprawl and also handles most of the traffic within the plex.

>>>>[If you get past the go-gangs. . .]<<<<<

—Hades (02:06:29/11-JUL-54)

Travel on the roadway is generally unrestricted. Travelers entering Westphalia, however, must pass through the restrictive customs of the Westphalian ecclesiastical state.

>>>>[Almost everybody does, including metahumans, sorcerers, armed chrome boys, and anyone else not wearing a three-kilo cross around his neck.]<<<<<

—Devil Dancer (12:09:23/12-SEP-54)

#### By Rail

Despite the worn state of its national train lines, the German railways still provide reliable service to the Rhine-Ruhr sprawl. The Transrapid line from Rijnstaad to Hannover and Berlin runs through the Rhine-Ruhr megaplex, with stops at Cologne, Düsseldorf-Lohausen Airport, and Dortmund. In addition, every city and town in the megaplex has a railway station that offers connecting trains to the major hubs.

>>>>[Sure, take the train. If you don't mind an hour's delay or two.]<<<<<

—Kumpel Anton (22:04:33/23-DEC-53)

#### By Sea

Once, the Duisburger Freihafen was Europe's largest river port. The Great Flood in 2003 turned it into one of Germany's largest sea ports. Hovercraft lines from Duisburg run to all the larger towns on the Rhine as far south as Karlsruhe. Though fast and safe, hovercraft travel is not cheap. The two-hour trip from Frankfurt to Duisburg, in fact, can cost anywhere from EC 150 to 250 depending on the line. Part of the price goes to pay for the weaponry and armor each vessel carries. North of Duisburg and on the North Sea, sea traffic consists almost entirely of computer-guided freight vessels.

>>>>[Not quite, children. Some of the pilots working for those hovercraft lines will smuggle people who find themselves in deep drek down the Rhine for a measly few hundred ecus. Once they reach the North Sea, the slots lock themselves below decks, leave their passengers outside, and wait for the toxic spirits to do their drek. If you ever have to beat feet, I recommend walking.]<<<<<

—Kumpel Anton (08:22:58/14-NOV-54)

### MOVING AROUND THE MEGAPLEX

It's a big plex, mann. Here are a few tips for getting around the Northrhine-Ruhr quickly, cheaply, and sometimes both.



**By Air**

Almost every city in the plex has a small airport which offers flights to other sprawl cities. Helos swarm like locusts between the business towers, corp headquarters, and malls throughout the plex, offering another alternative for those who don't want to rub shoulders with the regular street folk. Prices can be steep, however.

**By Car**

Most inner-plex travel occurs on the autobahnen that crisscross the region like a spider's web. The Ruhrschnellweg, stretching from Dortmund via Bochum and Essen to Duisburg, is the most famous of these highways. It features ten traffic lanes on two levels. The megaplex's streets and highways are all well-maintained and continue to attract commuters, despite the sometimes chaotic traffic. Don't bother with the exorbitantly expensive taxis, because renting a car at 150¥ per day offers a much better deal.

**Public Transportation**

A well-maintained network of trains, trams, and buses provide 24-hour public transportation to every section of the plex. Armed guards accompany buses traveling into the rougher areas, and occasionally these routes are suspended when guards are unavailable. Ruhr University's regional maglev suspension railway, the Magnetschwebbahn, opened in 2048 and connects all university campuses and buildings across the sprawl. Ridership is restricted to university students and faculty.

>>>>[The university officials claim the restriction is a safety measure. If you ask me, they're just a bunch of fraggin' elitists.]<<<<<

—Brecht (18:07:42/21-DEC-54)

**UNIQUE FEATURES**

The Rhine-Ruhr area is especially well-known for the Ruhr University and the Subworld.

**Ruhr University**

Several years ago, the town fathers decided to save some money by merging all the universities in the megaplex. Now the locals proudly point to the Ruhr-Universität, home to a teeming mass of almost 300,000 students, as one of the Rhine-Ruhr's major achievements. Though the university only began offering courses in magic fairly recently, the school's alchemy department has already earned a reputation for innovation. Naturally, the university administration rarely mentions the exorbitant salaries it had to offer to attract such excellent minds as Nobel winner Wolfgang Winterhall.

>>>>[Bulldrek. Internationally, RU is second-rate despite its size. That should set these pencil pushers thinking, but it won't.]<<<<<

—Doktor Schiwago (13:38:09/17-JAN-54)

**Subworld**

Some 70,000 orks, dwarfs, and trolls live in a gigantic network of old mineshafts that stretches for hundreds of kilometers below the surface of the megaplex. Apart from a small tourist section open to the public, few topsiders venture into this area, known as Subworld. Its inhabitants rarely leave their subterranean habitat.

>>>>[Excepting, of course, those occasions when they jump out of the sewers to hold up a store.]<<<<<

—Doktor Schiwago (16:30:38/25-AUG-54)

>>>>[Lies! We are a peaceful people!]<<<<<

—Duke Darkness (16:35:36/25-AUG-54)

>>>>[So why do most corps consider Subworld orks the sprawl's best runners?]<<<<<

—Kumpel Anton (16:35:50/25-AUG-54)

>>>>[Well. . .]<<<<<

—Duke Darkness (16:36:11/25-AUG-54)

Most of the "underground" economy of the Subworld remains hidden, but that doesn't stop God-fearing topsiders from attributing all sorts of criminal enterprises to its inhabitants. No proof supports these accusations, but metahumans have always been convenient scapegoats.

>>>>[Where did the dwarf king get his legendary hoard, then?]<<<<<

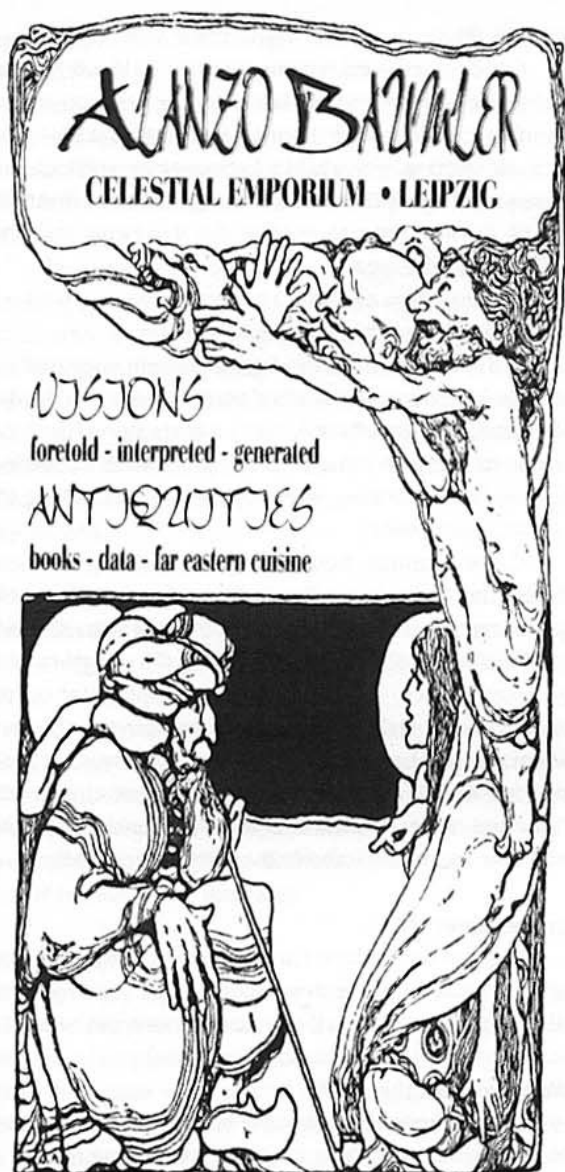
—N. N. (08:29:47/28-AUG-54)

>>>>[You've done too many Tolkien™ sims, bud.]<<<<<

—Duke Darkness (08:30:19/28-AUG-54)

**COST OF LIVING**

As in any other megaplex, life in the Rhine-Ruhr sprawl is anything but cheap. Natural food is particularly expensive, and anyone who wants to avoid soy junk has to dig deep into their pockets. With enough money, however, the lucky wageslave can feast on the finest Westphalian delicacies. Apartments are equally expensive: anything even remotely suitable for human habitation costs a CEO's ransom to rent. Services, on the other hand, are relatively cheap, and even sophisticated equipment such as a top-of-the-line deck can be had for a reasonable price.



**ENTERTAINMENT**

Almost every city in Northrhine-Ruhr has its own theatres, concert halls, and museums. The most famous theatre and the megaplex's most popular cultural attraction is the Krupp-Aalto Theatre in Essen. Besides putting up the finest productions in the Rhine-Ruhr, the building is a true architectural masterpiece. Though less interesting architecturally, the newly built Bochum Schauspielhaus also ranks as one of the finest stages of the German Alliance. Bochum also boasts the Lloyd Webber Halle, owned by the corporation of that name. Long after the death of the great composer, Andrew Lloyd Webber, "his" newest musicals premiere here to packed houses, testimony to the banal tastes of the bourgeoisie. The resident ensemble is famous for its members' athletic prowess.

>>>>[And I'll eat my hat if they aren't chromed.]<<<<<<  
—Doktor Schiwago (19:00:34/11-JUL-54)

The Gelsenkirchen music festival offers audiences a chance to hear classical opera unadulterated by voice-enhancing cyberware. It's a must for anyone who longs for the days before electric guitars and synthleather.

Every city also has a multitude of discotheques, sports centers, museums, simsense theatres, and other entertainment venues. Not even this vast array of options for leisure time has dislodged the Ruhr area's favorite pastime from its place at the top of the list: soccer.

>>>>[Or more precisely, football, as it is called everywhere in the world except North America.]<<<<<<  
—Rummenigge (23:19:55/14-NOV-54)

**CRIME**

Except for the yakuza in Düsseldorf and the Mafia, who run prostitution rings in most of the Rhine-Ruhr's major cities, organized crime plays a relatively minor role in Northrhine-Ruhr. The plex's numerous street gangs, however, are another story. Nowhere else in the German Alliance are so many violent crimes perpetrated out in the open, and the gang's rule is so complete that they boldly stage an annual "tournament" in the Rhine-Ruhr. This "tournament" is actually little more than a gigantic free-for-all, with thousands of armed and motorized psychopaths wreaking havoc throughout the streets.

>>>>[Psychopaths? Watch your mouth, alter! We follow an honorable profession!]<<<<<<  
—Bandit King of Ancient China (13:37:59/06-APR-54)

The most feared local gangs are the Piranhas, the alleged cannibals who rule the Ruhrschnellweg, and the White and Pink Tigers, who prowl the expressways off the autobahnen. Several groups of so-called "robber knights" make a living by holding up autobahn motorists. The Rhine-Ruhr is home to two such gangs: the Ritter vom Loe zum Loe, named after an ancient nobleman of the Freedom of Marl, and the Pussycats, an ork >>**FORCE DELETE::IMP**<<.

>>>>[Association!]<<<<<<  
—Bandit King of Ancient China (13:39:47/06-APR-54)

The Ritter control east-west connections, and the Pussycats claim the north-south routes as their territory.

>>>>[Thanks to this highly intelligent division of turf, the two gangs cross paths every time they want to move to another highway. I'm sorry, Bandit King, but the ensuing fights look psychopathic to me. By the way, both gangs steer clear of the Ruhrschnellweg. I wonder why?]<<<<<<  
—Kumpel Anton (18:10:00/16-JUL-54)

A number of smaller gangs, each associated with cities or districts of the plex, round out the Rhine-Ruhr's roster of scuzboys and thriller chillers. The strength and weaponry of these gangs varies widely; some wield homemade shivs, while others carry light machine guns and other sophisticated weaponry.

The best known of these gangs are as follows, listed by city district:

**Bochum:** Blue Hawks, Killers, Toxic Zone Maniacs

**Cologne:** Orks (orks and trolls only), Silver Stars (white elves only)

**Dortmund:** Dr. Feelgoods, Halos

**Dulsburg:** Frankensteins, Hooligans

**Düsseldorf:** Samurai, Warriors

**Essen:** Rächer (Avengers), Hurricanes, Viertes Reich (Fourth Reich)

**Leverkusen:** Acid, Winter Wolves (white male humans only)

>>>>[The Winter Wolves are said to be an Alamos 20,000 splinter group.]<<<<<

—Doktor Schiwago (12:06:22/13-MAR-54)

## CITIES AND DISTRICTS

The following descriptions of the plex's major cities and their districts should provide a good idea of what to expect in each area. Each district name is followed by a security rating, given in parentheses: "AAA" denotes a very secure area, while "Z" denotes the opposite end of the spectrum.

### BOCHUM

Before the economic collapse of the late 20th and early 21st centuries, Bochum was a showcase of German economic restructuring. The city's economy is no longer so robust, but the so-called "Las Vegas of the Ruhr" still seems to be making it. Bochum houses numerous brothels, casinos, simsense arcades, and sports arenas, as well as the Aggravex Center—Central Europe's largest mall. EMC's Opel car works and its suppliers also employ many locals, but the city's pride is the newly enlarged Ruhrlandhalle, a massive convention center that hosts a variety of large-scale events ranging from concerts and corporate-sponsored dances to the recently popular German karaoke championships.

#### Altenbochum (B)

The socialist equivalent of Wattenscheid, Altenbochum's middle-class residents tend toward somewhat left-of-center politics.

>>>>[I say we force Altenbochum and all its subversive sympathizers to secede.]<<<<<

—Franz (21:20:30/28-OCT-54)

#### Hustadt (F)

Condemned and abandoned in 2015, this giant nightmare of misguided public planning grew up around the ruins of the former Ruhr-Universität Bochum. Now Hustadt's rotting concrete blocks house many of Bochum's underworld figures, who recruit thugs to use as front-line troops in their fight to control the gambling and chip trafficking in the area.

#### Inner City (B)

The enlargement of the Aggravex Center located just outside Bochum's city limits doomed the once thriving commercial district called the "Innenstadtring," or Inner City to its fate as a dreary looking place where boarded-up storefronts and a few tiny shops sell cheap clothing and cut-rate electronics.

Come nightfall, however, Innenstadtring awakens. Under the harsh neon lights that advertise the area's gambling halls, brothels, and bars, throngs of tourists and gawkers stroll. Bodyguards clear paths for high-ranking corporate execs, club owners and pimps loiter on the street corners sizing up potential customers, chip and organ pushers hawk their wares to passersby. Overlooking this entire scene is the city's largest church: the Cathedral of the Reformed Orthodox Church, a massive structure that towers above even the largest casinos.

#### Langendreer (A)

A green belt isolates Langendreer from the rest of the city. Ruhr University professors and other wealthy members of the bourgeoisie live in its spacious old houses.

#### Wattenscheid (B)

Despite repeated attempts to secede over the span of several decades, this neighborhood remains part of Bochum. The city's middle class has settled in Wattenscheid, making it a bastion of centrist thinking and "respectable" lifestyles. After nightfall, however, metahumans should watch out for the "Blue Hawks," a local gang of racists.

>>>>[Bunch of bourgeois slags if you ask me. I say we force them to secede.]>>>>>

—Hans (21:18:30/28-OCT-54)

### COLOGNE

Cologne, or Köln, according to the traditional German spelling, is one of Germany's most important media centers. As of 2050, four trideo and eleven radio stations broadcast from the city, which also serves as home to several smaller press and newsfax agencies. Cologne's bustling information market attracts a veritable army of spies, paid by competing megacorps, nations, and inter-

est groups. Not surprisingly, Cologne offers plenty of employment opportunities for shadowrunners.

Cologne's most distinctive landmark is the guitar-shaped high-rise of Brilliant Art Productions (BAP Inc.). Because this corp extorts a cut of every local band's profit, BAP is known on the streets as "the Brutal Amalgamated Posse."

On weekends, overworked wageslaves and thrill-seeking youngsters crowd Cologne's major public recreation area, an artificial lake and surrounding park known as Föhlingen. The city invests a lot of money into the area's upkeep, but visitors should avoid the area around the Neumarkt, especially after dark. Pushers, runners, BTL junkies, and plenty of other shady characters make the Neumarkt a place that even the police will only enter in squadrons.

>>>>[The Neumarkt? Hey, mann, it's always midnight there. Even the sun pukes when she looks down.]<<<<<<  
—Harley "The Boss" Hog (12:00:00/30-APR-54)

As an extension of an experiment begun in 1998, the entire inner city of Cologne has remained barred to traffic. The traffic-free zone, which contains the Altstadt and Neustadt neighborhoods, covers a six-kilometer radius extending from Cologne Cathedral. Citizens in the zone travel by automatic walkway.

**Chorweller (E)**

An ugly, gray bedroom town outside the city, Chorweller epitomizes architecture's fall from grace. This human-scale pigeon coop should not be forced on a dead dog, but those who cannot afford rents anywhere else have little choice but to settle for a doss in this eyesore of a neighborhood. Some years ago the city council actually contemplated fencing in the district to spare passersby the sight of the blighted area.

**Deutz (B)**

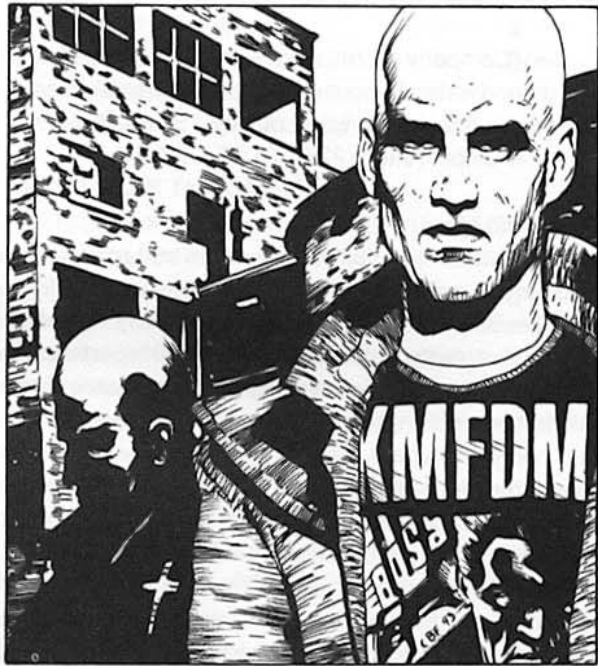
Situated on the opposite bank of the Rhine from most of Cologne, Deutz consists mainly of the heavily guarded trade-fair area. Forced to produce ID cards at innumerable checkpoints, residents find merely reaching their homes a constant struggle. Before every election, at least one candidate promises to ease the extensive security measures, a promise that none ever keeps.

**Ehrenstraße (AA/C-D)**

During the day, the downtown Ehrenstraße district attracts Cologne's most fashionable folk, who browse through the boutiques lining the streets in search of the latest fashions. After dark, however, the Ehrenstraße porn parlors light up and the joytoys compete for clients in none-too-gentle ways.

>>>>[Love it or leave it.]<<<<<<  
—Harley "The Boss" Hog (08:44:12/24-FEB-54)

Other Neighborhoods	Security Rating
<b>Altstadt and Neustadt (traffic-free):</b>	
Middle Class	B
<b>Cologne East:</b> Middle Class	B
<b>Cologne North:</b> Middle Class	B-C
<b>Cologne West:</b> Middle Class	A-B
<b>Kalk:</b> Low Class	D
<b>Weidenpesch:</b> Luxury Class	AAA
<b>Sülz:</b> Low Class	C



**DORTMUND**

One of the largest of the sprawl's cities, Dortmund still contains several unbuilt areas, now home to numerous eco-freaks, those self-proclaimed protectors of nature, and "green squatters." The Dortmund police periodically clear these areas using the force's sizeable contingent of helicopters, but the groups keep coming back. Because the "green freaks" for the most part coexist peacefully with their neighbors, public opinion has begun to swing against the expensive, violent police raids.

Dortmund enjoys a healthy economy, largely due to the Saeder-Krupp and Fuchi Germany "mini-habitats" in Unna and the numerous regional offices nearly every major German megacorp maintains in Dortmund. Though some of these corp facilities manufacture on a small scale, most research and design various technological products, from trucks to software.

This economic security carries a price, however, as 16 of the city parliament's 48 seats belong to corporate appointees. Despite the powerful corporate presence, however, Dortmund's parliament retains sufficient inde-

pendence to block corporate excesses, such as the infamous Holzwickede Genetic Project.

>>>>[Does anyone actually believe that? Personally, I find it quite remarkable that the project was as good as passed until the genetically engineered, oil-consuming bacteria tainted the ground water and dried up the supply to the Fuchi habitat. By the way, the rest of the city is still drinking that gene-tainted muck.]<<<<<<  
—Hambruch-Hool (22:00:00/29-OCT-54)

>>>>[And where do the Fuchis get their water?]<<<<<<  
—Pietje Puck (22:00:30/29-OCT-54)

>>>>[Company secret; they're probably afraid of a run on ground water. Supposedly, their eco-research teams pay close attention to water quality. . .]<<<<<<  
—Kumpel Anton (22:01:01/29-OCT-54)

#### Dorstfeld (A)

Its proximity to the Dortmund University campus has led large numbers of university students and faculty to settle in Dorstfeld, turning the area into the city's brainbox. Numerous bistros, cafés, and galleries—all in postmodern glass and chrome—dot the giant park that makes up the largest part of Dorstfeld. University security teams, made up partly of student militias, keep the green squatters away from the park and ensure the continued purity of this intellectual enclave. Cut off from all forms of public transport save the university's Magnetschwebbahn, Dorstfeld is relatively isolated. Theoretically, a resident could spend his entire life in Dorstfeld without once coming into contact with the less savory features of metroplex life.

>>>>[As long as you're a norm, that is. If your ears or teeth are too long, you'll find out about those less savory features sooner than you want to.]<<<<<<  
—Duke Darkness (15:09:33/21-APR-54)

#### Eving (C)

Eving is an especially fine example of Dortmund's middle-class districts. Tenements and small row houses coexist peacefully, the local street gang keeps a low profile, and the citizens busy themselves with earning money and fighting social decay.

#### Gartenstadt (B)

Despite its name, which means Gardentown, Gartenstadt is one of Dortmund's least 'green' districts. Gartenstadt does, however, boast a colorful collection of small shops, back-lot garages, electronics workshops, small-arms dealers, helicopter rentals, and so on. Incomes in the district span a wide range, and Gartenstadt's residents display an unsurpassed tolerance for metahumans

and immigrants. Not surprisingly, the Self-Help Association of Ork-Human Relationships and Marriages maintains its German headquarters in Gartenstadt.

>>>>[Of course, it moves constantly, as the office tends to burn down soon after each opening.]<<<<<<  
—Uncle Klaus (17:44:00/18-MAY-54)

>>>>[Not soon enough!]<<<<<<  
—Metatron (17:44:40/18-MAY-54)

>>>>[50K for his head.]<<<<<<  
—Duke Darkness (17:50:12/18-MAY-54)

>>>>[Acc. No. 137 071 312 @ 430 500 01. My pleasure.]<<<<<<  
—Wonderblimp (18:09:27/18-MAY-54)

Gartenstadt owes its high security rating to a local street gang, the Dr. Feelgoods, rather than the Dortmund police. Because they have proved themselves reliable, efficient, and rarely guilty of overkill, many residents view the Dr. Feelgoods more as a private law enforcement agency than a street gang.

#### Hombruch (C)

Formerly a middle-class neighborhood, Hombruch today suffers from its close proximity to the polluted Emscher River, which has made even high-quality apartments in the area amazingly cheap. Despite the occasional eco-horror story, the river is less tainted near Hombruch than a few kilometers farther downstream.

>>>>[Meaning that trouble with toxic spirits occurs no more than once a week. The guys and gals living here have strong nerves and steely abilities. So if you ever need a runner from the Bundesliga. . .]<<<<<<  
—Wichita Cathedral (00:09:42/01-JAN-54)

#### Unna (AAA)

Annexed by Dortmund in 2045, Unna remains less a city quarter than a separate corptown. After they constructed the Fuchi and Saeder-Krupp habitats, which house 15,000 people each, the two corps chose to put the entire town under corporate administration for 'security reasons,' which apparently means they found the surrounding greenbelt easier to police than a growing cityscape. Rumor has it that the corporate security teams tend to fire on each other as much as they do on intruders.

>>>>[Which means the Fuchis and Saeders in Unna are even more prone to blast away than corp goons elsewhere. And they're in good shape, too; all that practice makes 'em fraggin' near perfect.]<<<<<<  
—Duke Darkness (18:39:12/17-APR-54)

**Other Neighborhoods**

	<b>Security Rating</b>
<b>Aplerbeck:</b> Upper Class	<b>A</b>
<b>Brünninghausen:</b> Middle Class	<b>B</b>
<b>Hörde:</b> Low Class	<b>C</b>
<b>Huckarde:</b> Upper Class	<b>A</b>
<b>Lindenhorst:</b> Middle Class	<b>C</b>
<b>Wellnghofen:</b> Middle Class	<b>B</b>

**DUISBURG**

Despite its focus on coal and steel manufacturing, which should have depressed its economy when those fuel sources became unpopular, Duisburg's Freihafen, or river port, helped soften the effects of Germany's sharp economic downturn in that area. These days, however, Duisburg suffers one of the highest unemployment rates in the Northrhine region. As the area's sole employer, Saeder-Krupp dictates policy to the city government, but the corp's power extends beyond the halls of government as well. As street buzz puts it, if Saeder-Krupp told the whole city to dive into the Rhine, its only question would be, "From how high up?" Opportunities for illegal employment also depend almost exclusively on this corp.

**Buchholz (B)**

Mostly remarkable for its tidy front yards and numbing boredom, Buchholz is a living testament to the tedium of living a respectable existence. Buchholz's residents have made it by anyone's definition, but have apparently spent every ounce of ambition they ever had in the process. Residents like to entertain themselves at the small park, where several times a day they can watch some other poor inhabitant feed the ducks that live in the park's pond.

**Neudorf (F)**

As the name "New Village" suggests, Neudorf started out as a utopian development project some 60 years ago. Government neglect, however, has turned it into one of the sprawl's worst slums. People forced to live in Neudorf have reached rock bottom.

**Rheinhausen (C)**

Traditionally a stronghold of the labor movement, Rheinhausen remains poor but proud. Here the number of private gun owners far exceeds the region's average, a situation that has attracted a strong police presence. Politically, Rheinhausen is considered communism's last stronghold in the German Alliance.

**Zoo (Z)**

The zoo's original inhabitants were eaten during the so-called "protein revolt" of 2033. Since that time, human "animals" have settled in the zoo grounds. Strangers who enter this once-public attraction are fair game for the

residents, but anyone capable of holding his own has a good chance of surviving. The plex's biggest BTL kitchen, located inside the former ape house, produces chips for export. It is generally accepted that any outsider who reaches the kitchen under his or her own power has proved his or her qualifications for a well-paid courier job and can generally have one for the asking.

>>>>[For some mysterious reason, half of all couriers never return to collect their salaries.]<<<<<<  
—Kumpel Anton (23:41:10/21-DEC-53)

**Other Neighborhoods**

	<b>Security Rating</b>
<b>Hamborn:</b> Middle Class	<b>B</b>
<b>Mittelmelderich:</b> Upper Class	<b>A</b>
<b>Obermelderich:</b> Middle Class	<b>B</b>
<b>Wahnheimerort:</b> Low Class	<b>D</b>

**DUISBURGER FREIHAFEN**

The harbor and the surrounding Duisburger Freihafen, or Duisburg Free Trade Area, belong to the megacorps and are independent of greater Duisburg's governing authority. Security is higher here than anywhere else inside the plex, and anyone without legitimate business inside should avoid the port and its environs. At present, Saeder-Krupp, Ruhmetall, EMC, and Treuhand jointly administer port affairs.

>>>>[Just in case anyone's interested, the minimum payment for a run into the harbor stands at 250K.]<<<<<<  
—Gallon Drunk (21:51:33/12-JAN-54)

The harbor's southern area contains bays for passenger hovercraft. Three ferry companies handle security at these facilities. Rhein-Express and Lorelei Transport have pooled their resources to form their own security company, and the third company, Freundliche Flotte (Friendly Fleet), relies on the security teams of its parent corporation, Ruhmetall. The buzz on the street says these security organizations are high on morale but low on experience.

The entire Duisburg Free Trade Area spans almost 80 square kilometers, and all the world's megacorps maintain enclaves in the area. A corp consortium administers the area but generally allows each corp to fend for itself, preferably at its neighbor's expense. As a result, gun battles between guards, shadowrunners, and rival goons have become a daily occurrence. As a transshipment zone for valuable goods, especially delicate microelectronics and heavy industrial goods, the Freihafen has become a common target for industrial espionage and shadowruns, despite its security arsenal of sensors, aerial reconnaissance devices, rigged drones, and wage mages.

>>>>[Every now and then, a run actually succeeds.]<<<<<

—Doktor Schiwago (12:21:51/12-JUN-54)

### DÜSSELDORF

Considered Germany's fashion center for almost a hundred years, Düsseldorf has become the metropolis of the modern lifestyle. International trends tend to arrive first in Düsseldorf, and spread from there to Frankfurt or Munich. Formerly the capital of the Land of Northrhine-Westphalia, Düsseldorf has become one of the four decentralized, administrative centers of Northrhine-Ruhr. Though its movers and shakers consider themselves extremely important, they like to show their closeness to the people by having an Alt at the Uerige.

>>>>[By having a WHAT?]<<<<<

—Stein (22:12:04/12-02-54)

>>>>[This is right up your alley, Stein. "Alt" is the local top-fermented beer.]<<<<<

—Idle Savant (23:01:10/12-02-54)

>>>>[Now, isn't that just typical. The first time you touch on something interesting, and you give me one, lousy line about it.]<<<<<

—Stein (23:02:00/12-02-54)

Demographically, Düsseldorf has changed little since the turn of the century. Largely unaffected by unrest in the Ruhr area, even the waves of refugees from elsewhere in Germany and Central Europe passed Düsseldorf. Since the 1980s, however, Düsseldorf has become the playground for several Japanese corporations and contains one of the largest Japanese populations outside the Japanese islands.

The administrative headquarters of Mitsuhamma-Europe dominate the Düsseldorf skyline. Next to this 450-meter-high skyscraper, all other buildings look insignificant. Even so, Mitsuhamma is not the only Japanese power in Düsseldorf. The yakuza followed in the corporation's wake and today claim the largest piece of the city's underworld pie. The Italian and Russian mafias and various Far East criminal outfits such as tongs, triads, and a few Seoulpa Rings claim the remaining criminal enterprises.

The booming business Düsseldorf produces in trade fairs is the city's most distinguishing feature, and the 15-square kilometer floor inside the Trade Hall is almost constantly booked. The InterMag magic fair, held annually at the end of April, attracts everybody who is anybody in the field of thaumaturgy, from the lowliest street mage to the most recent Nobel Prize winner.

Düsseldorf's suburbs, especially Ratingen and Erkrath, reflect Düsseldorf's prosperity; both have become pro-

tected enclaves of the ultra-rich. Security at the "Golf Park" development in Ratingen-Hösel, for example, costs every resident 50,000 ecus a month.

### City Center (A)

Düsseldorf's core district stretches from the five-story, chrome-and-glass railway station down to the Rhine River between the Altstadt (Old Town) and the banking quarter in the south, and extends north to the borders of Derendorf. The Japanese-controlled Immermannstraße and the so-called "Golden Boomerang" of Königsallee, Schadowstraße, and Wehrhahn streets—a three-story maze that houses the largest concentration of direct-sales outlets in the entire city—dominates Düsseldorf's City Center. One lane for cars and one for trams passes in each direction at the bottom of the maze, two levels underground; above them lies a shopping arcade offering entertainment, electronics, second-hand fashions, sushi, and other edibles; at ground level, hemmed in by the surrounding skyscrapers, visitors find the actual avenues. Filled with expensive restaurants, trendy boutiques, jewelry stores, and banks, the avenues attract those who want to see and be seen. Bank couriers carrying hard cash, escorted by watchful wage mages and security agents with LMGs at the ready, are so common a sight that pedestrians barely seem to notice them.

### Benrath, Garath (D-E)

Along with Oberbilk and Flingern, these two residential districts house commuters and low-level corporate employees. Garath's dilapidated tenements rise to the sky like warning fingers, pointing at the advancing decline. With an unemployment rate three times as high as the rest of the city, criminal activity and BTL abuse run rampant. However, the lack of anything worth stealing makes the burglary rate amazingly low, and locals tend to be conservative—preferring to deal with the local gangs rather than have "long-haired bomb-throwers" disturbing the fragile peace. Between the anti-runner attitude and constant marauding by the Warriors of Worrigen and the Garath Ronins, runners looking for a safe doss had best avoid these districts.

### Karlstadt, Friedrichstadt, Unterbilk (AAA)

From the harbor to the Altstadt, skyscrapers fill the skyline of these three adjoining districts. Behind the mirrored-glass walls of these towers, executives from Mitsuhamma, ECC, Ruhmetall, and many corporations make decisions that affect the entire megaplex. Next to the corporate towers, the former Landtag building houses the central administration of the sprawl's Rhineland area. At the center of this heavily guarded quarter lies the pedestrian precinct that stretches from Kirchplatz to Graf-Adolf-Platz. Crowded with boutiques and bistros patron-

ized by bankers and brokers, aficionados say this area houses the highest concentration of Herr Schmidts in Germany. Though runners must run a gauntlet of painstaking security checks to enter, the high quality of runs available make the trouble worth the effort.

**Lohausen, Stockum (Airport and Trade Fair) (AA)**

The area between the Rhine and the airport comprises one vast conglomeration of factory-style buildings, occasionally interrupted by a high-rise or the ruins of an ancient town center. No hint of green mars the asphalt grounds. The area's architectural similarity to the Duisburger Freihafen port at Duisburg is no coincidence: large parts of the district serve as transshipment points for goods from all over the world.

>>>>[Words take on new meanings in there: hovertanks become "building machines," crates containing "office machines" turn out to hold modern targeting systems, and don't even ask what's inside the sacks of "fertilizer"...]<<<<<

—Jagdpanther (22:49:37/21-MAR-54)

**Oberkassel (AAA)**

A long-established haven for Düsseldorf's rich and super-rich, Oberkassel boasts a striking view of the Rhine. Though Düsseldorf's executives occupy only the riverfront properties, the triple-A security rating applies to the entire district: security services even guard the autobahn exit ramps leading into Oberkassel. The district center and the trendy neighborhood of Lörick contain numerous small shops that cater to the daily needs of Oberkassel's high-society residents.

Other Neighborhoods	Security Rating
<b>Altstadt:</b> Middle Class	B
<b>Erkrath:</b> Middle Class	B (AA)
<b>Gerreshelm:</b> Low Class	C
<b>Oberbilk, Flingern:</b> Low Class	D
<b>Ratingen:</b> Upper Class	C-D
<b>Ratingen-Hösel (Golf Park):</b> Luxury Class	AAA
<b>Unterrath:</b> Low Class	C

**ESSEN**

Saeder-Krupp maintains its world headquarters in Essen and runs the city like a fiefdom. Under the megacorp's control, Essen's economy has boomed, enabling the city to compete with economic powerhouses like the city of Frankfurt.

>>>>[Of course, the majority of citizens live like serfs under their corporate "benefactor."]<<<<<

—Kumpel Anton (20:54:53/28-MAY-54)

**Bredeny (AAA)**

In this older district on the banks of the Ruhr lies the Saeder-Krupp arcology, one of the sprawl's most awe-inspiring manmade structures. Though only half-finished, it already houses more than 60,000 residents. The region surrounding the arcology, including the family seat of the Krupp corporation at Villa Hügel, also rests securely in corp hands.

>>>>[Translation: without a corp badge, you're dead meat in there.]<<<<<

—Doktor Schiwago (13:10:43/09-APR-54)

**Helsingen (AA)**

As ritzy as high-priced Kettwig, Helsingen was built within the past 20 years. Every one of its residential buildings offers unimaginable luxury to its tenants.

**Kamap (E)**

Essen-Kamap, in the north of the city, lies by the most polluted stretch of the Emscher River. The area is a virtually uninhabitable slum.

**Kettwig (AA)**

Home of Saeder-Krupp's top-level execs, this district boasts some of the most well-preserved 20th-century architecture in the world. Merely walking through this area without appropriate high-fashion dress and manner makes one suspect.

**Steele (C)**

Representative of Essen's numerous middle-class districts, Steele offers reasonable comfort and security, but lacks the slightest suggestion of luxury. This area holds little that would interest the professional shadowrunner.

>>>>[What would you POMs know about that?]<<<<<

—Sugarcubomb (23:34:52/10-DEC-53)

Other Neighborhoods	Security Rating
<b>Borbeck:</b> Low Class	D
<b>Burgaltendorf:</b> Middle Class	B
<b>Essen-West:</b> Middle Class	C
<b>Überruhr:</b> Low Class	C
<b>Vogelhelm:</b> Low Class	D

**GELSENKIRCHEN AND RECKLINGHAUSEN**

Gelsenkirchen and Recklinghausen share a blessing and a curse: both cities lie close to Northrhine-Ruhr's border with Westphalia. Because the two cities rely on trade with the German-Catholic Land for the bulk of their income, the city fathers of Gelsenkirchen and Recklinghausen must often resort to intricate, political maneuvering to avoid treading on Westphalian religious sensibilities.

An average, middle-class district of Gelsenkirchen, Schalke is the home of one of the German Alliance's most famous soccer clubs, Schalke 04. The company founded to exploit this fame, Schalke 04 Marketing und Vertriebsverband KG, wields considerable economic power throughout the Alliance, though the club's archaic power structure keeps the promotions company from reaching its full potential.

>>>>[With management like that, the boys will never make the championship.]<<<<<

—Kumpel Anton (09:28:09/31-MAY-54)

#### **Buer (B)**

Considered a working-class area of Gelsenkirchen until 1998, the Buer district was almost totally leveled during the food riots in 2010. The establishment of the Allied German States brought government money to restore and renovate many of the old cottages and tenements, and Buer has become popular among romantics who make a comfortable living. Liberal to a fault, the residents of Buer support several alternative housing projects and even an anarchist enclave.

>>>>[Those wannabe anarchists never harm anyone anyway.]<<<<<

—Duke Darkness (22:06:56/15-FEB-54)

#### **Speckhorn (E)**

Situated on Recklinghausen's Westphalian border, this area teems with car rental shops, vehicle repair shops, and gas stations. The constant noise of hovercrafts fills this commercial district, which becomes especially busy at night. The fertile farmlands of Westphalia offer an abundance of valuable, natural produce, and everyone in Recklinghausen wants a piece of the pie, which has spawned a constant stream of legal and illegal transactions in the district. Many of these deals far exceed the restrictions contained in the treaty of 2045, and every so often a rocket duel provides a free, nocturnal light show.

>>>>[The brethren in the garages are just as humorless as their pious cousins in Westphalia. So if you insist on heading out to Speckhorn with your big guns, say goodbye to your loved ones first. . . assuming idiots like you have any.]<<<<<

—Luke Skycreeper (17:09:42/08-OCT-54)

Rudolf Erwecker, an ork who owns a thriving car rental business, represents a typical businessman in the Speckhorn district. He never questions his customers about their destinations or their occasional inability to pay. In the latter case, he simply pulls the trigger.

>>>>[Also, he takes a 50K deposit. . .]<<<<<

—Kumpel Anton (19:32:20/18-NOV-54)

#### **Other Neighborhoods**

**Altstadt:** Upper Class

**Feldmark:** Low Class

**Grullbach:** Low Class

**Herten:** Low Class

**Neustadt:** Low Class

**Rotthausen:** Middle Class

#### **Security Rating**

**A**

**C**

**C**

**D**

**D**

**B**

#### **GLABOTKI**

The 1999 merger of the formerly independent towns of Gladbeck, Bottrop and Kirchhellen produced Glabotki, probably the least interesting city in the entire Rhine-Ruhr megaplex.

>>>>[What, even less interesting than Oberhausen?]<<<<<

—Roland von Bremen (11:56:27/20-JUN-54)

Apart from a small inner-city area and some shopping, all three districts of Glabotki are little more than bedroom towns whose inhabitants earn their livings in Essen, Oberhausen, or Bochum. The corporations have not bothered to influence city politics, though this has not kept the Glabotki city council from indulging in levels of corruption and graft unmatched anywhere else in Germany. Local politicians frequently offer low-paying but amusing employment for shadowrunners.

#### **Bottrop (C)**

Despite an intensive search, the editors failed to find anything or anyone remotely remarkable in this district.

>>>>[That cries out for a comment, doesn't it? Too bad I can't think of anything. Anyone? I'll reserve some space, just in case. . .]<<<<<

—Moonwalker (13:12:11/18-DEC-53)

#### **Gladbeck (D)**

A lower-class residential district with a small business area, Gladbeck contains little of interest aside from a factory whose ownership changed hands between Telekom and Siemens AG (now ECC) several times during the past sixty years.

#### **Kirchhellen (D)**

This town contains the sad remains of the Erlebnispark, a modest amusement park established in the mid 20th century. The idle merry-go-rounds and reeking food stalls, however, present ideal places for clandestine meetings. For those interested in a visit to this sorry parody of an amusement center, call manager Josef Hiddigsberger at 989-235-26.

## LEVERKUSEN

Leverkusen is home to one of AGC Chemie's largest manufacturing sites. The corp's gigantic factories here cover several dozen square kilometers of the city and produce a distinctive aroma that announces Leverkusen's presence for several kilometers around. Orks, who are more resistant to pollution than humans, comprise most of Leverkusen's population. They work at the AGC Chemie factories, live in AGC-owned housing, buy in AGC stores, join AGC-sponsored clubs, and are buried in AGC zinc-lined coffins. AGC's strong presence in Leverkusen has also attracted several environmental organizations, such as Green War and FROMATES (Friends Of Man And The Earth Society), to the city.

>>>>[A while ago, AGC started up a couple of new filter installations. Supposedly, some FROMATES runner found a few skeletons in the corp cupboards—literally—and the group forced AGC to build the filters in return for silence.]<<<<<

—Hades (00:47:20/21-MAY-54)

>>>>[Skin cancer has a name: AG Chemie.]<<<<<  
—Prof. Dr. Korf (13:12:10/11-JAN-54)

## MÜLHEIM/RUHR

Situated at the southern border of the Rhine-Ruhr megaplex, Mülheim has recently become the preferred residence of higher-level corp execs. The lovingly renovated living quarters available in Mülheim/Ruhr are astronomically expensive, and its shops and boutiques rank among the finest in the sprawl. Politically, the Mülheim city council is almost totally dependent on the Saeder-Krupp-controlled Essen government.

### Inner City (AA)

Most of the Mülheim inner city is one giant pedestrian precinct full of shops and restaurants, all exuding the smell of money. Anyone sporting armor and weapons who is not part of a licensed, corporate security team is arrested on sight.

>>>>[If you're lucky.]<<<<<

—Wiesenschaumkraut (00:46:39/14-SEP-54)

### Airship Port (A)

Though Mülheim/Ruhr's airship port is one of the largest in Germany, it offers little for anyone but the traveler, not even the usual airport shops.

## OBERHAUSEN

Oberhausen looks like an outsider's stereotype of the Ruhr area: a bit too loud, a bit too dirty, a little run down, and full of life. Oberhausen's vitality helped it survive the recession better than most of the Ruhr's cities—luckily, the

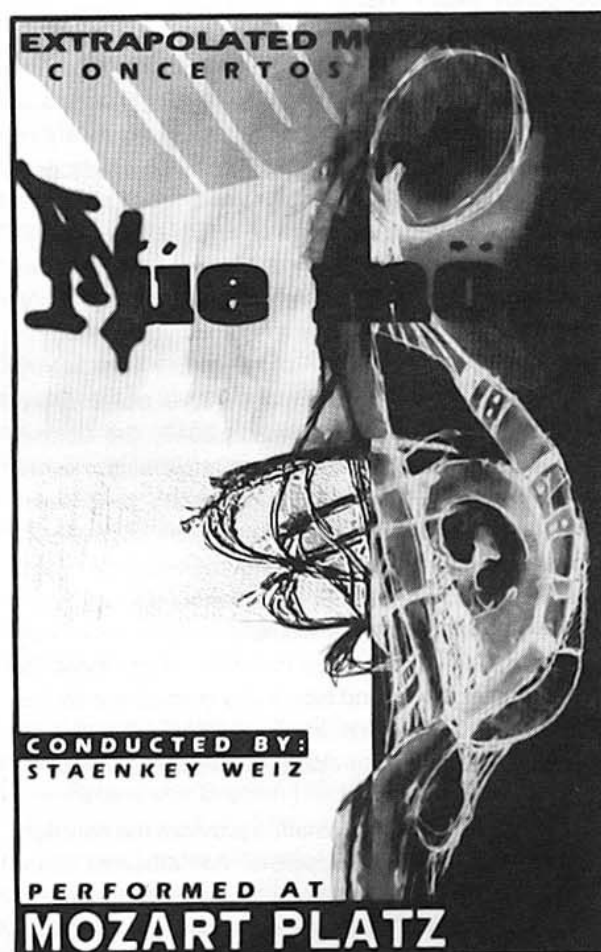
city's generally healthy economy and sound infrastructure kept it free of a megacorporate bailout. Even today, not one megacorp maintains offices in Oberhausen. On the downside, Oberhausen enforces restrictive immigration and security policies. Oberhausen also remains the only city in the sprawl that employs a foreign private security firm. Foreign or not, however, Knight-Errant has an excellent reputation in Oberhausen, because their sterling work allows the citizens to lead a quiet life. Unparalleled safety and economic security without megacorporate corruption make Oberhausen a jewel in the megaplex crown.

>>>>[And makes shadowrunners yawn their lungs out. I don't know anybody who ever made a decent deal in that burg.]<<<<<

—Kumpel Anton (12:05:41/08-OCT-54)

### Die Große Brache (Z)

In the northern part of the city lies the Great Fallows, the sprawl's biggest industrial dump. Swamp spirits and toxic spirits inhabit the 17-square-kilometer waste area, which in itself keeps most people from venturing into the area. Black marketeers and other nefarious characters often meet in the chemical dump, attracted by the privacy it affords.



**Dumpten (D)**

>>>>>[Spirits, what a name!]<<<<<<  
 —Freddy's Return (15:09:10/03-DEC-53)

The northern half of this district looks just like the rest of Oberhausen, but the southern half houses the largest red-light district in the sprawl.

>>>>>[Phew! From the earlier bits, I thought the Oberhauseners were inhumanly respectable.]<<<<<<  
 —Lightnin' Luke (17:10:58/12-JUL-54)

>>>>>[They are, mate. The visitors in the brothel quarter come from the rest of the sprawl. They don't do that sort of thing in Oberhausen.]<<<<<<  
 —Kumpel Anton (21:20:00/09-OCT-54)

**Sterkrade (B)**

A colorful mixture of residential and commercial buildings, Sterkrade runs a picturesque tram that cuts right through the center of the district.

>>>>>[What, above ground???]<<<<<<  
 —Pietje Puck (04:55:29/23-FEB-54)

>>>>>[So what? Trams in Düsseldorf, Neuss, and Müchengladbach are above ground. You don't get around much, do you?]<<<<<<  
 —Doktor Schiwago (10:17:42/25-MAR-54)

Other Neighborhoods	Security Rating
<b>Alstaden:</b> Upper Class	A
<b>Buschhausen:</b> Low Class	C
<b>Klosterhardt:</b> Middle Class	B
<b>Schwarze Heide:</b> Upper Class	A

**WUPPERTAL**

This 'sleeve' around the Wupper River boasts one of Germany's most unusual cities. In 2017, the German government prohibited expanding construction in the surrounding area, and so Wuppertal's city government devised a unique solution to the problem of continued growth. From Elberfeld to Schwelm, the entire river valley is almost completely built over with concrete structures forming four distinct levels. Complex, sophisticated ventilation and lighting systems make the lower levels livable, and speedways and tube trains connect the various districts. On the lowest level, the old Schwebbahn suspension train still runs along the banks of the relatively clean Wupper.

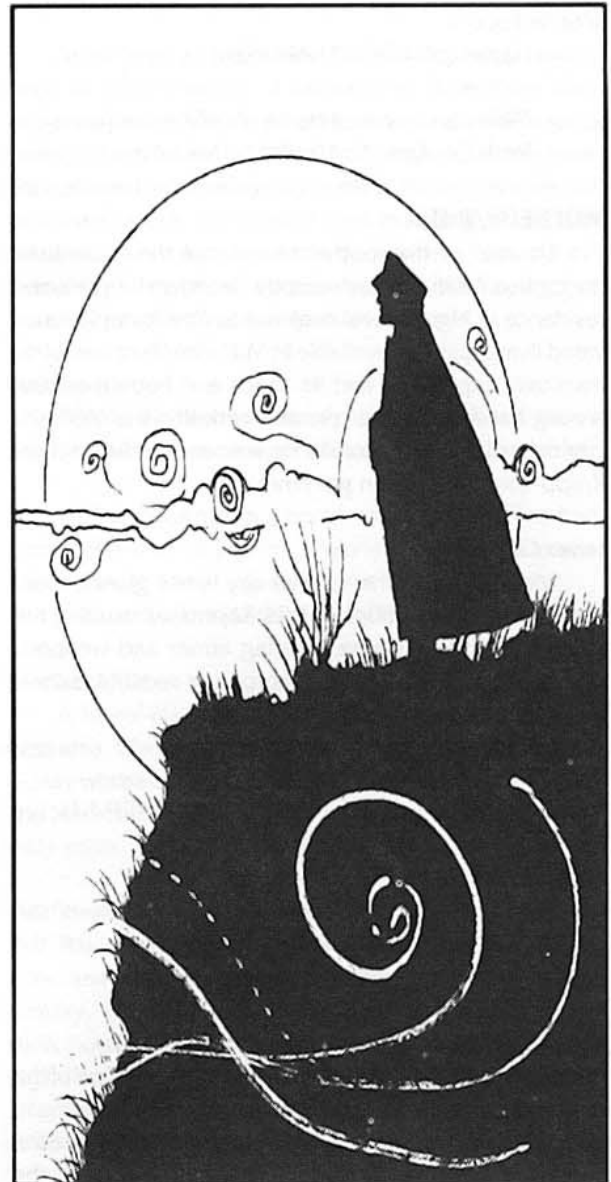
Because artificial illumination provides the only light for much of the city, Wuppertal has attracted many unfortunates allergic to sunlight. Metahumans comprise nearly 60 percent of Wuppertal's residents, giving the city

a proportionately large metahuman population. Because many of its inhabitants live underground and rarely see the light, outsiders have nicknamed the city 'Zombietown.'

**Districts**

With the enclosure of Wuppertal, the term 'district' came to mean 'level.' In general, security ratings drop with each descending level. For example, the uppermost level is rated A or B, whereas F and even Z zones exist on the lowest levels of the city. The 'gray market' is especially extensive in Wuppertal; buyers can bargain for customized cyberdecks, replacement organs, BTLs of every kind, and of course cheap and discreet hired help.

>>>>>[Careful what you drink, though. They tend to spike every second drink or so with interesting substances.]<<<<<<  
 —Gucky der Mausbiber (02:32:44/16-DEC-53)



# SOUTH GERMAN STATES



*Of course, living south of the Main was never exactly fun, but these days it's punishment.*

—Anonymous

After several years of so-called independence, Germany's southern Länder have returned to the fold of the German Alliance. This reunion has produced a climate conducive to the further, healthy growth of these industrious and <<0.2 MP DELETED BY SYSOP>>

>>>>[Let's cut the bulldrek and start over, shall we? After having done away with such useless and expensive indulgences as embassies and a central government, the states of southern Germany have that much more time to make money.]<<<<<

—Streetwizz (13:04:16/23-JAN-54)

Despite the tendency of the public in the other German Länder to lump "the South" together as if the states were a single entity, significant differences exist between the various South German Länder. The following text describes the major states of southern Germany.

## BAVARIAN FREE STATE

Bavaria has not fared well in the past decade. The state shrunk considerably when it lost three districts to neighboring Franconia and Swabia to Württemberg. Some consider her losses a well-deserved punishment for Bavaria's leading role in the secession movement of the 2030s. Few people have forgotten that the initiators of the short-lived, independent South German Federation lived in the Bavarian capital of Munich.

>>>>[You can only buy the punishment theory if you believe all that bulldrek about historic justice.]<<<<<

—Streetwizz (20:09:56/18-AUG-54)

The Euro-Wars sent armies of refugees trekking toward southern Germany from the turbulent Balkans, and the bulk of them landed in Munich. Metahumans, who made up an unusually high percentage of the refugees, presented an easy scapegoat for humans who felt threatened by the immigrants. Soon, horror tales of the

metahuman marauders spread. For weeks, the tabloids had a field day with the alleged rape of a farmer's wife by three Bulgarian trolls until other, uglier stories pushed it aside. The cost of far-reaching integration programs being planned by the northern government was perceived as a threat to the Bavarian economy, and provided further fuel for the anti-metahuman propagandists. Bavaria took its first official steps against metahumans as early as 2032, when the government instituted compulsory registration of metahuman refugees.

>>>>[Quietly including on their lists long-established metahumans with secure jobs and apartments...]<<<<<

—Elrond Silberchip (01:00:00/04-OCT-54)

When Bavarian humans realized that their counterparts in neighboring Baden-Württemberg detested the orks and trolls in its Black Forest as much as they loathed their metahumans, the two Länder began the long negotiations that culminated in the formation of an independent South Germany. In 2038, Bavaria, Baden-Württemberg, Greater Frankfurt, and the Rhineland-Palatinate united to form the Union der Länder Mitteleuropas (Union of Central European Countries).

The confederation proved doomed from the start. Offers of membership sent to Austria and Switzerland got no farther than the nearest shredder, and so the union remained the principal responsibility of its two largest states. Bavaria and Baden-Württemberg, however, shared a long history of mutual distrust; the Swabians of Baden-Württemberg devoted considerable effort to keeping as distant from Bavaria as possible. At Swabian insistence, the union capital was even moved from Munich to the twin cities of Ulm and Neu-Ulm, straddling the border between the two Länder.

>>>>[A move of striking stupidity, given the cities' total lack of infrastructure.]<<<<<

—Roland von Bremen (16:46:31/22-FEB-54)

The two Länder had little in common save for their repressive policies towards metahumans. And as attitudes mellowed over time in neighboring states, Bavaria's insistence on continued and even heightened repression

cost it several friends. During the 2040s, three Franconian districts seceded from Bavaria and Swabia united with newly independent Württemberg in protest of Bavaria's extremist, right-wing policies. Ever since the first secession in 2044, Bavarians have become increasingly unpopular among their neighbors.

>>>>[Only since 2044? I beg to differ.]<<<<<<  
—Roland von Bremen (08:09:12/01-FEB-54)

>>>>[Careful observers will note a bias against Bavarians in particular and southern Germans in general in this text. Such bias is a longstanding tradition, at least among northerners.]<<<<<<  
—Idle Savant  
(08:10:23/12-02-54)

>>>>[Yes, well, have you scanned any of the shadow-data coming out of South Germany? YOW!]<<<<<<  
—Stein (09:10:16/12-02-54)

Within Bavaria, the Bavarian People's Party (Bayerische Volkspartei, or BVP) remains in control. State president Anton Hofmayr, successor to the assassinated Alfons Hunggarten, has tailored the new constitution to suit his own ends with the aid of a rubber-stamp parliament. With a comfortable BVP majority in parliament, and 68 percent of the popular vote in the last direct election, his position seems secure.

>>>>[Of course, that popular vote consists only of those who have lived in Bavaria since ten years before the Euro-Wars. Fortunately, his eight-year term ends next summer. . .]<<<<<<  
—Prof. M.  
(03:44:26/12-AUG-54)

>>>>[Do you really think Bavarians have changed that much?]<<<<<<  
—Streetwizz (03:50:00/12-AUG-54)

Riding a wave of popular sentiment, Hofmayr continues his policy of 'Bavaria First!' During the past few years, however, he has loosened restrictions slightly. As a result, Bavarians now grudgingly accept dwarfs, orks, and trolls—provided they speak the broad, Bavarian dialect like a local.

>>>>[More likely it's because Bavarians now despise human Serbs and Romanians more than they do metahumans. . .]<<<<<<  
—Streetwizz (22:33:11/26-JUL-54)

The distinctive Bavarian dialect has recently experienced a tremendous surge in popularity across the state, even in government offices and courtrooms. Only a few institutions, such as the nationwide daily newspaper *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, have resisted this development and continue to insist on correct German.

>>>>[But the tabloids don't. *Bild Minga*, for one, is published in Bavarian.]<<<<<<  
—Streetwizz  
(00:10:55/17-NOV-53)

>>>>[Of course it is. Bavarian is the perfect way to single out foreigners; what Greek or Bulgarian, well-educated though he may be, speaks that sorry excuse for a language?]<<<<<<  
—Roland von Bremen  
(00:20:49/17-NOV-53)

In the economic sphere, Hofmayr maintains a popular stance against corp power. In every public speech, he insists that the beautiful Bavarian countryside should no longer be at the service of the corporations; instead, the corps should serve Bavaria.

>>>>[And it's working, too. Why else should he get 2 million ecus transferred to his account annually? I've seen his bank records myself.]<<<<<<  
—Streetwizz  
(21:36:00/12-SEP-54)

His commitment to checking corporate power, however, has never produced anything more than anti-corp pronouncements.

>>>>[And also sharp action against unwanted corps. Fuchi should count itself lucky that it still owns Neue Bavaria; if you're Japanese, the court's against you in any conflict. Especially in Bavaria.]<<<<<<  
—Streetwizz (19:20:11/22-APR-54)



>>>>[A protection racket the Bavarian way.]<<<<<  
—Roland von Bremen (19:30:35/22-APR-54)

>>>>[Sounds almost as if shadowrunners like us had  
top-level protection in Bavaria.]<<<<<  
—Infomater (19:45:55/22-APR-54)

>>>>[You be careful, alter. Sure, they'll use you, but if  
you get caught, they'll kill you slowly.]<<<<<  
—Streetwizz (19:55:23/22-APR-54)

Surprisingly enough, Bavarian laws regarding weap-  
ons, cybertechnology, and magic differ little from those in  
force elsewhere in the German Alliance.

>>>>[Unless you're a refugee or an escaped metahuman.  
If so, they'll use any excuse to string you up.]<<<<<  
—Streetwizz (05:44:00/30-MAR-54)

### MUNICH/ISAR METRO AREA

Bavaria's loss of territory to Franconia and  
Württemberg left it with few major cities other than the  
Munich megasprawl, officially known as the Isar Metro  
Area (Ballungsraum Isar, or BI). In many ways Munich  
remains culturally distinct from the rest of Bavaria, and  
despite its past history as right-wing Germany's 'secret  
capital,' Munich has become far more open and liberal  
than the rest of the state.

The total population of the megasprawl is hard to pin  
down; the city gives the number as approximately five  
million, whereas the state president's office insists on 2.2  
million. The larger figure includes all humans and  
metahumans actually living in Munich; the smaller refers  
only to those inhabitants possessing papers identifying  
them as official citizens of Bavaria. According to city  
estimates, 58 percent of Munich's population is human.  
Elves make up 13 percent; trolls, 11 percent; dwarfs, 9  
percent; and orks, 8 percent.

One of Europe's most popular refugee destinations,  
one of every two of Munich's inhabitants was born some-  
where else, usually in the Balkans. The common tongue of  
many city districts is neither German nor Bavarian, but a  
polyglot of German, English, and various southern Slavic  
tongues. Forty-eight percent of Munich's population lives  
below the poverty line, and a mere 37 percent claim  
corporate employment. Per capita income is only EC  
34,900 per year. Education levels are low as well among  
the population; only 36 percent of the residents hold  
high-school diplomas, and a mere 4 percent have at-  
tended a university. Despite these statistics, the crime  
rate remains at a modest 5.3 felonies per 100 inhabitants  
annually.

With a population larger than that of some entire  
states, Munich often elects the Bavarian state president.  
So far, the city has managed to defend the municipal  
voting rights of all inhabitants, giving control of the city  
council to the liberal ESP and USPD parties. Oberbürgermeisterin Hilde Steininger of the European  
Socialists takes equal rights seriously: her deputy, Slobodan  
Eisenfaust of the USPD, is a dwarf of Serbian origin.

>>>>[Of course, that doesn't keep them safe from  
some major blunders. Remember the plans for a refugee  
camp in Munich-Dachau?]<<<<<  
—Streetwizz (20:08:34/25-OCT-54)

Like most megaplexes, Munich contracts out many  
municipal services to private organizations. Because state-  
controlled police forces exhibit a lax attitude about patrol-  
ling certain districts, the so-called 'Black Sheriffs' enforce  
the law in these areas. Unfortunately, the zealotry of  
these private security operatives and their overreliance on  
firepower keeps Munich's 68 hospitals very busy.

The core city of Munich consists of 89 districts, and  
during the past few years it has incorporated such sur-  
rounding towns as Dachau, Fürstenfeldbruck, Freising,  
Erding, Ottobrunn, and Gauting. Though the city wants to  
expand further, the Bavarian government has refused to  
approve new settlement projects. Munich's major dis-  
tricts are described below, with each district's security  
rating given in parentheses after the district name.

#### City Center (AAA)

Munich's city center extends from the central train  
station to the banks of the Isar river. It contains the city's  
best-known malls and specialty shops, the famous  
Viktualienmarkt, and Munich City Hall. Culture as well as  
commerce thrives in this district, which supports 20  
museums, 23 theatres and cabarets, and scads of street  
performers.

>>>>[Often they're Balkan refugees who still play  
music without synths. I fraggin' flipped when I heard  
them for the first time.]<<<<<  
—Municking (23:10:51/06-DEC-53)

#### Freising (AA)

The northernmost of the Isar Metro Area's districts,  
Freising is home to the Bavarian state parliament and the  
regional president's office and residence. Though the  
government presented its move to Freising as a humani-  
tarian gesture intended to open up living space for  
Munich's overpopulated inner city, the suburb's proxim-  
ity to the large Franz-Josef-Strauß International Airport  
must have been a major factor in this decision. Today  
Freising, as well as the neighboring districts of Neufahrn

and Eching, is populated almost exclusively by state government employees and their families and is heavily guarded by state police and the Presidential Guards.

>>>>[Heavily guarded means that in many areas of Freising you need a special pass to be there at any time, day or night.]<<<<<

—Prof. M. (12:42:11/23-MAY-54)

#### Garching (A)

For decades Garching has been the home of some of central Europe's most important institutions: the German Patent Office, the European Patent Office, and the Confederate (formerly Federal) Patent Court. Personnel in these offices catalogue every technological and magical development throughout the German Alliance in painstaking detail to help the courts rule on ownership of inventions and ideas.

>>>>[Wow! That's got to be an open treasure trove, just waiting to be plundered!]<<<<<

—Matrixmaster (15:09:12/02-AUG-54)

>>>>[Careful, junge. I sneaked a peek in there once. The only thing that isn't dark red in that system is the black-as-night IC. Without passcodes, forget it.]<<<<<

—Streetwizz (15:21:29/02-AUG-54)

>>>>[Hey, alter, you're talking to the Matrixmaster here. The IC that can scrag me or my loot hasn't been developed yet.]<<<<<

—Matrixmaster (15:29:17/02-AUG-54)

>>>>[Matrixmaster got fished out of the Isar at Landshut yesterday. Coronary. . .]<<<<<

—Streetwizz (04:12:51/09-AUG-54)

#### Neugauting (C)

This district bordering the city center has so far resisted turning into a slum. Inhabited mostly by German-speakers recently emigrated from East Frisia, Holstein, the Eifel and other parts of northern Germany, Neugauting regards Balkan refugees and metahumans with extreme suspicion.

#### Neuperlach (D)

One of the many planned developments of the previous century, Neuperlach has become an enclave of Romanian refugees. Thanks to the nearby Siemens research center, which offers menial jobs, the standard of living here is endurable.

#### Olympiastadt (E)

Balkan refugees have taken over the Olympic Village, a relic of the Games of 1972 and 2024. Close to 2,000 refugees live in cramped conditions in the athletes' quarters, halls, and stadiums, often at bitter loggerheads along racial or national lines. The Croatian orks living in the ice-hockey stadium, for example, consider the Bulgarian-Macedonian trolls at the Olympia Tower their sworn enemies.

#### Pullach (A)

As the home district of the German secret service, the BND (Bundesnachrichtendienst), Pullach boasts amazing security. From its headquarters in Pullach the BND gathers information and shares it with the government, largely out of the public eye.

>>>>[Rumor has it that the boys at Pullach have been more helpful to the Bavarian president recently than to the Confederate Chancellor in far-away Hannover. . .]<<<<<

—Streetwizz (18:09:34/27-APR-54)

#### Schwabing (AA)

Schwabing is home to a hundred or so theatres and cabarets, simsense parlors, and discotheques. A popular destination for young, upper-class city dwellers seeking a taste of the wild side, Schwabing also has a thriving BTL trade run by street gangs.

As the favored haunt of Munich's idle rich, Schwabing starts the trends that later spread throughout Bavaria. This year, elf posing is the hottest fad; next year, it might be anything.

The bright lights and noise are not Schwabing's only attractions, however. The English Garden near the Isar River is a favorite of Munich's inhabitants. For the past hundred years or so, city dwellers and visitors have thronged the banks of the river, swimming and sunbathing in the nude every summer. These days, of course, nudists can also show off their new cyberlimbs.

>>>>[Sodom and Gomorrah! Heathen profanity! If the Lord had wanted us to show ourselves in all the shame of our naked form, we would all be born stark naked!]<<<<<

—True Believer (09:18:04/14-NOV-54)

>>>>[No comment.]<<<<<

—Raghnal (11:10:53/14-NOV-54)

An elf gang, possibly poseurs, has ruled the park for several years. Not the stereotypical "back-to-nature" elves, the gang seems to be no more than a group of criminals who like to live among the trees while having their favorite bar less than five minutes away.

**Starnberg (B)**

This almost entirely elven district is the home of Munich's rich and beautiful; most residents keep small villas and yachts on Lake Starnberg. Because Starnberg's residents tend to be just as arrogant and elitist as the worst anti-metahuman hate pamphlets portray them, most metahuman-rights activists hate the Starnberg elves with an intensity they usually reserve for Humanis cultists.

>>>>[And if only half the story about how the elves got rid of the original residents is true. . .]<<<<<  
—Prof. M. (06:07:19/28-NOV-53)

**Theresienwiese (AAA)**

Under constant surveillance, this large park is possibly the most heavily guarded open ground in the world. As the traditional site of the Oktoberfest, it serves as a powerful symbol of Bavarian nationalism, and presents a tempting target for oppressed and angry people. The city government beefed up protection after an ugly incident four years ago, when unidentified perpetrators planted magical bombs shortly before the Oktoberfest. The bombs detonated at the opening of the event and claimed 120 lives.



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**Unterstadt (AA)**

This collection of shopping arcades, museums, and small shops spreads beneath the city center along Munich's old subway lines, forming a subterranean complex extending from the central station via the Stachus to Marienplatz. Every so often some unusually stupid gang stakes out turf among Unterstadt's riches, but none of them ever last longer than two days before coming up for light.

**FRANCONIA**

Independent for less than a decade, Franconia is a newcomer among the southern German states. With considerable aid from Württemberg, the three regions that comprise Franconia seceded from Bavaria only after the breakup of the Union of Central European Countries. Even today, the Franconian capital of Nuremberg (Nürnberg) finds it difficult to project an independent image, despite its fierce determination to escape its past

as the former North Bavaria. This determined drive to create a distinct identity affects even the smallest aspects of everyday life in Franconia. For example, finding Bavarian Weißbier or Weißwurst anywhere in Franconia is virtually impossible. Any Franconian with an ounce of pride shuns Bavarian produce, instead eating locally produced Rostbratwurst and drinking wine from Bocksbeutel bottles.

>>>>[Which is almost invariably a cheap imported vintage from Portugal. . .]<<<<<  
—Prof. M. (23:09:18/12-NOV-53)

A mere two years after Franconia declared its independence, the southern part of Hesse outside the city of Frankfurt joined the new state. The Hessians brought high-tech manufacturing to Franconia, but not enough to sustain it economically, and Franconia had to resort to drastic measures to sustain its independence.

>>>>[Right enough. Once the cheers had died down, reality harshly asserted itself. As soon as Stuttgart stopped shipping bundles of ecus to its client state, Franconians discovered how weak their economy truly was. Although it was fairly diversi-

fied, with everything from high-tech manufacturing to agriculture, no single industry was strong enough to ensure any stability or growth in Franconia's economy.]<<<<<

—Prof. M. (16:38:31/23-OCT-54)

>>>>[The place also had problems with foreign companies run by geographical idiots, who wondered why they should invest even more money in France!]<<<<<  
—Streetwizz (17:46:27/23-OCT-54)

Franconia's newly elected coalition government of ESP, LDFF, and CVP members agreed to appoint Ms. Edith Weidner as state prime minister. Though she had almost no political experience, Weidner had worked as a highly paid flack for Fuchi Germany, experience that the coalition hoped would enable her to attract investors to prop up the economy. In her first act as prime minister, Frau Weidner took stock of every economic sector. The study she sponsored revealed a few harsh truths about Franconia's

strengths and weaknesses. Franconian agriculture, including its vineyards, stood no chance against the massive agrofactories of Westphalia to the north. And the entertainment electronics and toy-manufacturing industries clustered around Nuremberg were the only growth areas that Franconia could claim aside from tourism.

Accordingly, Weidner launched a daring plan for Franconia's economic revival. In cooperation with Japanese corps, she created FrankenKultour AG, essentially a corporate government. Almost immediately FrankenKultour set about renovating the historic towns of Rothenburg over Tauber, Nuremberg, and Würzburg in accordance with prevailing tastes. Even the famous Wagner festival at Bayreuth did not escape the treatment. FrankenKultour continues to operate a huge wine cellar at Würzburg (10 ecus for the guided tour) and manages Franconia's best-known landmarks as well. But the most visible signs of FrankenKultour's impact are its medieval-flavored luxury hotel and restaurant chains spread throughout the Land.

>>>>>[Reportedly, long-time Bayreuth festival director Wolfgang Schneider committed suicide when they told him to stage *Siegfried* with the hero as a decker persona and the Valkyries as IC. . .]<<<<<<  
—Streetwizz (19:57:11/21-JUN-54)

FrankenKultour also offers tours of the Main River valley and the hill and mountain ranges of the Rhön, Fichtelgebirge, Spessart, and Pfälzer Wald. FrankenKultour's most popular tourist attraction, however, may turn out to be the Charlemagne Center in the Steigerwald hills. This mock-medieval town, scheduled to open this spring, boasts its own heliport, train station, hotels, and a castle where tournaments and sieges will be staged regularly, as well as a medieval banquet. The town's "dragons," which include several small specimens conveniently fitted with child-sized saddles, are masterpieces of sophisticated technology. Most of the dwarfs, elves, and trolls, on the other hand, are quite real.

>>>>>[Making it one of the few places in southern Germany where a metahuman will be able to find a job. Unless, of course, you're too proud to run around in leather and chain mail and have your picture taken alongside grinning Japanese salarymen on vacation. . .]<<<<<<  
—Elrond Silberchip (17:31:13/05-APR-54)

Should the Charlemagne Center succeed, FrankenKultour plans to follow it up with a metahuman tourist village in the Pfälzer Wald. Mounds of souvenirs have already been produced in connection with these attractions, including both handcrafted items and ultramodern, plastic dragons and mages. These miniature toys are fully motorized and produce realistic special effects.

So far, most Franconians support the government tourism program, which has brought Franconia badly needed nuyen and jobs. An estimated 66 percent of Franconia's tourists are Japanese, and the remainder hail from the UCAS.

In the past few years, Franconia's economy has become increasingly devoted to tourism and dependent on imported technology. However, only a few voices in the wilderness protest the lack of technological research taking place in Franconia and the dwindling diversity of its economy.

>>>>>[Ever heard the story about the wife who left her husband because he "oppressed" her and then was forced to become a prostitute to eat?]<<<<<<  
—Roland von Bremen (22:00:00/16-JAN-54)

Aside from the capital of Nuremberg, Franconia's other large cities are Würzburg and Bayreuth.

>>>>>[The descriptions of which I've personally deleted for safety reasons—nothing's more dangerous than falling asleep while decking.]<<<<<<  
—Roland von Bremen (14:42:12/26-SEP-54)

#### NUREMBERG (REGNITZ-PEGNITZ METRO AREA)

>>>>>[Sounds like some Prussian officer, jawohl!]<<<<<<  
—Streetwizz (03:01:00/11-JAN-54)

>>>>>[You seem to know your way around the military. You a Deckoffizier, 'Wizz?]<<<<<<  
—Roland von Bremen (03:08:08/11-JAN-54)

The Franconian capital of Nuremberg forms the center of the Ballungsraum Regnitz-Pegnitz (BRP), a megaplex of some 1.6 million people that comprises a string of cities along the Regnitz and Pegnitz rivers. With its long and rich history, Nuremberg had become a favorite vacation spot for overstressed Japanese managers even before the founding of Franconia. Building on this reputation, modern-day Nuremberg is well on its way to becoming the premiere convention center of southern Germany.

>>>>>[Not that it could ever match Düsseldorf as a yakuza playground.]<<<<<<  
—Streetwizz (02:46:26/28-MAY-54)

Several years ago, the city spent considerable money to transform Nuremberg Castle into a convention center, a gamble that has paid off handsomely. Unbelievably popular with overseas corp execs, the Castle commands staggering rental fees and has an impressive waiting list. During the annual Christkindlmarkt in December, finding

a hotel room anywhere within 50 kilometers of the city is nearly impossible. The mass of convention-goers traveling into the city overwhelm the road system, making large-scale traffic jams and congestion a common sight during rush hours. Another popular event is Nuremberg's annual toy fair in February. Thousands flock to this fair to see the latest offerings from megacorporate toy manufacturers, many based in or near Nuremberg.

>>>>[And junge, are those little things fast these days! Last year, Fuchi introduced a slowed-down F-4 deck with a small mainframe, allowing kids to play at decking. I should have been so lucky growing up!]<<<<<  
—Deckjack (05:44:00/07-FEB-54)

>>>>[Think about how much high-tech data these toymakers have in their databanks. It's not cutting-edge, of course, but it *is* less well guarded than most.]<<<<<  
—Prof. M. (06:22:49/07-FEB-54)

>>>>[I just wish they'd quit making guns for kids. The toy ones get more and more like real ones every year.]<<<<<  
—Mütter (04:21:16/03-MAR-54)

>>>>[I had a smartgun with rubber bullets as a ten-year-old, and it didn't hurt me!]<<<<<  
—Roland von Bremen (16:27:51/02-SEP-54)

>>>>[Unfortunately.]<<<<<  
—Rommel III (14:02:16/14-SEP-54)

Nuremberg boasts excellent autobahn connections in all directions, plus transrapid lines to Munich and Berlin. The transrapid connection to Stuttgart is tentatively scheduled to open in the fall of 2055. Reportedly, Nuremberg's city government plans to expand the city airport to handle international service. Unfortunately, diverting funds to revamp the airport may postpone work on the Main-Danube canal yet again. Intended to make the city a river port, this project has been part of Nuremberg city planning for more than a thousand years.

## GREATER FRANKFURT

Greater Frankfurt stretches from the cities of Wiesbaden and Mainz in the west to Hanau and Aschaffenburg in the east, and from Frankfurt in the north to Mannheim and Ludwigshafen in the south. Historically Germany's financial center, modern-day Frankfurt essentially belongs to the Frankfurt Bank Association. In response to city hall's attempts to curb the banks' expansion in the early 21st century, the banks simply bought large parts of the city by exercising their shareholders' power in



a substantial number of real estate concerns. The sprawl began to emerge in 2023, when Frankfurt incorporated the city of Offenbach, and continued to spread during the ensuing years. Now the sprawl's south side is ruled by AG Chemie. Nearly one-third of the area, including the former city of Ludwigshafen, consists of chemical factories, research laboratories, suppliers and employee residences.

Because the banks control many concerns usually run by organized crime, the underworld exerts considerably less influence in Greater Frankfurt than in other sprawls. The long-established Mafia, in place before the Frankfurt Bank Association took over, spends considerable time defending its territory against the yakuza and other newcomers, leaving it with little time to expand its operations. In the absence of a powerful crime syndicate, street gangs flourish. The B-52s of southern Darmstadt and the Spessart Spiders, who terrorize the local autobahnen on their motorcycles, are two especially infamous gangs.

**VITAL STATISTICS****Population:** 5,607,000

Human: 74%

Elf: 4%

Dwarf: 8%

Ork: 9%

Troll: 5%

**Per Capita Income:** EC 43,000**Below Poverty Level:** 28%**Telekom Code:** D-04 or 0494**Education:**

High School Equivalency: 44%

University Equivalency: 19%

**GETTING THERE**

Air travel is the easiest way to get to Greater Frankfurt. More than 1,500 regular and suborbital flights depart from Frankfurt Airport each day to major cities worldwide, and a consortium of companies led by the IFMU and the Bank Association plan to build orbital-flight facilities at the airport as well. The city and the surrounding area are also integrated into the autobahn and railway networks, and the transrapid maglev stops at a number of places within the megaplex. Travelers can even reach Frankfurt by ship, via the Rhine.

>>>>[Airport security is extremely tight. A dozen armed guards greet anyone who tries to get onto the grounds packing a gun, and hair-trigger sensors blanket the entire area.]<<<<<

—The Hessian (23:44:12/19-JAN-54)

**FRANKFURT**

Frankfurt is the city of money. Under the aegis of the Frankfurt Bank Association, many of the world's largest banks maintain towering, glass-and-chrome headquarters in Frankfurt's so-called Forbidden City, located in the former city center. The Bank Association maintains strict security in the restricted area and requires lengthy security checks of all visitors. Despite these restrictions, heavy traffic abounds in the Forbidden City, as in every other major urban center. Many high-level corp execs keep luxury apartments in the area, and its countless boutiques draw visitors from all over Europe.

**HEIDELBERG**

Top corp execs live outside Mannheim and Ludwigshafen, far from the dirty Rüsselsheim car plants, the noisy airport, and the potentially lethal Hanau nuclear factories. Many live in Wiesbaden, but most have fled to the quaint city of Heidelberg.

Despite this influx, the character of the old university town has hardly changed in the past fifty years. Aside from the historic architecture that continues to draw throngs of overseas tourists every year, Heidelberg University is the

city's best-known attraction. No other university within the German Alliance has such a highly regarded thaumaturgical faculty.

>>>>[An interesting aside: the magic faculty obviously receives its dough from third-party funding—in this case ChemEurop. Now the corp folk don't throw away money for the sake of learning, so it should be obvious that the entire theoretical superstructure those Heidelberg profs are building is a big front for alchemical research. You see, no one has yet managed to make real alchemy or even harness an elemental spirit for industrial work. For those interested in *genuine* magical theory, I'd recommend the universities at Marburg, Erfurt, Weimar, or Göttingen over Heidelberg any day. Also, Munich and Hamburg offer less impressive faculty resumés but are damned good in practice.]<<<<<

—Magic Missile (19:45:00/21-JUN-54)

**KARLSRUHE SPECIAL LEGISLATIVE ZONE**

When a series of earthquakes hit the Upper Rhine in 2043, the earth churned like a raging sea in the Baden-Württemberg city of Karlsruhe. Houses collapsed, sewage fountained out from the ruptured ground, and fires raged out of control. Within just 24 hours, 10,000 people died and material damage soared into billions of deutsche marks.

The following years saw the first rebuilding efforts, almost entirely funded from the city's own exhausted coffers. Following the declaration of the Troll Kingdom of the Black Forest in 2043, the Baden-Württemberg government in Stuttgart practically wrote off the entire Upper Rhine region. The only 'help' the confederate government provided consisted of keeping the constitutional court at Karlsruhe 'for reasons of national solidarity.' North Baden eventually became part of the Badensian Palatinate.

Understandably, all kinds of radicals found scores of followers among Karlsruhe's dissatisfied and homeless inhabitants. The most successful of them all, Hedwig Gabler of the Greater Badensian Crusade, headed a group remarkable for extreme Badensian nationalism, religious fanaticism, and a virulent hatred of metahumans.

Though ridiculed across the rest of Germany as an overzealous local patriot, Gabler was elected Lord Mayoress of Karlsruhe in 2047. Within months she had established a work program with the ultimate goal of launching a war against the hated trolls and orks of the Black Forest. By April of 2049, Gabler had hired enough mercenaries to put her nefarious plans in motion. On the night of April 23, however, Bundeswehr units from the Palatinate and Württemberg advanced towards Karlsruhe and took control of the city within seven hours. Most of the mercenaries fled or changed sides at the first sight of confederate troops, who easily captured Gabler and her deputies.

For the past five years, Karlsruhe has remained a so-called "Special Legislative Zone," ruled directly from Hannover by the confederate government and administered by the army's local commander. It has also become Germany's, if not Europe's, largest garrison. The barracks at Philippsburg, Forchheim, and Ettlingen contain close to 30,000 soldiers.

Several factors have prompted this massive military presence, not least being the location of the constitutional court at Karlsruhe. The court acts as the only universally accepted forum for settling conflicts between the German Länder and for many has become the most visible symbol of a status quo they hate. The terrorist attack on the First Senate in 2050, which almost succeeded, demonstrates just how endangered this institution has become. Other institutions under army protection are the German Nuclear Research Center and Forchheim Airport, which Gabler's fanatical followers have targeted in the past.

>>>>[And as long as she awaits trial at Bruchsal penitentiary, a few of them will keep trying to rescue their heroine.]<<<<<

—Prof. M. (22:34:52/12-JAN-54)

This stationing of troops has prompted criticism by opposition parties in the confederate government because of its high cost. Foreign governments have also reacted with mounting agitation. France especially has begun to view the garrison as a threat.

>>>>[More level-headed people are concerned about the internal danger. A growing number of people are beginning to laud the Karlsruhe garrison commander, General Michael Karaoglu, as the much longed-for "strong man," even though he has so far denied any such ambitions.]<<<<<

—Prof. M. (04:00:24/22-JUN-54)

>>>>[He didn't make his headquarters in the castle by accident.]<<<<<

—Roland von Bremen (04:02:58/22-JUN-54)

So far, however, the government shows no signs that it intends to withdraw its troops or transfer the area's administration to the Badensian Palatinate government.

>>>>[Besides the security bunk, they have more important reasons for staying. As long as the restrictive customs barriers of the southern German states remain in place, the Special Legislative Zone gives northern Germany a convenient back door.]<<<<<

—Dator (23:49:27/04-SEP-54)

>>>>[Correct. Despite, or probably because of all those troopers, more smuggling and illicit trade goes on in Karlsruhe than anywhere else. Right under the noses of the supreme court justices, you can buy anything you want. Dutch hardcore BTLs, forged credsticks from UCAS, spare body parts from Africa, you name it. As long as you keep your business nice and quiet.]<<<<<

—Streetwizz (00:04:32/05-SEP-54)

### LUDWIGSHAFEN/MANNHEIM

Like Wiesbaden and Mainz, these two cities lie on opposite banks of the Rhine. Virtually owned by primary employer AG Chemie, Ludwigshafen and Mannheim are among the few places in the world that can truly boast an unemployment rate below 3 percent. The residents, however, pay a dear price for this prosperity. Ever since AG Chemie successfully declared these two Upper Rhine cities corporate enclaves, it has done as it pleased, perpetrating enormous ecological crimes in the name of maintaining the cities' prosperity. And almost every week, corporate damage-control teams are hunting for nosy reporters or loose-lipped employees.

>>>>[Or another free toxic spirit, spotted in one of the old Rhine river branches.]<<<<<

—Prof. M. (22:56:21/14-MAY-54)

The only persons allowed to work in Ludwigshafen and Mannheim are those cleared by AG Chemie. Unwelcome individuals are either deported or simply disappear.

>>>>[AG Chemie claims to have stopped all testing on lab animals 10 years ago. I wonder who or what they test their products on now?]<<<<<

—Wichita Cathedral (04:45:23/01-MAR-54)

### MAINZ/WIESBADEN

Wiesbaden and Mainz are "twin cities," located on opposite banks of the Rhine. Wiesbaden seems to have changed little during the past 60 years. Tourism has helped to keep this spa and casino town looking just as it did back in the nineties. The banks own large areas of the city, and plenty of medium-level executives of financial institutions live in Wiesbaden.

Mainz is another story. Everything and everyone not wanted in Wiesbaden gets shoved across the Rhine to this city. Because Wiesbaden absorbs almost all the money in the region, Mainz remains one of Germany's poorest cities. Unemployment, poverty, slums, street gangs, and organized crime abound in the largely metahuman city, as do prostitution, illegal gambling, the BTL trade and other forms of entertainment the good citizens of Wiesbaden don't want in their own city. Visitors to Mainz are advised to leave the underworld-controlled "safe areas" only if

well-armed. Mafia and yakuza live side by side in Mainz, their most solid base in the Greater Frankfurt area. Despite the friendly facade, however, Mafia and yakuza hitmen and local street thugs frequently shoot it out.

In spite of its troubles, Mainz still draws a crowd during the street carnival season, which has changed from a rather straitlaced affair to an orgiastic festival more like New Orleans' Mardi Gras or Rio's Carnival.

## SAAR LEGISLATIVE ZONE (SOX)

The area irradiated by the nuclear disaster at Cattenom in 2009 includes Luxembourg, large parts of Lorraine, the entire Saarland, and the regions around the cities of Trier and Kusel. These two cities and the city of Zweibrücken are the only points of entry into the irradiated zone.

The name SOX, a contraction of Saar-Lorraine-Luxembourg, was coined in the late twentieth century, when the region began to establish itself as an economic center spanning the national borders of Germany, Luxembourg, and France. Though it was officially christened the Saar Special Legislative Zone since then, most people still call it the SOX. Others refer to it as simply "the Zone."

>>>>[Most Europeans view the SOX as a distinct "country," though Germany and France (whose territories make up the SOX) do not. The following text relates only to the German side of the Zone. The French side of the mess is equally bizarre; the so-called "atomic punks" who actually live in the glow of Cattenom are très weird.]<<<<<

—Deiter Dead-Eater (05:10:23/07-AUG-54)

Immediately after the Cattenom disaster, most people assumed that the massive radiation the mishap released had made the area useless for millennia to come. In the 2020s, however, researchers discovered the disaster had caused powerful astral turbulence in the area. This turbulence is so strong that even the mightiest magical entities can only remain in the area for limited periods. Several megacorps quickly established sealed research installations in the Zone, taking advantage of the impervious magical barrier created by the ever-present turbulence. Others were attracted to the area because they could conduct research without worrying about causing any harmful effects to the area's already decimated ecology. Rumor has it that some corps even place researchers in sealed habitats in the SOX and release them only when they have produced useful results. The German side of the Zone contains about 200 such research or production facilities, manned by some 300,000 personnel.

>>>>[The largest labs are owned by Saeder-Krupp (at St. Wendel), Ruhrmetall (at Merzig), and Ares Europa (below the remains of Völklingen). Guess what they research there.]<<<<<

—Philosopher (22:07:31/16-JUN-54)

>>>>[Weapons research is not the only thing the corps are working on in the SOX. The Leo-Bernhardt laboratory at Wadern is wholly owned by AG Chemie. You could call their work "biotech," but illegal genetic research is closer to the truth.]<<<<<

—Konwacht (11:28:49/27-JUL-54)

The Saar Special Legislative Zone also hosts the semiannual maneuvers and military exercises of various corporate armies, which are slowly but surely leveling the few buildings left in the region's deserted towns and cities. Additionally, about 2,000 corp guards ensure that no one enters or leaves the Zone without a pass. Apart from much-improved air reconnaissance, the border resembles the one that separated the Federal Republic of Germany and the German Democratic Republic during the 20th century's Cold War.

>>>>[Ja. Here too, they shoot to kill without warning.]<<<<<

—Old Man (23:18:15/13-JUN-54)

The only people officially allowed to enter the SOX are the employees of the corps that own research and production facilities there. Not even confederate troops or BIS agents have any official business in the Zone.

## WÜRTTEMBERG

Known as the "Switzerland of Germany," Württemberg emerged greatly altered from the troubles of the early 2040s. With the secession of the Troll Kingdom of the Black Forest and the largely troll-and-ork Badensian Palatinate, the former state of Baden-Württemberg lost a large chunk of its western territory to metahumans.

The Swabians, historically divided between Bavaria and Württemberg, welcomed the Badensian secession. An outsider unacquainted with Swabian history and prejudices, however, would be hard pressed to understand the silent joy with which many Swabians look back on the history of the past decade.

>>>>[An' a good thing, too! Them an' their fragging "Swabians keep working, while Badensians keep thinking. . ." They're all orks and trolls now!]<<<<<

—Rommel III (10:13:00/10-NOV-53)

Shortly after the Badensian lands seceded, the former Bavarian district of Swabia joined Württemberg, which more than compensated for the loss of the western provinces. To this day, prosperous and industrious Swabians continue to build top-of-the-line rigged cars, cyberdecks, and other high-tech items.

For the past eleven years, a coalition of the right-of-center CVP and the laissez-faire LDFP under Prime Minister Josef Blättle has governed Württemberg. From all indications, the coming election will change nothing, which suits the largely prosperous and complacent citizenry.

Württemberg's relations with neighboring Bavaria have cooled markedly as well, mainly because of lingering Bavarian resentment over Swabian support for the Franconian secession in 2045. That support fostered close ties between Franconia and Württemberg, and the two Länder are now building the Nordalb Transrapid line to connect the Württemberg capital of Stuttgart to the Franconian capital of Nuremberg.

>>>>[Word is the Swabians want to make Stuttgart the southern hub of the Hannover-Frankfurt-Stuttgart and Berlin-Nuremberg-Stuttgart transrapid lines.]<<<<<  
—Streetwizz (18:27:01/12-MAR-54)

>>>>[Just you wait. Once the connection to Zürich is up and running. . .]<<<<<  
—Rommel III (06:01:11/14-OCT-54)

>>>>[So the corp mobsters can visit their money without too much aggro?]<<<<<  
—Roland von Bremen (13:06:22/14-OCT-54)

The megacorp IFMU (International Vehicles and Mechanical Engineering Union), a pillar of Württemberg's economy, maintains headquarters at Stuttgart-Untertürkheim. IFMU is the only megacorp of any consequence within Württemberg and exerts considerable influence over the state government.

>>>>[IFMU owns the government.]<<<<<  
—Streetwizz (22:09:23/23-JAN-54)

Because IFMU has had the good sense to leave Swabia's traditional economic structure alone, Württemberg has retained innumerable small and me-

dium-sized companies. Many of them family-owned, these companies tend to manufacture single product lines. For example, Fuchs GmbH in the city of Aalen manufactures almost all Telekom charge meters.

Tourism provides Württemberg with a second source of steady income. Not even Swiss industry has been able to kill the beauty of southern Swabia's Lake Constance (Bodensee), which continues to attract tourists seeking a bit of unspoiled nature.

>>>>[Right. The Bodensee is about as unspoiled as a two-ecu joygirl!]<<<<<  
—Deckjack (21:38:21/12-OCT-54)

>>>>[You honestly think anyone who can afford a waterfront cottage there gives two dreks about that?]<<<<<  
—Elrond Silberchip (22:01:57/12-OCT-54)



Other tourist destinations include the Ulmer Münster cathedral, Neuschwanstein Castle, and the Allgäu mountains in newly reclaimed eastern Swabia, as well as the old Hohenzollern castles in the Schwäbische Alb range. The Hohenzollern castles shelter the graves of famous Prussian kings.

>>>>[They were moved back there when Potsdam became part of the Berlin sprawl. A really big celebration, that, with the chancellor attending and everything!]<<<<<  
—Rommel III (09:46:22/21-FEB-54)

>>>>[The Fredericus Rex traveling sideshow, eh?]<<<<<  
—Roland von Bremen (09:52:44/21-FEB-54)

In addition to Stuttgart (also known as the Metro Area), Württemberg includes such cities as Ulm, Augsburg, and Friedrichshafen on Lake Constance. Friedrichshafen is home to IFMU's Zeppelin works, which produces dirigibles for customers all over the world. Nearby, Germany's first large fusion installation produces power for the city and helium for the Zeppelin Works.

>>>>[In 2038, the *Lothar Späth* got in the way of a dragon above the Black Forest. Full of hydrogen, it was. Junge, you could see the flames all the way in Munich and Paris!]<<<<<  
—Streetwizz (22:58:11/27-APR-54)

>>>>[Hadn't they learned anything since the days of the *Hindenburg*?]<<<<<

—Stein (13:43:28/12-04-54)

>>>>[Yes, they had. In fact, the *Lothar Späth* was the only airship using hydrogen at that time, because its builders couldn't get any helium. So of course the dragon had to roast this particular zeppelin—a spectacular example of Murphy's law in action.

Ironically, the *Hindenburg* carried hydrogen for the same reason.]<<<<<

—Idle Savant (13:52:10/12-04-54)

Württemberg maintains friendly relations with the human-run German Länder and its other European trading partners, and many Swabians regard Switzerland as a model for their own state. In fact, the members of one obscure Lantfridbund named after a former Swabian duke advocate merging Württemberg with Switzerland.

>>>>[Those Lantfreaks are all owned by banks and corps.]<<<<<

—Streetwizz (22:12:23/10-JUN-54)

Württemberg's laissez-faire economic policy is enshrined in the state's constitution, enabling corps to extend their control into all areas of daily life. The constitution also guarantees all humans the right to freely practice their religion. Not surprisingly, Württemberg teems with countless small religious sects committed to enforcing their particular version of purity, morality and decency. Nowhere else in Germany does the occasional lawbreaker meet with such public hostility.

>>>>[He wouldn't be talking of *us*, now would he?]<<<<<

—Streetwizz (22:14:07/10-JUN-54)

>>>>[Surely not such law-abiding citizens as us, alter!!]<<<<<

—Roland von Bremen (04:13:56/10-JUL-54)

Spotless Swabia has a simple way of dealing with its metahumans: it foists them off onto its neighboring Länder. When a well-known and trusted neighbor suddenly begins to sport orkish features, the government makes him a gift of a rail ticket to the Freudenstadt border station. Of course, the government provides the individual with generous compensation for the property he must leave behind—usually about one-third of its actual value. Of all the metatypes, only elves can expect any sympathy, provided they have their ears surgically altered, adapt to local customs and lead quiet, unobtrusive lives.

Württemberg's most active polliclubs include the Christian Knights (Ritter Christi), the aforementioned pro-Swiss Lantfridbund, a multitude of puritanical Christian groups, and a few laissez-faire organizations fighting for even greater 'corp freedom.'

>>>>[Definition of a puritan: a person who lives in fear that somewhere, someone is having a good time.]<<<<<

—Raghnal (06:12:30/10-NOV-54)

### STUTTGART (MID-NECKAR METRO AREA)

Württemberg's capital, Stuttgart, lies in the idyllic Neckar River valley. Although its inhabitants call it the 'plex of woods and streams,' Stuttgart is a major industrial center and contains numerous IFMU factories. The incorporation of the towns of Ludwigsburg, Bietigheim, Waiblingen, Esslingen, Böblingen, Sindelfingen, Heilbronn, Tübingen, Reutlingen, and Göppingen have given the Metro Area a population of 5.6 million, making it Germany's fourth-largest city. Its official name is the Ballungsraum Mittlerer Neckar, or BMN.

Despite its size, Stuttgart boasts few cultural attractions. The city fathers are much more interested in the smooth flow of business than music, museums, or learning. Apart from Tübingen University at the southern border of the sprawl, Stuttgart supports few other cultural institutions. The city also has no major newspaper or trideo station.

>>>>[And even Tübingen's pretty lightweight, intellectually speaking. They mostly research commercial applications for cybertech and magic.]<<<<<

—Deckjack B. (22:12:37/10-JUN-54)

>>>>[What about the Cannstadter Wasen?]<<<<<

—Rommel III (14:09:52/10-JUL-54)

>>>>[What about it?]<<<<<

—Roland von Bremen (20:10:10/10-JUL-54)

Stuttgart contracts out police protection to a wholly-owned subsidiary of IFMU, the SternSchutz (StarSecurity) Company. This outfit brutally keeps even the roughest districts under control. Needless to say, no black market worth mentioning exists anywhere in Stuttgart.

>>>>[A word to the wise, kumpel—if you've got any brains at all, NEVER refer to SternSchutz by their initials. Not in anyone else's earshot, anyway. . .]<<<<<

—Streetwizz (17:19:32/02-JUN-54)

>>>>[Sounds cozy to me. If they ever hold a championship for the world's most boring sprawl, I'd put all my money on Stuttgart.]<<<<<

—Roland von Bremen (23:59:59/10-AUG-54)

# AWAKENED LANDS

*C*reatures from the depths of hell found their own kingdoms in the middle of Europe. Satan has triumphed. We have descended into the Dark Ages!

—Brother Gabriel (Gottfried Burringler), SJ

Metahumans are the numerical majority and hold control over the government in two German Länder and two associate states. These Awakened lands are the Grand Duchy of Westrhine-Luxemburg, the Troll Kingdom of the Black Forest, the Duchy of Pomorya, and the Marienbad Council. The latter two are not full Länder, but associated with the Alliance of German States, as provided by the Constitution of 2045.

>>>>>[Let's get one thing clear right from the start. Not all German metahumans live within these Länder, nor are these states populated entirely by metahumans.]<<<<<<

—Prof. M. (22:56:00/22-JUL-54)



## BLACK FOREST TROLL KINGDOM

This young southwestern Land, known as Trollkönigreich Schwarzwald in the original German, offers a homeland, shelter, and work to Germany's persecuted trolls and orks. The German Alliance's first metahuman state, the Troll Kingdom of the Black Forest has become home to nearly half of all German orks and trolls. For the remainder, the Black Forest is an almost mystical refuge where they can find a welcome if things go drastically wrong.

>>>>>[The Black Forest is the butt of constant derision and attacks by "normal" human fanatics, but without it, metahumans in the rest of Germany would be a lot less resigned to their fate.]<<<<<<

—Prof. M. (00:21:38/06-FEB-54)

### VITAL STATISTICS

**Population:** 180,000

Troll: 38%

Ork: 34%

Human: 21%

Other: 7%

**Per Capita Income:** EC 21,000

**Below Poverty Level:** 38%

**Megacorporate Affiliation:** 3%

**Education:**

High School Equivalency: 22%

University Equivalency: 14%

The King of the Black Forest, Berthold I, is a former citizen of Freiburg who helped found the Troll Kingdom. At 44 years of age, he has reached a remarkable longevity for a troll. Perhaps it is the wealth of experience from his unusually long life that has helped him steer his realm in profitable directions.

>>>>>[Especially since he was supposedly a fairly good shadowrunner in his day. . .]<<<<<<

—Infomaster (22:49:01/14-FEB-54)

>>>>[Fairly good? Jungchen, there won't be a better street samurai in this century!]<<<<<<

—Roland von Bremen (22:56:31/14-FEB-54)

Organized along feudal principles, the Land is divided into the duchies of Feldberg, Triberg, and Kinzigtal, all of which include numerous smaller counties. The rich and fertile Upper Rhine valley, including the capital city of Freiburg, is a Crown domain and provides the state revenue. The city sits astride the vital North-South autobahn from Karlsruhe to Basel, giving Freiburg strategic importance.

>>>>[Nice source of toll revenue for those street robbers!]<<<<<<

—Rommel III (23:22:00/05-JUN-54)

>>>>[Just taking care of their own, you drekhead!]<<<<<<

—Roland von Bremen (4:25:53/05-JUN-54)

Though much of the Troll Kingdom is inhabited almost exclusively by orks and trolls, many of the Land's humans remain in the towns and villages of the Crown domain. Mostly workers in orchards and vineyards, the humans have the legal status of royal wards; to harm or kill one is considered a felony.

>>>>[This special status cannot hide the ugly truth that they have almost no rights.]<<<<<<

—Rommel III (09:22:11/04-OCT-54)

In addition to agriculture, the Black Forest gets much of its income from tourism. In winter as well as summer, hiking enthusiasts enjoy holidays in the forested hills and valleys. The increasing frequency of reports of dangerous paranormal animals and hostile trolls and orks, however, may soon diminish this popularity. Certain political circles within the Troll Kingdom would welcome an end to tourism, despite the loss of revenue.

Unlike the Grand Duchy of Westrhine-Luxemburg, the Troll Kingdom has few friends. Most other Länder and nations regard the Black Forest as a dumping ground for bothersome metahumans, and would not lift a finger to guard King Berthold or his Land against trouble. Of course, the Troll Kingdom's preferential treatment of orks and trolls over humans has not helped the trolls' cause.

>>>>[That hasn't hurt them half as much as the King's refusal to rent out his subjects cheaply for hard labor. The corps hate that.]<<<<<<

—Roland von Bremen (03:20:09/12-AUG-54)

## DUCHY OF POMORYA

The legal association between the German Alliance and the elves of Pomorya is extremely loose. The association treaty of 2045 includes a non-aggression pact, declarations of friendship, a small amount of aid, and provisions for easing customs formalities, ensuring a reasonably free flow of goods, and establishing embassies to represent the elves abroad. Apart from the specific provisions of the treaty, the new lords of the Baltic Sea keep their distance from the affairs and troubles that beset the rest of the German Alliance.

### VITAL STATISTICS

**Population:** 180,000

Human: 54%

Elf: 44%

Other: 2%

**Per Capita Income:** EC 18,000

**Below Poverty Level:** 45% by AGS standards, 5% by local standards

**Megacorporate Affiliation:** 2%

**Education:**

High School Equivalency: 35%

University Equivalency: 21%

The Duchy of Pomorya contains the islands of Rügen, Usedom, and Wolin, as well as the former state of New West Pomerania that lies north of the Recknitz, Trevel, and Peene rivers. The cities Ribnitz, Demmin, Anklam, and the ferry port of Saßnitz are the only legal border crossings. Historically part German and part Polish territory, the duchy was settled largely by elves. After the successful revitalization of the Baltic Sea, numerous Euro-War refugees from Poland, Russia, and the Baltic states as well as additional German elves flocked to Pomorya.

With their coming, life returned to the villages that had become virtual ghost towns since the death of the Baltic Sea. The elves brought the gift of life to a realm thought dead, and their joyful songs rose above the rooftops>>**BLOCK DELETE:: 20mp**<<

>>>>[Enough is enough. Must have been written by an elf.]<<<<<<

—Roland von Bremen (18:37:46/25-JAN-54)

### POMORYAN SOCIETY

As a visible sign of their independence, the Pomoryan elves have created a new society from old myths and traditions.

>>>>[That's one way of putting it. You could also say these nostalgia freaks are stealing like magpies—everything down to names and fairy tales.]<<<<<<

—Roland von Bremen (18:38:22/25-JAN-54)

Unlike their cousins elsewhere in the world, they have eschewed Celtic legends in favor of local Pomorian traditions. For example, they created a new language from Polish and German elements, liberally mixed with terms from various ancient Slavic dialects. Place names, too, have largely reverted to ancient forms. The name Pomorya itself is related both to the German Pommern and the Polish Pomorze, "land near the sea," and makes a fitting name for an area so rich in water and islands. Indeed, the sea interests the Pomorian elves much more than the land. For them, the restoration of the Baltic Sea's former wealth of life is their primary reason for existence.

>>>>[I thought they had already revitalized it.]<<<<<

—Infomaster (07:00:52/  
06-SEP-54)

>>>>[Unfortunately not. They have made life possible again, but it is not yet present.]<<<<<

—Elrond Silberchip (07:08:37/  
06-SEP-54)

The ground beneath their feet, on the other hand, receives scant attention. Wide areas of Pomorya remain wilderness forsaken by man and elf, inhabited only by wildlife and paranormal animals. Pomorya's elves congregate in small seaside villages and in the capital city of Saßnitz; most humans live in the towns and cities of Gora (formerly Bergen) on Rügen Island, Strelasund (formerly Stralsund), Greifswald (formerly Swinoujście), and Vineta (formerly Swinemünde).

Pomorya's ruling Duke Jaromar Greif has his official residence in the capital, which is on the shores of the Baltic. There he presides over the tiny governing council.

>>>>[His favorite residence is said to be the nearby Königsstuhl, a coastal hilly region that offers a breathtaking view across the Baltic Sea.]<<<<<

—Elrond Silberchip (09:10:00/17-DEC-52)

Pomorya's four remaining towns are governed by counts. Count Ratibur Dreikopf rules Gora, Count Ladislas runs Strelasund, Count Kasimir Tyminski governs Greifswald, and Count Wratisslas Greif controls Vineta.



>>>>[Fascinating names, some of them. In case anyone is interested, Dreikopf means Threehead, Greifswald means Gryphon's Wood, and Greif means Gryphon. Not sure if Tyminski means anything, but Königsstuhl means Chair of the King.]<<<<<

—Idle Savant (17:42:05/04-NOV-54)

>>>>[Anyone have any more facts about these longears?]<<<<<

—Caramon (04:28:09/03-DEC-52)

>>>>[A few, all rumors. I can't guarantee the truth of any of it. Duke Jaromar is supposedly eco-romantic and a deadly enemy of all sea polluters. Some people claim he's a mage and a priest of the Great Mother. Ratibur of Gora has a rep as a self-important blabbermouth and poser. Ladislas appears to be a talented shaman and a so-called "black elf." His ancestors were supposedly Sinti or Roma. That's gypsies, for the uninitiated. Kasimir Tyminski is a human scientist from Poland, and Wratisslas of Vineta is allegedly an elven racist who calls himself "Brother to the Duke."]<<<<<

—Prof. M. (04:55:22/03-DEC-52)

>>>>[But no one knows whether that title denotes a true sibling relationship or is just an honorific. Apart from that, why do you ask, Caramon?]<<<<<

—Elrond Silberchip (05:32:02/  
03-DEC-52)

>>>>[No comment.]<<<<<

—Caramon (05:39:56/03-  
DEC-52)

Among the counts, Wratisslas of Vineta is particularly influential with younger elves and those with a strongly elitist bent. Having long viewed Pomorya's human inhabitants as a thorn in his side, he has recently begun openly advocating their eviction with the goal of establishing a purely elven state, citing Tír na nÓg as a precedent.

>>>>[They say he maintains close ties to Tír na nÓg through discreet channels. One might almost suspect him of plotting a coup against moderate Jaromar except that Duke Jaromar is a fellow elf. . .]<<<<<

—Elrond Silberchip (17:55:00/20-MAY-54)

>>>>[Any such action would do a lot of damage to Pomorya's own interests. An awful lot of humans are active in environmental protection and biotech research. For example, Count Kasimir Tyminski of Greifswald was once Poland's leading authority on environmentally friendly genetic technologies.]<<<<<<

—Prof. M. (18:05:35/20-MAY-54)

So far, however, Count Wratislav has not succeeded in putting his far-reaching proposals into practice.

>>>>[Instead, he vents his spleen with petty chicanery against Polish freighters and the nearby city of Szczecin. He once destroyed 500 tons of food because it hadn't been grown organically enough for his taste.]<<<<<<

—Prof. M. (22:54:22/16-JUL-54)



>>>>[They have other troubles with Poland. Pomorya's official state religion is pantheism, combined with the veneration of old local gods. The elves built a temple at Kap Arkona and dedicated it to the gods of nature. Just the kind of thing that really sets the teeth of the militant Polish Catholics on edge.]<<<<<<

—Elrond Silberchip (14:52:23/27-AUG-54)

## MARIENBAD COUNCIL

The Marienbad Council encompasses parts of Bavaria and Bohemia and has one of the loosest internal structures of all European nations. Apart from the amorphous advisory body referred to in this Land's name, there exists virtually nothing in the way of national government. According to the Treaty of Prague and the German Constitution of 2045, the Council is a client state of both the Czech Republic and the German Alliance, which together represent it diplomatically and maintain a modicum of involvement in its affairs.

>>>>[Which means ensuring that the barons and petty kings can't get their grubby little hands on missiles, fighter planes, or cybertech.]<<<<<<

—Prof. M. (18:00:26/28-AUG-54)

Government within the various constituent parts of the Council is entirely the locals' own affair. Currently, the Marienbad Council consists of 8 kingdoms, 4 grand duchies, 4 counties, 7 baronies, 3 republics, 3 city-states, and one revolutionary people's republic.

>>>>[Two days ago, the people's republic was the Empire of Marktredwitz. . .]<<<<<<

—Prof. M. (19:35:21/23-MAR-54)

## VITAL STATISTICS

**Population:** 80,000 (approx.)

Human: 46%

Elf: 2%

Dwarf: 24%

Ork: 10%

Troll: 14%

Other: 4%

**Per Capita Income:** EC 14,000

**Below Poverty Level:** 67%

**Megacorporate Affiliation:** 19%

**Education:**

High School Equivalency: 12%

University Equivalency: 3%

A ferocious desire for independence is the only thing that unites this small nation. Wars, coups, and raids are such common occurrences that the caretaker governments in Prague and Hannover cannot spare the time to put a swift end to the constant conflict. The combination of the Council's political disarray and its location on the borders of Thuringia, Franconia, and Bohemia has made it the center for smuggling magical products into Germany.

>>>>[Just watch out, chummer; step off a forest track on the wrong side, and you may land in the middle of a bloody border war that would put any gang war in the Ruhr sprawl to shame.]<<<<<<

—Deckjack (22:00:00/01-OCT-54)

A joke in the newsmagazine *Der Spiegel* described the Marienbad Council as "a tolerant nation inhabited by intolerant people." Though amusing, the quip is less than accurate. The bloody vendettas between 25 rulers have little to do with race and everything to do with the lust for power. The Council consists of 9 human, 8 troll, 5 ork, 2 dwarf, and 1 elf ruler who fight each other constantly over money, territory, and resources without resorting to racial prejudice as a rallying cry. In fact, the Marienbad Council

is among the most racially tolerant areas in Europe.

This atmosphere of tolerance has made the Marienbad Council attractive to large numbers of European Sinti and Roma, the descendants of Indian immigrants more commonly known as gypsies. Discriminated against elsewhere, they find a haven of sorts in Marienbad. Upon registering at the Bureau of Vital Statistics at Marienbad and paying a flat, annual tax rate of EC 500, they become citizens of the German Alliance and the Czech Republic just like everyone else. The characteristic color of citizenship documents has earned Marienbaders the nickname "Redbooks."

>>>>[Ever heard of Gretna Green in Britain or the city of Reno, Nevada? At Marienbad, you can get married without a waiting period, as long as all involved can prove their sentence. Age, race, gender, number . . . none of that matters. A divorce doesn't take any longer than a wedding; you register your displeasure with your present partner(s), and if you haven't changed your mind after three hours, you're divorced.]<<<<<<

—Prof. M. (09:02:56/22-JAN-54)

The Council has a virtually nonexistent economy; its inhabitants tend to spend any income they gain on petty warfare. The legendary wealth of some Marienbad kings is mostly exaggeration, though some hold considerable property outside Council territory.

>>>>[The King of Cheb, for example, is said to hold valuable shares in IFMU.]<<<<<<

—Prof. M. (11:43:27/18-FEB-54)

What little industry and agriculture exists can barely feed and supply the people. Large parts of the Council are polluted; several areas allegedly harbor hostile, toxic spirits.

>>>>[Isn't there talk about some guys who can control those critters? That would be quite a weapon!]<<<<<<

—Deckjack (20:29:21/15-MAR-54)

>>>>[Careful, alter. If you know so much, you should know enough not to blab about it.]<<<<<<

—Dances-in-the-Matrix (20:32:31/15-MAR-54)

## WESTRHINE-LUXEMBURG

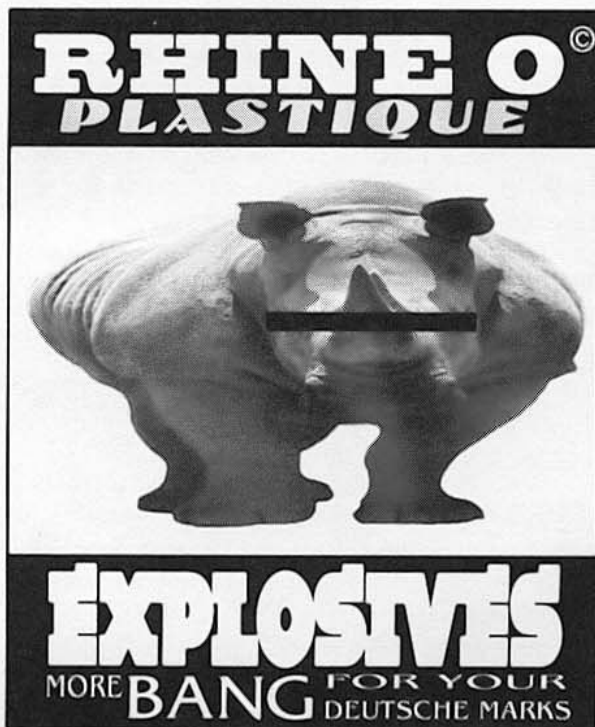
The Grand Duchy of Westrhine-Luxemburg covers the left bank of the Rhine between the Nahe and Rur Rivers, encompassing the Hunsrück hills, the Mosel and Ahr River valleys, and the Eifel hills. The latter region is the home of the Grand Duchy's largely dwarf population. Following the unexpected eruptions of the Eifel's numer-

ous dormant volcanoes in the 2040s, the southern German Länder were persuaded to grant metahumans nominal equal rights, which eventually led to the development of a dwarf-controlled state.

>>>>[Boy, I wish I could talk complicated like that. . .]<<<<<<

—Roland von Bremen (16:05:02/31-MAY-54)

In the wake of the disaster many dwarfs and other metahumans from the South German states emigrated to the Eifel and Hunsrück hills. The surrounding governments granted the disaster area its independence in 2043, glad to shed responsibility for its people. Adolphe III, heir to the Grand Duchy of Luxemburg, became the new realm's head of state.



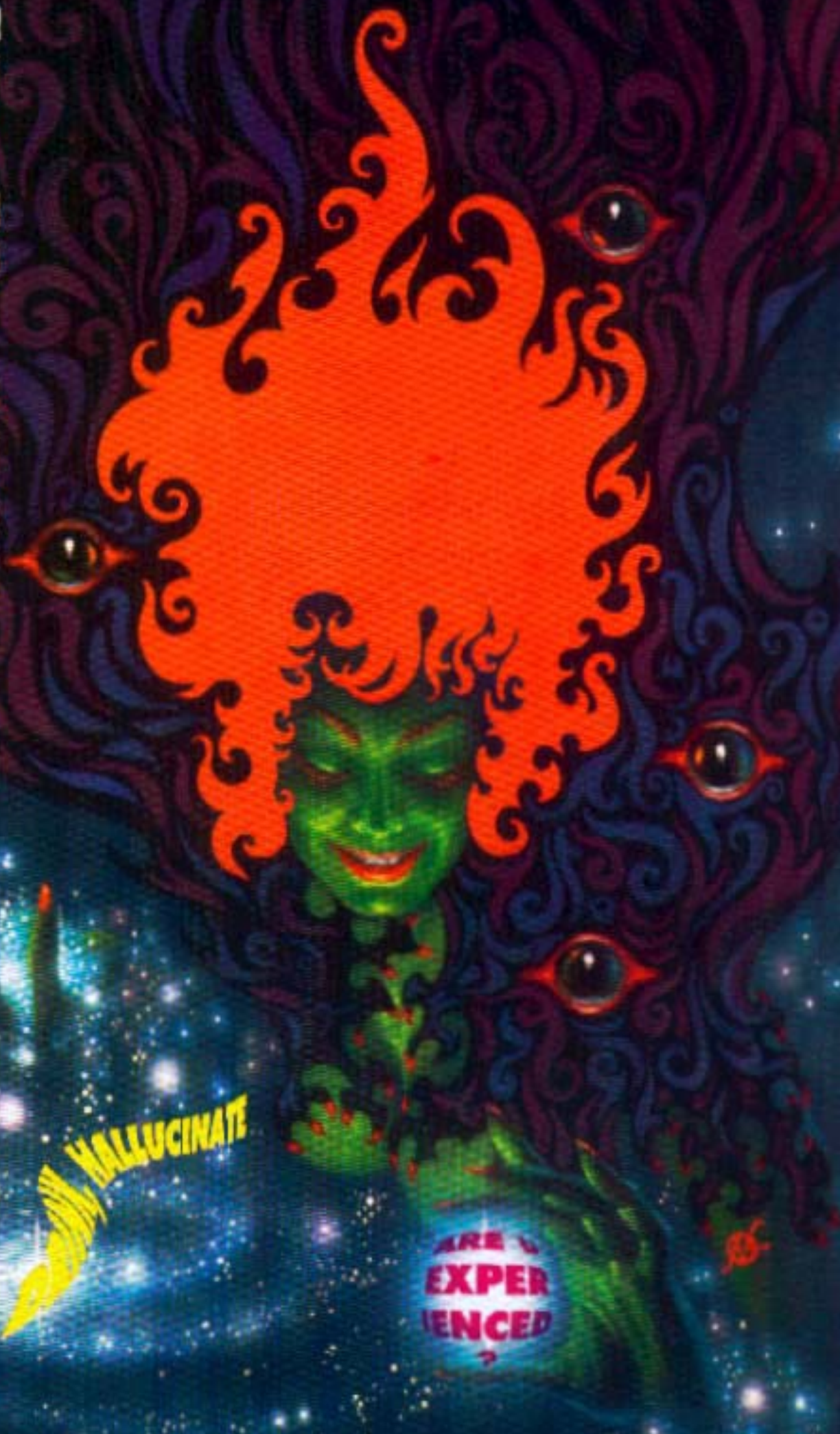
>>>>[Interesting fellow, this Adolphe. When he was born in 2012, people thought him deformed from to the radiation that spilled over Luxemburg in the Cattenom accident. For the loss of his health and country, the French granted him the highest compensation of all time. Rumor has it that he gets five to ten million ecus annually from them. If that's true, he is the main source of revenue for his Land.]<<<<<<

—Prof. M. (23:09:21/07-AUG-54)

>>>>[Some say he received a lot of cred on top of that for selling his land rights within the SOX to the corps. . .]<<<<<<

—Roland von Bremen (05:32:32/14-AUG-54)

IT'S A  
BLAST  
FROM THE  
PAST  
AT THE  
STARR  
BAR  
BERLIN



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ARE U  
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**St. George's  
Pilsener**

Das Bierschikt lebt nicht 99%

**VITAL STATISTICS****Population:** 892,000

Human: 40%

Dwarf: 43%

Troll: 11%

Other: 6%

**Per Capita Income:** EC 41,000**Below Poverty Level:** 8%**Megacorporate Affiliation:** 12%**Education:**

High School Equivalency: 61%

University Equivalency: 30%

**POLITICS**

The Grand Duke's power rests mostly on the close connections between his private monies and the Land finances, his personal shares in several prominent European and multinational megacorps, and his connections to international high society. Wherever the remainder of the international jet set meets, Adolphe III of Westrhine-Luxemburg is a frequent guest. At least partly because of his influential friendships, the Grand Duchy enjoys favorable relations with almost all of its neighbors and with other European states.

Despite the legendary diligence of her dwarven citizens, the economy of the Grand Duchy rests on small feet.

&gt;&gt;&gt;&gt;[That supposed to be a joke?]&lt;&lt;&lt;&lt;&lt;

—Roland von Bremen (22:09:56/04-JAN-54)

Because the yield from agriculture and animal husbandry is insufficient even to fulfill local requirements, the Land depends entirely on export earnings and the Grand Duke's personal fortune. Unfortunately, it produces few exportable goods. The income from mining tufa, basalt, and other volcanic rock, bottling the mineral water from the numerous mountain springs, and the production of fine red wine in the Ahr River Valley have proven insufficient to cover the stubborn trade deficit. So far, it is mainly Grand Duke Adolphe's private financial resources that have kept the Land prosperous.

&gt;&gt;&gt;&gt;[Some claim that Westrhine mineral water possesses magical properties.]&lt;&lt;&lt;&lt;&lt;

—Prof. M. (10:00:43/28-MAR-54)

The capital of the Grand Duchy of Westrhine-Luxemburg is Bad Neuenahr. Though the lava flows miraculously spared the small, idyllic spa town of that name, the dwarfs set up their government seat in a fallout shelter built by the former federal government. This vast subterranean complex shelters the monarch and major governmental bodies. It is also alleged to protect them even from guided missiles, dragons, and magic of all kinds.

The constitutional monarchy of Westrhine-Luxemburg includes a Landtag (state parliament) in Bad Neuenahr, where the Rhinish People's Party (Rheinische Volkspartei, or RVP) and the ESP have kept each other at bay in three elections over the past five years. This political deadlock makes the provisional prime minister, Herr Karl Hammer of the RVP, utterly dependent on the Grand Duke's trust to hold onto his position. In smaller by-elections, the USPDP has been steadily gaining votes.

According to rumors, the Freemasons of Westrhine-Luxemburg wield considerable political influence. In the years after the Awakening, many metahumans abandoned the established churches that had scorned them, turning to more tolerant organizations. Dwarfs, especially, drifted toward Freemasonry, and these days make up almost half of Germany's Masonic community.

&gt;&gt;&gt;&gt;[Then again, they might just identify with old fantasy clichés. . .]&lt;&lt;&lt;&lt;&lt;

—Roland von Bremen (14:54:00/17-JUL-54)

The Masonic lodge known as Hiram zu den Zwei Säulen (Hiram at the Two Columns), headquartered at Bad Neuenahr, is said to be one of Germany's wealthiest and most influential lodges. It enjoys a close relationship with high-ranking business executives as well as politicians; both Prime Minister Hammer and Grand Duke Adolphe are said to be members. In fact, the Grand Duke allegedly holds high rank within the group.

&gt;&gt;&gt;&gt;[That gang is also said to be up to its neck in magic, especially alchemy. . .]&lt;&lt;&lt;&lt;&lt;

—Streetwizz (21:55:31/28-DEC-52)

Most members regard their lodge as a place to find aid, comfort, and financial support in times of trouble. Most lodges accept only male initiates, or else allow only males into positions of influence. Many Westrhine dwarfs tend to keep their women subservient, and the Masons are no exception. For example, >>**FORCE DELETE::1.5Mp**<<

&gt;&gt;&gt;&gt;[Sorry, but we really don't need to suffer through a dissertation on the oppression of female dwarfs.]&lt;&lt;&lt;&lt;&lt;

—Streetwizz (02:22:17/19-MAY-54)

&gt;&gt;&gt;&gt;[Careful where you say that, mann. To some, your family jewels are at just the right height for mining.]&lt;&lt;&lt;&lt;&lt;

—Grisle (20:18:56/20-JUN-54)

**PLACES OF INTEREST**

A discussion of interesting localities within the Grand Duchy must begin with the Eifel region. The volcanic eruptions of 2042 turned this pleasant, gentle hill country

into a desolate region full of often bizarre mineral and rock formations. For example, where the town of Gemünd once stood, there now stretches a lava desert filled with basalt columns, a place reminiscent of the nightmare visions of Hieronymus Bosch.

>>>>[Who the devil is he?]<<<<<<  
—Roland von Bremen (13:09:33/03-JUN-54)

>>>>[Bosch? Must be a system designer.]<<<<<<  
—Streetwizz (14:00:00/03-JUN-54)

>>>>[Philistines!]<<<<<<  
—Prof. M. (11:10:11/09-AUG-54)

The Mondtal, above the former town of Adenau, resembles the surface of the moon.

>>>>[Which makes it a favorite recreation spot for the Weise.]<<<<<<  
—Prof. M. (23:54:37/31-MAY-54)

Except for a few areas where small covens of the Weise are helping to reforest the region by magical means, the volcanic ground has not yet shown any renewed fertility. Instead, the Eifel has become a magically potent area filled with magical phenomena: the elemental power of the volcanoes has brought to the surface minerals that exhibit strange attributes. The region's alchemists prize such stones and pay generous prices for them.

The lava flows from the eruptions dammed up the Rhine above the mouth of the Ahr all the way to the town of Lahnstein. The entire Neuwieder Becken, including the towns of Neuwied and Koblenz, were transformed into a lake that has become a favorite weekend destination of treasure-divers.

>>>>[And finally ended the controversy about whether or not to put the Kaiser monument back up at Deutsches Eck . . .]<<<<<<  
—Prof. M. (21:22:39/21-OCT-54)

The Grand Duchy's other hill region, the heavily forested Hunsrück, offers much less spectacular scenery than the Eifel. In Hunsrück lies Idar-Oberstein, where dwarfs have made the town's traditional handicraft of jewelry-making almost entirely their own. Hunsrück's wooded slopes also serve as a recreational area for nearby Frankfurt.

Westrhine-Luxemburg boasts few cities. The surviving population of the city of Luxemburg fled after the Cattenom disaster, and the cities of Trier and Koblenz were abandoned in the wake of the 2042 eruptions. In the northwest there still stands the city of Aachen, former



capital of the great Charlemagne, a time-honored source of legends about magic and other strange occurrences that took place long before the Awakening. Statistically, it is the Land's largest city. Along with the neighboring towns of Würselen, Stolberg, Eupen, Kerkrade, and so on, Aachen is ruled by a Geheimrat (privy councilor) responsible only to the Land government.

>>>>[Believe it or not, this Geheimrat is supposedly Charlemagne himself, who has returned to his old capital. The dwarfs suffer his rule because they couldn't stop him if they tried.]<<<<<<  
—Destroid (23:21:46/24-FEB-54)

# FREE STATE OF WESTPHALIA

*Go from your father's land. . . to a land, I shall show ye. . . and I shall bless who bless thee, and curse who curse thee.*

—1 Moses 12: 1-3

For centuries, various bishops have ruled the region around the cities of Münster, Paderborn, and Osnabrück as a religious fiefdom. Westphalia today remains tightly under Church control, giving the German Alliance its only true theocracy. Conservative, close-minded, and determined to shut itself off from the rest of the Sixth World as much as possible, Westphalia remains a closed society. Those of us who are bringing you these files know little about Westphalia's inner workings, but we present what we know and what little we could ferret out. Westphalia in many ways is a law unto itself, a dangerous one for those who happen to be different.

Westphalia had its origin in anger and neglect. Originally inhabitants of Northrhine-Westphalia, its people felt slighted by their government's concentration on the Ruhr area's problems. Though the farmers complained loud and long, no one listened, and in 2013 leading politicians and citizens in the rural districts of Münster and Detmold proclaimed a separate Land with the archaic name of Westphalia. A year later, despite vigorous protests from the Northrhine government at Düsseldorf, the Federal Republic of Germany formally recognized and accepted the new Land.

>>>>[You can tell the name is archaic. It is written "Westphalen" with a "ph," a distinctively English spelling, whereas the name of Westphalia in the Land name of Northrhine-Westphalia is written with a proper, Germanized "F" as in Nordrhein-Westfalen. ]<<<<<

—Raghnal (19:25:03/23-OCT-54)

Westphalia's founding fathers were a mix of Catholic and Protestant farmers. The Catholic Bishop of Münster in 2013, Klaus Klein-Schmeinck, served both communities well as an impartial head of state. His successor, Bishop Bernhard Freiherr von Heeremann, was an ambitious politician who claimed Catholic precedence as if by divine right.

>>>>[Hallelujah!]<<<<<

—Sandmann (01:38:52/24-JUL-54)



In his first major act as Bishop-President, von Heeremann exchanged territory with Lower Saxony in 2022, giving up the Protestant areas around the city of Bielefeld in exchange for the traditionally Catholic Emsland region. Following the land swap, he turned to interior problems. Under his rule, Westphalia has developed the strictest anti-metahuman laws north of the Main river.

>>>>[Let's be fair: north of the equator.]<<<<<

—Duke Darkness (23:47:11/09-OCT-54)

The Free State of Westphalia is an influential actor on the political scene, drawing its power from its status as Germany's breadbasket. Westphalia produces more than one-third of all food consumed in Germany, from the famous "Bauer Bernd" bacon and sausage specialties to greenhouse vegetables and fruit to cheap soy-and-protein sludge. The neighboring Land of Northrhine-Ruhr, among others, depends on Münsterland imports for more than half its nutritional requirements.

>>>>[That alternate name for Westphalia comes from its capital city, Münster. Westphalia's religious dictatorship makes the name particularly appropriate. Münster means minster, as in cathedral.]<<<<<<

—Prof. M. (14:06:35/30-OCT-54)

>>>>[Of course, they can only produce as much as they do by an unsurpassed rape of nature. Do any of you have the slightest idea how many megaliters of liquid manure are annually sloshed over the fields by the pork factories? What do the feed refineries around Lingeny do with the oily remainder? Questions like that are why elves like me get shot there.]<<<<<<

—Elrond Silberchip  
(04:56:42/23-JAN-54)

## POLITICS

Westphalia's state parliament (Landtag) is elected by all resident humans, but real power lies in the hands of Münsterland's wealthy farmers and the German Catholic Church. The rich farmers own the greenhouses, meat factories, vast pig, poultry, and cattle farms, and all other profitable producers of foodstuffs. The terms "meat baron" or "feed baron" often used as nicknames for such farmers refer to the power they hold through economic control of such valuable resources and also to the ties many of them have to long-established families of the minor German nobility.

>>>>[Like the ruling bishop, Freiherr von Heeremann. "Freiherr" means he's a baron.]<<<<<<

—Ragnal (11:42:13/02-NOV-54)

As for the German Catholic Church, its priests have a surprising degree of power over the people. They believe and teach their congregations that the Lord created the frightening Sixth World to test the faithful, and that Münsterland will definitely pass this test thanks to its divinely inspired Bishop-President.

His eminence, Cardinal Bernhard Freiherr von Heeremann, combines both these power groups and has held his position as Westphalia's spiritual and secular leader for more than thirty years. As the Land's preeminent priest and meat baron (with personal ownership of eight large feederfarms), he can rely on the support of

both of Westphalia's major power bases. In fact, his status as Bishop-President of Westphalia and chairman of the Chamber of Lords (Herrentag), the Landtag chamber reserved for the richest landowners, has brought Westphalia's agricultural industry to its present position of power.

Westphalia's relations with almost all the other Länder are reserved. The Länder gladly accept Westphalia's produce while privately deriding its "popery," and Westphalia in turn regards most outsiders as godless. Only its relations with Bavaria are cordial; witness the treaty Westphalia recently signed agreeing to supply Bavaria with food-production technology.

Relations with Westphalia's southern neighbor and rival, Northrhine-Ruhr, have reached a tense peace after years of quarrelling provoked by the basic difference in world view between city folk and prosperous farmers. Two issues remain controversial. The first involves the Transrapid line running across Westphalian territory from Dortmund in Northrhine-Ruhr to Bielefeld in the North German League. The second is a low-grade territorial dispute in the Sauerland.

The Transrapid line passes through Westphalia without any stopover, and Bishop-President von Heeremann demands enormous payments from both Northrhine-Ruhr and the North

German League for protecting the line from terrorist attacks. The other two Länder rightly regard this demand as extortion, and at first refused to pay. Two days after Northrhine-Ruhr rejected the first demand for such payment, the Westphalian government removed police protection from the line, citing a shortage in personnel. Within hours of the police withdrawal, unidentified terrorists blew up two of the transrapid line's pillars. Fortunately, no one was hurt. Since that time, however, Dortmund has not missed a payment.

>>>>[Mann, that's the dirtiest piece of blackmail between neighbors I've ever heard of!]<<<<<<

—Deckjack (21:05:57/31-MAY-54)

>>>>[Idealistic fool.]<<<<<<

—Roland von Bremen (22:10:33/31-MAY-54)



The subdued territorial dispute sizzling in the Sauerland, located southeast of the Rhine-Ruhr sprawl, constantly threatens to flare into a larger conflict. Most of the Sauerland's inhabitants are conservative and Catholic like the Westphalians. Viewing their region as "the Rhineland's last colony," the leaders of a growing local movement are demanding union with Westphalia. Needless to say, Westphalia would be only too happy to gain territory at its rival's expense.

>>>>[Problem is, most of the Rhine-Ruhr megaplex's water supply comes from the Sauerland. Düsseldorf couldn't cede the Sauerland even if it wanted to. Anybody remember back in '48 when Münster blocked the supply from the Haltern reservoir for two months because of a so-called technical failure? About 2,000 people died of thirst in Recklinghausen and Gelsenkirchen because they couldn't afford to buy bottled water.]<<<<<  
—Prof. M. (13:56:23/22-FEB-54)

Outside of Germany, Westphalia has its warmest relations with such strongholds of political Catholicism as Poland, Croatia, and Spain, all of which have embassies in Münster.

## SOCIETY

Westphalian thinking can be summed up in the old adage, "Wat de Bur nit kennt, dat frett he nit" (A farmer won't eat what he doesn't know). This wary mentality has shaped every aspect of 21st-century Westphalian society. It takes most people a long time to overcome their natural suspicion of anything new. For example, cyberimplants are considered extremely suspect by the church and, with very few exceptions, are prohibited. Not one legal bodyshop exists in all of Westphalia. Although cosmetic changes using cyberimplants are not officially prohibited, the Church considers it one of the seven deadly sins to undergo such a procedure and does not consider excommunication too strong a punishment.

Attitudes toward metahumans are just as bad, if not worse. Most Westphalian humans consider dwarfs and

orks unnatural abominations, and the government coerces them into leaving whenever possible. Elves, feared as ecological troublemakers as well as for their metahuman nature, may not enter Westphalia and are immediately expelled if by chance they are natives. Only trolls receive the slightest consideration, and very slight it is. Because of their size and strength, these metahumans have a small chance of finding low-paying jobs in a meat factory or perhaps as a dockworker in a coastal port, work requiring enormous strength.

>>>>[Just as long as you're pious and decent, and your heart is pure. . .drekbrains!]<<<<<  
—Roland von Bremen  
(18:56:00/21-APR-54)

>>>>[Hey, junge, that sounds as if you're talking from personal experience.]<<<<<  
—Deckjack (19:21:37/21-APR-54)

>>>>[Listen, boy, the original Bremer Roland isn't exactly on the small side. Satisfied?]<<<<<  
—Roland von Bremen  
(20:01:29/21-APR-54)

Though magic is suspect, it is accepted within stringent limits. After years of hedging and ambivalence, Münster University founded a department of what it calls theurgy in 2041. Defining theurgy as "white, "God-fearing" hermetic magic, the School of Theurgy allows the surprisingly numerous magically talented Westphalians, known as Spökenkieker, to train their abilities for the service of the Church and "the greater glory of God." The actions of all other mages are

severely restricted. Shamans and witches, for example, are considered blasphemers, and may not enter the Land.

The university's long-standing fame has made the Westphalian capital of Münster a major city. Other Westphalian cities include Osnabrück, known for its liberal attitudes in comparison with its neighbors; pious and conservative Paderborn; the port of Papenburg; and nu-

SOFTWHERE?

IT'S ALL IN YOUR HEAD!

GEISTSTREIK  
CEREBRAL SYNTHETICS  
• POLYTECHNIQUE •

merous feedcorp headquarters whose owners prefer living in old mansions or moated castles fitted with modern luxuries.

>>>>[In wrath at mankind all forlorn, God created Paderborn.]<<<<<

—Roland von Bremen (04:22:19/03-SEP-54)

## PAPENBURG

Westphalia's remarkable economic power allowed the Land's rulers to build a giant habitat at the mouth of the Ems River, with a port visited by ships from abroad as well as by German vessels. The Münster government named it Papenburg, after a nearby town that sank beneath the waves in 2011.

With a population just under a quarter of a million inhabitants, of whom 98 percent are human, Papenburg is Westphalia's most important city save Münster. Various wealthy meat barons and the city governor, who bears the archaic title of "Drost," live in the restricted district of Kapernaum. The actual habitat includes a few towns founded on the nearby mainland.

Papenburg's main freight and passenger port lies at the town of Ludgershaven, named after an ancient, local saint. From Ludgershaven, Westphalian produce is shipped overseas, and it is here that the high-tech goods received in payment enter the Land. Passenger traffic is quite sparse, not surprising given Westphalia's suspicion of outsiders. The heavily guarded Portus Christi in Ludgershaven is the war port of the Westphalian Coast Guard.

>>>>[Fortunately, the Coast Guard amounts to all of five torpedo boats, ten hovercraft, and a few small vessels.]<<<<<

—Prof. M. (21:03:00/10-MAR-54)

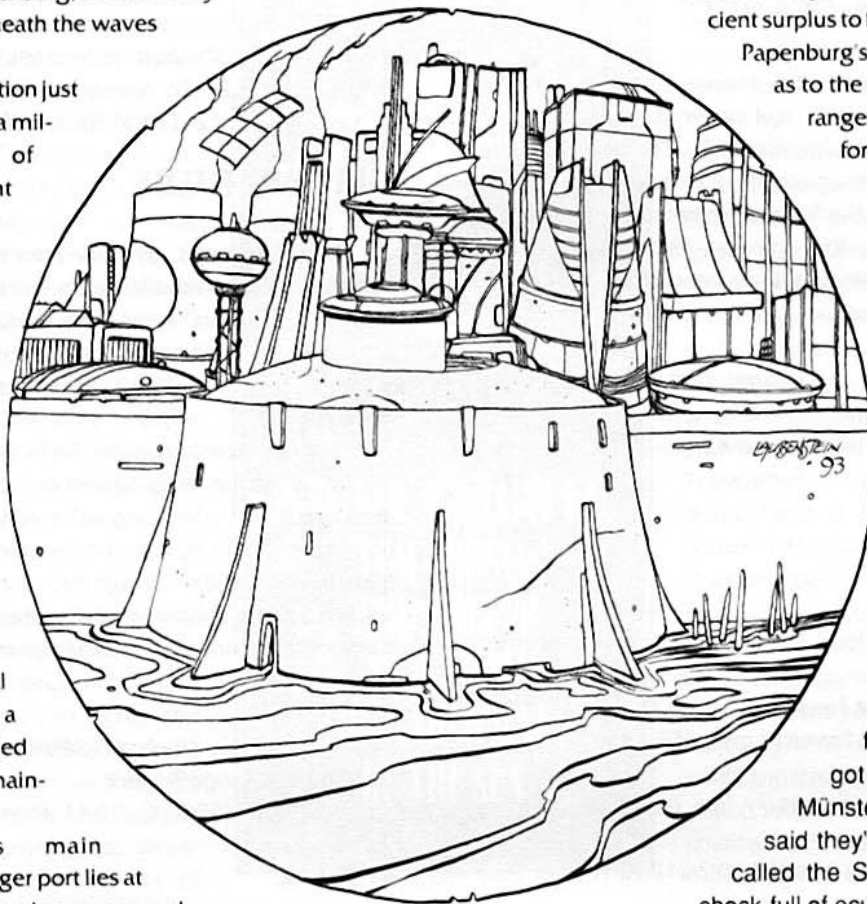
>>>>[Careful there, kumpel. If you had bothered to take a peek into the Vulkan order lists, you would have seen three light cruisers—the *Gabriel*, *Michael*, and *Raphael*—destined for Papenburg.]<<<<<

—Roland von Bremen (06:47:24/30-OCT-54)

Papenburg's existence, let alone its prosperity, raises significant questions about the sources of the money for its construction. The Land has neither trade revenues nor any other monies in sufficient surplus to finance a habitat of Papenburg's size. Speculation as to the habitat's investors ranges from anonymous foreign backers or the Mafia to treasure troves rescued from the sea. The Westphalian government has little to say about Papenburg, crediting its prosperity to "the grace of God and the diligence of the people."

>>>>[Me, I heard something from a mate who got into one of the Münster finance files. He said they've got something called the St. George's fund, chock-full of ecus. Apparently, it's the hoard of a dragon found dead in the Teutoburg Forest. The thing had been dead for centuries, and somebody stumbled by chance over its hidden lair.]<<<<<

—Infomaster (15:09:56/07-APR-54)





**You think you're hot, chummer? Come to Berlin, then, and let's take a look at what you've got. . .**

—Marrick Man

## FACTS AT A GLANCE

Someone once said, "Never trust a statistic you haven't forged yourself," and the words might have been written especially to describe Berlin. The city's fluctuating population is made up mostly of Berliners who refuse to be counted and make fierce offers to cause bodily harm to the official asking the question. Under these circumstances, the following data was impossible to verify; take it with a block of salt.

**City Area:** Covers an idealized diameter of 65 km, surrounded by a wall

**Population:** 5.7 million (approx.)

Human: 40%

Elf: 11%

Dwarf: 10%

Ork: 26%

Other: 13%

**Population Density:** 2,340 per square kilometer within the city center

**Annual Per Capita Income:** EC 33,600

**Population Below Poverty Level:** 15%

>>>>[That's an extremely low estimate. Nice try, boys.]<<<<<

—Drivin' Mona Lisa (18:10:24/12-APR-54)

**Corporate Affiliation:** 27%

**Felonious Crime Rate:** No statistics available

>>>>[That's right. No one has the cojones to ask what people do for a living, but we can assume that at least one in three makes it by on illegal activity. But hey—without a police force, who decides what's a crime in Berlin?]<<<<<

—Drivin' Mona Lisa (19:18:20/12-APR-54)

### Education

High School Equivalency: 43%

University Equivalency: 17%

>>>>[Have you ever seen a Berliner's job application? All the diplomas and publications people claim will make you dizzy. You can buy diplomas and other "education documentation" on every Berlin street corner for just a few ecus, and no one in the world can say they aren't authentic. Why should anyone cram, if he can qualify as a "university grad" by paying for it?]<<<<<

—Professor Z. (20:11:32/12-APR-54)

## GETTING THERE

Travel to Berlin, whether from inside Germany or outside, can be an adventure. The old saying that "getting there is half the fun," takes on particularly ironic meaning for this anarchic city-state.

### BY CAR

Tourists planning to visit Berlin should avoid traveling by car, as the roads around and in the city have not seen a repair crew for many years. Adventurous travelers coming to Berlin by automobile often use the historic Interzonenaubahn; though this road resembles a field track more than a highway, it gives the prospective visitor the feeling of having traveled back in time to the previous century.

>>>>[Especially if their vehicle's suspension isn't really up to the challenge!]<<<<<

—Stermul (08:27:58/10-MAR-54)

### BY PLANE

Air travel offers a comfortable and reasonably safe alternative to driving, despite the occasional unexplained crash over Berlin.

>>>>[The risk of a crash is fairly small, unless you use ADL-Fly. Stay away from that airline, chummer!]<<<<<

—Pinguin (13:22:12/16-MAR-54)

>>>>[The airline has nothing to do with it. It's the planes, I tell you!]<<<<<

—Dick TechI (18:07:32/22-MAY-54)

>>>>[You're all POM dependent! Where do you drekbrains get your data? From state archives? Don't make me laugh. I thought everybody knew about that weapons shipment that hit Berlin awhile back. Mostly ground-to-air missiles, or so they say.]<<<<<

—Mark Apache (21:12:56/28-MAY-54)

**BY TILT WING**

Anyone willing to pay for a fast, safe, stress-free journey should consider renting a tilt-wing helicopter. Before planning such a trip, however, get landing clearance from one of Berlin's airport authorities; anyone landing in Berlin outside of the airports stands a good chance of never needing landing clearance again. Berlin airport authorities include representatives of Saeder-Krupp at Tempelhof Airport; United Airport Corporations (UAC), a cooperative of various airlines that controls Schönefeld Airport; and Luft-und Stadtverkehrsgesellschaft Berlin (L & S-VGB), Air and City Transport Company Berlin, at Tegel Airport. Be aware that these authorities pick and choose who they allow onto their airfields. For example, Tempelhof only accepts flights arranged by corporations that maintain a general landing-rights agreement with Saeder-Krupp.

**BY RAIL**

Travelers can reach Berlin by two different trains: Transrapid Express and conventional high-speed rail. An inexpensive alternative to flying, the Transrapid, or ECE (EuroCity Express), trains fly along so fast that they blur the concrete jungle beyond the train windows into a psychedelic maelstrom. The window panes are of Flachglas™ quality, whose manufacturer claims they will withstand direct hits from anti-personnel rounds. Though Transrapid Busters (a nickname for the bored children of rich parents) used to kill time aiming pointblank shots at the trains, the new windows have spoiled their fun.

The underground passage beneath the wall that encloses the whole of Berlin to protect the city from "destructive elements" is an experience in itself.

>>>>[Ah, but whom does the wall protect?]<<<<<

—Penguin (14:07:30/08-APR-54)

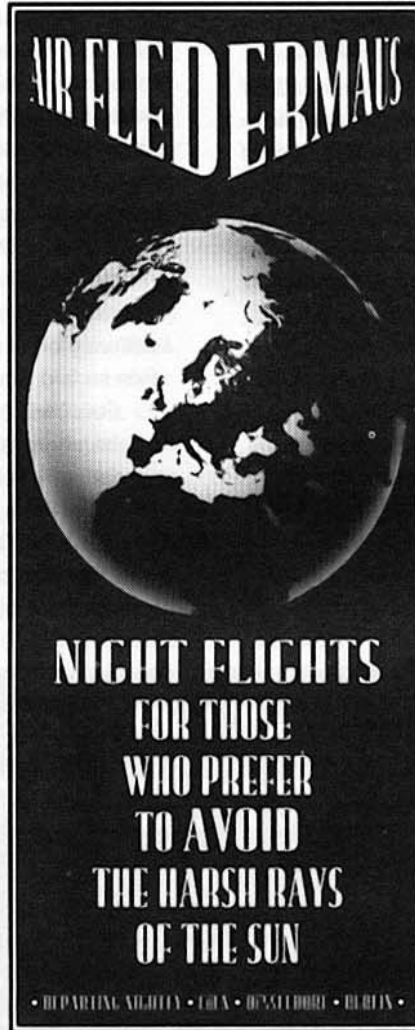
One moment, the train is above the surface, churning along under the slate-gray sky; the next moment, the train plunges into the dioxin-polluted ground. The wall, a light gray line that one glimpses dimly from the corner of the eye, appears for a split second; two seconds later, the train stops for ten minutes in Gatow, wheezing and rattling as if it powered by an ancient mechanical engine.

>>>>[Our gentle writer seems to be channeling the Idol of Pulp Fiction.]<<<<<

—Krieger-san (03:53:30/12-APR-54)

Gatow is one of two Berlin stops for the maglev train; the second is below Tempelhof Airport. Travelers who wish to reach the city center or other destinations within Berlin can travel by bus or U-Bahn (underground) from either stop.

Those traveling within the German Alliance unwilling or unable to spend 200 nuyen for a Transrapid ticket from, say, Essen to Berlin, can book passage on the Bundesbahn high-speed railways. The confederate government maintains this extensive rail network across Germany, and tickets cost half the price of Transrapid fares. However, the Bundesbahn is much slower and somewhat less safe. The government does not guard its trains, and so they often pose a tempting target for thieves. A traveler on the confederate rail lines may enjoy leisurely travel across a countryside filled with awe-inspiring views of the polluted landscape and the scorched ruins of abandoned towns, enlivened by an encounter with train robbers if he is supremely unlucky.



>>>>[You think that's worth risking your hump for? Me, I'll just spend a few nuyen more and get some peace.]<<<<<

—Marrick Man (15:28:45/28-MAY-54)

**ON ARRIVAL**

Upon arrival at one of Berlin's three airports or the Gatow Transrapid station, foreign visitors will undergo a thorough document check before the Berlin authorities allow them to proceed. Aboard planes and trains, airline

personnel and rail crews check entry papers as AGS law requires; anyone entering by tilt-wing cannot get landing clearance unless he holds a green card.

**DOCUMENTATION**

Foreigners who wish to enter Berlin need a valid passport or equivalent travel document, such as an entry visa. As is true everywhere else in Germany, every foreigner approved for entry receives a green card as well a guest card required by the Berlin Council. However, anarchic Berlin lacks a customs or other authority to check up on foreign visitors: entry without a guest card is easily accomplished, and once within Berlin, this same lack of government authority practically encourages people to pitch their green card. In fact, not having a green card makes for a safer stay in Berlin; the card identifies the bearer as an outsider, whereas a lack of lawful ID lets visitors blend in with Berlin's citizens. More to the point than an ID card in Berlin is an AVIP (A Very Important Person) card, issued by the megacorps as an entry permit to corporate enclaves.

>>>>[Where would citizens get lawful ID? Berlin has no such antiquated trash as a passport office. It's anarchy, mann!]<<<<<<  
 —Funky Peter (16:09:55/12-MAY-54)

Because its virtually non-existent law enforcement cannot regulate travel and entry, Berlin has become a favorite home base for dubious characters who manage to pass through the rest of the AGS without a green card. Many individuals in Berlin can and do produce any kind of plastic or papers a visitor might desire, for a price. The city's professional forgers use top-of-the-line equipment; their handiwork is virtually indistinguishable from the real thing.

**PUBLIC TRANSPORT**

Berlin's U-Bahn (underground) network is one of the biggest subways in the world.

>>>>[Notice a trend here? Most things in Germany seem to end with the suffix "-est," as in "biggest," "fastest," and so on.]<<<<<<  
 —Tinker (20:51:28/12-05-54)

>>>>[Particularly interesting when you consider that members of the German anarchist movement put this document together. By all appearances, they seem to be a fairly nationalistic bunch; a rare sight these days. My fellow Americans reading these files should recognize that the German anarchists are not the same as the Neo-anarchists we know and love.]<<<<<<  
 —Tailor (08:38:30/12-6-54)

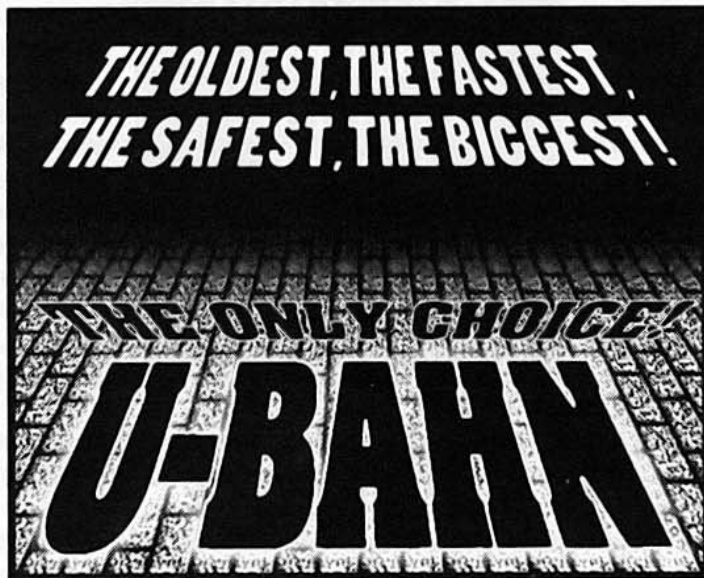
No spot within the city lies more than two hundred meters away from a U-Bahn entrance. The star-shaped U-Bahn network created more than one hundred years ago still operates, supplemented by a second network constructed in 2009, fifty meters below the first one. City planners originally intended to make this new network much faster and more comfortable than the original, thereby allowing its managers to charge higher fares and turn a profit. The network's modernization was never completed, but the Berlin U-Bahn now runs faster than equivalent systems in any other German city. This fact in itself may be of no importance; other cities' systems are often so bad that anything is an improvement.

Countless escalators and walkways connect the two U-Bahn systems, which allow travelers to quickly reach any part of the city. Despite the convenience it offers, native Berliners use the U-Bahn less frequently since sightings of earth spirits within the tunnels became common. City authorities (such as they are) responded to citizens' fears by posting guard-mages on the U-Bahn

during rush hour, but the higher fares charged during "magically protected travel times" did little to make the trains more attractive. Though the earth spirits have proved more annoying than dangerous, travelers should beware of gangs and other criminals who claim the tunnels as their territory. Timetables and line maps are available at any of the 23 Travel International stations located throughout Berlin.

Until recently, Berlin's bus system was still comparable to the

safer U-Bahn of a few decades ago. These days, 70 percent of the buses are out of commission at any given time because of traffic accidents and breakdowns. The bus companies cannot repair the existing vehicles or acquire new ones fast enough to maintain service, but this makes



little difference to the average Berliner. Most Berliners forced to use public transport ride the bus in favor of the U-Bahn, no matter how far the cranky machinery and non-existent schedules tax his or her patience.

>>>>[Interesting aside for tourists; Berlin is the only German city that uses double-decker buses on regular routes.]<<<<<

—Idle Savant (00:34:10/3-NOV-54)

Berliners still travel by private cars, apparently willing to face always chaotic and frequently life-threatening traffic. Around the turn of the century, street traffic in Berlin approached terminal gridlock; the suspension of all traffic laws during one of Berlin's periodic 21st-century upheavals allowed the process of natural selection to lessen the chaos somewhat and prompted the evolution of traffic patterns into their current state.

Maneuverable, heavily armored vehicles dominate the city streets of 2054, machines tuned to perfection by their owners and apparently driven by suicidal maniacs. Though Berliners treat this danger as a part of normal life, visitors should not attempt to drive a car in the city. Anyone unfamiliar with the Berlin traffic gauntlet runs the risk of losing his life to the next car maniac determined to add another kill sticker to his door.

Berlin's omnipresent taxicabs provide a convenient alternative to driving oneself. Like cab drivers everywhere, Berlin cabbies know the city like the proverbial backs of their hands, and almost always deliver their passengers safely to their destination.

>>>>[Any convent-educated young ladies who decide to grab a cab are advised to wear industrial-strength earplugs; Berlin cabbies express their feelings about bad road conditions and "Sunday drivers" in no uncertain terms.]<<<<<

—Twisted Blister (10:08:10/08-AUG-54)

However, visitors to Berlin should listen carefully to local advice against the city's various "cab-gangs." These gangs operate licensed cab services and know the city better than anyone, including all the shortcuts no sane driver would take. Their juvenile tendency to play chicken with rival cab-gang drivers places passengers in great danger, as do the infrequent outbursts of violence caused by one ganger poaching on a rival gang's turf.

## TIME

Berlin time follows the same reckoning used throughout the AGS, but only the mergacorps use Tokyo Stock Exchange Time (TSET).

## CURRENCY

Berlin lacks a standard legal tender; deutsche marks, ecus, and nuyen all circulate throughout the city. Most Berliners accept nuyen reluctantly, and ecus only under certain conditions. Rather than using currency, most Berliners favor payment in kind; a no-obligations introduction to a third party, information, and other services are all accepted more readily than cash of any kind.

## RECENT HISTORY

Though wracked by troubles before the Euro-Wars, it was that series of events that precipitated Berlin's slide into anarchy. The Russian air assault against Berlin in November 2032, followed by months of light-infantry warfare, devastated large areas of the city. However, the victorious Russians found Berlin as difficult to dominate as had their Communist predecessors. German and Polish forces defending the city, supported and supplied by Berlin-based corporations, held the Russians to the city's eastern half.

>>>>[It appears that one of my fellow professors-turned-anarchist contributed heavily to this rather formally worded file. Stick with it, though—the info is worth scanning.]<<<<<

—Raghnal (09:21:21/15-MAY-54)

The *Nightwraith* incident in January of 2033 brought an end to the first phase of the Euro-Wars, but Berlin remained occupied by German, Polish, and bogged-down Russian forces throughout most of that year. The threat of the great Islamic Jihad striking into Europe through the vulnerable Balkans changed the rules of the game, luring the Russians out of East Berlin and Poland to redeploy on the southern front with Islamic Turkey. Germany's Polish allies returned to their newly freed country to assist in the relocation of returning refugees. Germany's federal forces also left Berlin to cope with the waves of refugees flooding Germany from the besieged Balkans and those Islamic states not involved in launching the Great Jihad. Taking advantage of the chaos created by the war, ethnic minorities and metahumans fled the republics of the former Soviet Union in increasing numbers to settle in Berlin, the Rhine-Ruhr megaplex, and Hamburg.

The Euro-Wars and their consequences monopolized the attention of the German federal government for many years. Left to itself, Berlin sank into a morass of violence, corporate machinations, political strife, and social dysfunction. Though Berlin made a heroic effort to return to normal operations following the Russian withdrawal, with multinational and national corporate funding of the European Restoration initially making up for the German

government's neglect, social and political war continued to rage in the streets. The secession of the southern German Länder from the rest of Germany in 2038 made the federal government even more determined to completely ignore Berlin and the events within its walls.

The escalating conflict came to a head over what non-Berliners might see as a trivial set of circumstances. Early in 2038, a few radical, left-wing student organizations at the three Berlin universities organized massive strikes and protests to demand immediate improvement of teaching conditions and an end to exams they deemed unfair. At the venerable Humbolt Universität, much of the protest revolved around university policies that students believed were designed to offset tuition losses by forcing students to remain in school longer.

The protests at Humbolt took a particularly vicious turn. The university president tried to sit out the strike, but was forced to resort to tougher measures when his office received a package containing the severed ears of several professors who had earned the radical students' ire. He hired private security forces to clear occupied campus buildings, but these forces retreated after meeting defeat in several bloody skirmishes.

The escalating conflict in Berlin drew scores of political deviants to the troubled city from the surrounding countryside, their ideologies ranging from monarchism to neo-fascism to anarchists of every imaginable hue across the political spectrum. Berlin's increasingly nervous law-abiding citizens reacted by moving out of Berlin to the surrounding towns, disparagingly called the "Downlands" by modern-day Berliners. The distracted and overburdened city government could control the rising civil unrest only in certain areas, winning meager victories in battles near the districts of Kurfürstendamm and Schloßallee through brute force. Eventually, urban warfare was accepted as the normal state of affairs in Berlin; the national media relegated reports of the ongoing violence to the back pages. Only the inhabitants of Berlin still felt the daily impact of the continuing strife.

The national as well as the city government willingly played down the crisis in Berlin. When the worldwide Night of Rage in February of 2039 brought severe racist attacks against metahumans across the globe, the Berlin government selfishly hoped that rising xenophobia might end the city's trouble by uniting all the current combatants against a common, metahuman enemy. Instead, the rebels allied themselves with the Berlin anarchists, a group whose membership consisted mostly of metahumans, to form the Berlin Anarchist Movement (Anarchistische Bewegung Berlin, or ABB). Racism gave this new organization a worthy foe to fight. Spurred on by the Night of Rage, the radical right-wing Humanis Policlub and similar racist movements began to conduct their bloody hate rallies in broad daylight. The anarchists and

the racists almost immediately clashed in one of the most brutal confrontations Berlin had ever seen.

After a five-day civil war far worse than the violence of all the preceding years, the anarchists handed the Humanis Policlub a crushing defeat that effectively destroyed its influence in the city for the next fourteen years. Not satisfied with simply driving out extremists, the victorious anarchists next chose to attempt total political reform. They forced Berlin's acting mayor and his entire cabinet to abdicate and burned das Rote Rathaus, the red-brick city hall, to the ground.

Having brought down Berlin's government, the rebels withdrew to the Schöneberg city hall for the now-infamous Schöneberg Consultations. After 23 days, during which not one word of the discussions reached the city outside, much less the general public of Germany, the anarchist committee walked out of city hall and proclaimed Berlin "the greatest experiment in the history of the anarchist movement." The anarchists rescinded all democratic laws, replacing them with the Final Law that proclaimed anarchism as the basis of public life. They stripped the Berlin Council, once the city's supreme legislative body, of its powers and reduced it to a simple coordinating body for city services. Under the name of "Treusorgende Hand" or Devoted Trust (a pun on the government agency Treuhand, set up in the 1990s to



privatize the East German economy after German reunification), the anarchist committee privatized all public institutions. Postal services, social services, public transport, and even the police were either disbanded or restructured and turned over to private concerns.

>>>>[The corporations, I might point out, were more than happy to see Berlin dissolve into controlled anarchy. What better place to operate in?]<<<<<

—Uncle "A" (02:10:14/12-JUL-54)

>>>>[The non-native, multinational megacorps with a presence in northern Germany were pleased. Corporations such as Saeder-Krupp, however, were not. Already funneling billions of ecus into the European Restoration, that corp was and still is displeased by Berlin dissolving into chaos. It appears Lofwyr does not believe in anarchy.]<<<<<

—Kreiger-san (03:20:28/09-AUG-54)

>>>>[Lofwyr, I suspect, is more of a totalitarian than an anarchist. Anarchy runs in the other part of his family.]<<<<<

—The Big "D" (02:20:18/12-AUG-54)

>>>>[Chummer, you got bang-bangs jabbing at the wiz-worm like that! Hope you got a deep hole to hide in!]<<<<<

—Wizzer Wee (10:29:19/14-AUG-54)

>>>>[Yes. Do you?]<<<<<

—The Laughing Man (21:02:03/15-AUG-54)

These upheavals sent Berlin into a state of chaos exceeding even the worst predictions of the staunchest skeptics. The Partei der Radikalen Anarchie, or Party of Radical Anarchy (PdRA), the most radical group in the ABB, lived up to every anarchist expectation of its members; the PdRA's determination to permit no governmental structure of any kind led to renewed street fighting and violence. Such unabated radicalism soon led to differences within the ABB, which formally distanced itself from the PdRA within a few months of Berlin's revolution. After the split, the ABB developed into Berlin's most prominent political force: the Neo-Anarchist Policlub (NAP).

North and South Germany watched the suddenly ungoverned Berlin area suspiciously, but took no action when it appeared that Berlin's anarchist revolution would not spread beyond the rebuilt Berlin Wall. The South German Länder eventually came to view the walled city as a cheap, self-regulating Internment camp for "undesirable" metahumans.

Despite the chaos resulting from its almost non-existent government, Berlin refused to stagnate. Though

no city government regulated life in Berlin, an unspoken code of conduct developed among its citizens and private organizations. New morals and dependencies developed alongside rejuvenated fashion trends and popular culture. Attracted by this new vitality, corporations began to invest in the city again, enlarging enclaves already present and founding new ones. Berlin of 2054 is influenced by megacorporate business, but maintains its absolute political freedom. Though too chaotic to mesh comfortably with the rest of the German Alliance, Berlin offers a functioning structure to those living inside its anarchist system.

### STUDY IN ANARCHY

Many people consider that the state of anarchy precludes power; if no one is in control, then no one possesses true power. This adage does not apply to Berlin. Depending on one's point of view, Berlin appears as a shining example of a functioning, anarchist society or a warning against a laissez-faire government and corporate politicians. Regardless of one's viewpoint, public life in Berlin functions fairly smoothly, though no one really understands why.

The concepts espoused by North American-style Neo-anarchists have little place in the Berlin power structure. In Berlin, Neo-anarchists are just one group among many; political interest groups, policlubs, gangs, and megacorp lobbyists abound, all part of the mysterious, amorphous power structure generally known as the "Flux" or "F-State." Anyone trying to accomplish anything in Berlin must use the vagaries of the Flux and its participants to his or her advantage.

Who one knows is more important in Berlin than anywhere else in Germany, and perhaps in the world. Unlike most political organizations, which seek to establish and preserve the status quo, Berlin's anarchist groups work to keep the power structure in a constant state of change. Whenever a shift in the power structure seems likely to establish a status quo, the rest of Berlin's powers-that-be spring into action to eliminate the threat. Any individual or group recognized as Bedrohung des Status F (BSF), or a threat to the F-State, immediately attracts the efforts of all other groups in Berlin to strip it of its power. Under such a system, only a true political mastermind can hope to build a firm power base without attracting attention, but the constant shift in alliances and rivalries designed to promote the F-State makes such political manipulation almost impossible.

>>>>[Hey— isn't a constant state of flux also a form of status quo?]<<<<<

—Stermul (10:10:10/14-JUL-54)

The essential feature of the F-State is the balance of power between Berlin's political and social groups. The city draws its vitality from the strong conflicts of ideology and interest between these groups; only those who stay on the winning side at all times through constant tactical maneuvering have any chance of achieving their personal objectives. Though anarchy theoretically offers the best possible representation to all socio-political groups of society because it sets no rules, many groups and individuals still attempt to secure a permanent power base to ensure power over others.

To accomplish anything in the F-State, groups and individuals must form temporary coalitions and alliances. Such alliances rarely last for any length of time; a permanent coalition would represent an unacceptable power base, and every group outside the coalition would work actively for its defeat. As few legal bodies exist to help anyone or any group promote a given interest, the F-State is the only way to influence public life. Even anti-anarchist groups will declare themselves saviors of the F-State if they sense a profit in it.

>>>>[The F-State is the best rumor and intrigue mill in Berlin. If I could turn lies and misinformation into money, I'd be the richest woman in the city.]<<<<<

—Nakaira Sender 44 (20:03:33/28-JUL-54)

>>>>[For those of you who couldn't get your head around the babble above, I present the condensed version. Power in Berlin is dispersed among many groups, corporations, individuals, and other power blocs. Change in the stratification of power is mandatory; any group in a position of real power for any prolonged period of time may find itself the target of the rest of the F-State. Members of the F-State do enter into temporary alliances and coalitions in order to knock someone else out of power, but run the risk of becoming targets themselves if their power bloc remains active for too long.

Real power in Berlin is achieved at an individual level, based on who and what you know. A few Berliners have considerable political power held in reserve to be focused where needed and then dispersed before the F-State can react. A dynamic environment, to say the least.]<<<<<

—Colonel Dörn (03:20:18/24-NOV-54)

>>>>[And the Colonel would know.]<<<<<

—Krieger-san (20:19:39/28-NOV-54)

Adaptability became the most important social trait in the new Free City of Berlin. Those who could adapt to the city's changed circumstances soon discovered what a marvelous opportunity this virtually lawless environment provided to further their personal interests. The megacorps

adapted particularly swiftly, perhaps because many of them were used to playing fast and loose with the law. Indeed, the megacorps' lack of respect for legal niceties gave them a leg up on more conscientious small businesses when the legal barriers to the misuse of data disappeared with the anarchists' one bold stroke.

Contrary to what might be expected, the disappearance of the laws regarding misuse of data did not increase the incidence of unauthorized entry into megacorporate databases; hacking actually went down because of the concurrent legalization of formerly prohibited defensive measures such as black IC. Even before the revolt, every corp had some specialists in this area on its payroll. However, the prohibition of such devices had forced the megacorps to use black IC sparingly and rely on less effective, but legal means of protecting their data. The end of the legal restrictions allowed the megacorps to use and improve the black IC already in place. This made small businesses, which had kept faithfully to legal means of data protection, easier targets and so more vulnerable to data theft; no patent remained safe until publication, and small businesses found it increasingly difficult to build or maintain a technological lead.

Information became Berlin's instrument of power. Fixers, informers, and deckers found themselves in great demand; every group recognized that their services could tip the scales of the F-State toward one group or another.

>>>>[This is news? Children are born knowing that information is everything. About time everybody grokked that!]<<<<<

—Funky Peter (23:33:28/15-JUL-54)

## POWER STRUCTURE

Though the Berlin Council remains as a de jure political platform and has a certain responsibility for coordinating privately run city services, information brokers such as informers, deckers, and fixers from various interest groups hold the bulk of the power in Berlin.

## BERLIN COUNCIL

The Berlin Council (Berliner Rat) remains the city's only conventional political body, reduced by the Final Law to providing a platform for open dialogue between Berlin's various interest groups. To ensure that this political platform does not become a new government, all council functions are redistributed among its members every six months.

Because anarchist philosophy refuses to acknowledge the council as a permanent organization, it cannot use the trappings of an established government. No government security force surrounds the council's small administrative building or giant congress center, nor do

council members rate special security. Theoretically, every council member may draw funds for private bodyguards from the council bank Berliner Kasse. But because it has no internal revenue service to generate operating funds through taxes, the council depends on donations from Berlin residents. In practice, this means the council marks it as a red-letter day when money actually appears.

Aside from the Berlin Council, all service organizations in Berlin are privately owned. Every so often, the policlubs or megacorps try to take covert control of the city's services in order to grasp a greater measure of power, but none of these attempts succeed. Informers paid to do nothing but snoop invariably tumble to the scheme for which they are being paid to act as the vanguard and publicize it, consistently creating a massive backlash against the offending group.

>>>>[I remember one attempted coup, about three years ago. Some "democratic" splinter group, definitely corp-sponsored, tried to cow the anarchists through an assassination campaign. Needless to say, the anarchist groups blew them purely to hell.]<<<<<<

—Pinguin (23:53:43/28-JUL-54)

The attempt that came the closest to a successful coup to date took place in 2048, when the elven Meaters brothers arrived in Berlin to establish a toehold in the market for their family airline. Enlisting the aid of certain officials at the Tempelhof and Tegel airports, the brothers hired skilled deckers and quickly piled up remarkable cash reserves. Over several months, they coordinated control of council seats, hired an army of special operatives, and imported a crack dwarf mercenary unit from their home Land to storm the gates of the city. An informer within the brothers' organization paid one of the deckers to spill the whole plot, and the Meaters brothers ended up dead in a steamer trunk.

## FIXERS

Berlin fixers work freelance; their capital consists of their personal contacts with innumerable gangs, policlubs, and corporate managers. A successful fixer personally knows hundreds of important or useful people, and uses his own informers to stay in touch with current events.

>>>>[Stay in touch? The average fixer knows news faster than all of Berlin's radio stations put together. Stay in touch—talk about understatement!]<<<<<<

—Hermes Areo (23:13:02/18-MAY-54)

>>>>[Yeah, and most of that information could make a balloon float! Fast, maybe, but badly researched.]<<<<<<

—Nakaira (18:13:16/24-MAY-54)

>>>>[Jealous, eh? By the time you folks find the scene, everyone with any idea of what's going down has beat feet. Our information is true and hot; why do you think so many stations buy our news? Hmm?!]<<<<<<

—Hermes Areo (02:23:38/25-MAY-54)

## INFORMERS

Some informers work for one client, who provides orders to infiltrate specific organizations. Major corporations and policlubs plant informers within every other organization they consider important to their business or agenda.

Other informers work freelance, infiltrating organizations or powerful circles whose plans might be worth money to various interested parties. Freelance informers sell their information to everyone with the appropriate price. Because the open market sets the price for freelance paydata, it often comes cheaper than exclusive information.

People who need information from a variety of sources usually prefer to buy it on the street. Freelance informers tend to be more flexible in the way they do their job, and rarely blow their cover. On the other hand, freelance informers are more likely to spread false or incomplete news if needed to guarantee payment, because they do not depend on the good graces of a single employer.

>>>>[False or incomplete news is the least of the problems. They'll sell you out for the slightest profit if they see the chance to make some money. Keep clear of these people!]<<<<<<

—Nakaira (16:13:11/02-JUL-54)

## DECKERS

Deckers came into existence in Berlin with the inception of the Matrix. The enormous number of megacorps in Berlin makes the city seem a fool's paradise of data at first glance. A second look reveals the potentially lethal data protection measures made possible in Berlin by the lack of restraining laws against killer IC. Given the extraordinary hazards of their profession, Berlin's freelance deckers live secretive lives, hiding their paths into the Matrix with great care.

The megacorps also employ an unusually high percentage of deckers. These corporate wageslaves use all the latest technology, including state-of-the-art combat programs. Needless to say, some of these deckers apply their corporate-bestowed goodies to personal freelance projects.

## LAW AND ORDER

Berlin's approach to law and order is unique among the cities of the world. Crime in Berlin does not exist; Berlin has no laws to break, save for the anarchist-proclaimed Final Law which states that no individual or organization shall make or enforce generally accepted rules or accumulate significant power. This law, the foundation of anarchy, is the only legal bill in force within the city of Berlin.

>>>>[To all citizens of Berlin: Herewith, the Revolutionary Committee declares anarchy to be the official state of the Free City of Berlin. Henceforth, the setting of rules and regulations of general validity will be considered high treason, as will the accumulation of power in the hands of an individual or group of persons. The only official body will be the Berlin Council, which will restrict its activities to coordinating services and interest groups within the city. All citizens of Berlin are empowered to eliminate any person guilty of breaking this Final Law. ]<<<<<

—Matrix Entry: The Final Law (19:19:42/  
11-AUG-54)

Officially speaking, Berlin has no laws safeguarding the rights of the individual. All citizens must defend their own rights, gaining temporary aid from whomever they can persuade to their cause. Even if a majority of the population considers a citizen's demands justified, he or she must build an effective coalition or settle for short shrift. Whether fired without just cause, double-crossed on a business deal, or robbed on the streets, each Berliner must fend for himself.

Neither do laws exist to protect the innocent or ensure racial equality. For example, if someone chooses to collect troll scalps as a hobby, no public outcry accusing him of violating the law will stop him. Such a person can only be stopped by vigilante justice from those under attack.

Vigilante justice most often takes two forms: revenge by members of the group under attack, or retaliation by hired security forces. Berlin's racial minorities have an especially strong sense of community that demands instant retaliation, and these groups willingly set aside minor enmities for the duration of any vendetta. Individuals without such group support must retaliate using hired security forces, the strength of the retaliation dependent on how much the offended party can afford to pay. No special security enforces the Final Law; none is needed. Anyone breaching it immediately draws the attention of all power blocs in Berlin, who set about bringing the perpetrator down.

Berlin's police force, dissolved during the privatization of city services in 2040, found a niche in the new security market. Private citizens, who often live outside Berlin's corporate enclaves, found they needed bodyguards to move about freely. At first, ex-cops worked for their new employers as individual contractors, but as the demand for guards and SJs (Selbstjustiztruppen, or vigilante teams) grew, they began to band together into security companies.

The megacorps use their own security-and-order teams (SOTs) to protect their installations and regulate life within the enclaves; these troops enforce corporate law and prosecute internal criminal acts. Regular SOTs rarely operate outside the enclaves, though a few specially trained agents among them work as fixers and informers. Policlubs provide exceptional security for their leaders and supporters, drawing enforcers from tough street gangs of a similar ideological bent. In addition to providing personal security for policlub supporters, the gangs also provide general security at political rallies and serve as bodyguards for speakers on the Berlin Council.

Organized crime holds some sway in Berlin, but the policlubs and megacorps offer criminal organizations tough opposition. Attempts by the Russian Mafia to extend its network into Berlin met with dismal failure, as the intended victims of its intimidation campaign showed a disconcerting willingness to return fire.

## MEGACORPS

As the capital city of Germany and later the only non-Communist outpost in Communist East Germany, Berlin has always played host to several well-established corporations. Though conditions have changed considerably, the Free City of Berlin still acts as a magnet for the megacorps of 2054. Anarchist Berlin offers megacorps total freedom in which to operate, and several corps have financed gigantic enclaves there as headquarters. Berlin's special flair offers an almost irresistible attraction to many salarymen; the corporate enclaves provide employees with living space, shopping, and entertainment in the midst of a vibrant, colorful city.

As unlikely as it may seem, Berlin's political anarchy offers corporate managers many more benefits than drawbacks. Though the unstable power structure makes political takeover quite impossible, tangible benefits include a complete lack of government oversight of their operations and a large pool of capable individuals willing to take on work considered illegal outside Berlin. Shadowrunners of every class and qualification are readily available here, and everything is legal that a corp or individual can pull off. In particular, Berlin fosters an ideal environment in which to spy on competitors' R & D.



Despite the aforementioned dangers inherent in showing too much power in Berlin, the following megacorporations regularly draw attention to themselves by their sheer size or influence, and therefore deserve special mention. These corporations treat any breach of their security as an extremely serious matter; runners considering action against these corps should take stringent precautions.

>>>>>[Reminds me of the Ragtime Blues team—hounded by a corp agent for more than a year. He really gave 'em hell, but Ragtime and his people eventually vanished underground.]<<<<<<

—Mark Apache (18:27:53/19-MAY-54)

>>>>>[Hey, mann, they impressed the corp so much that it bought Ragtime. All the Blues are working well-paid jobs now; but on corp security, not against it.]<<<<<<

—Single (23:22:47/21-MAY-54)

## AZTECHNOLOGY

**Chief Executive Officer:** Mr. Marcus Frederico

Aztechnology's Berlin enclave concentrates on combining magic with cybertechnology. If successful, this line of research could lead to a technological revolution, but so far no one knows anything about Aztechnology's success rate. Though much is possible these days that seemed impossible a generation ago, magic and cybertech still appear incompatible. However, Aztechnology's tenaciousness in pursuing this line of inquiry suggests to some that CEO Marcus Frederico's efforts are based on a specific, plausible theory.

Aztechnology's relatively small Berlin office is located in the north of the city, within the walls of the old Spandau citadel. Its easily recognizable logo shows castle ramparts. Staffed by shamans, mages, and first-class deckers, this office has exceptional security on all levels, including an on-site unit of elite corporate forces.

## DAIMLER-BENZ

**Chief Executive Officer:** Mr. Gustav Grather

After the vast Saeder-Krupp enclave, the Mercedes building is the most prominent landmark in the city. In 1998, Daimler-Benz covered the Potsdamer Platz in the heart of Berlin with an ugly, 250-meter skyscraper flanked by three administrative wings fanning out from the central tower like spokes from a wheel. Five years ago, Daimler-Benz finally tore down this monstrosity—only to replace it with another. Now, the Daimler-Benz International Building, a glass-and-steel skyscraper, looms over the Kurfürstendamm highway. A giant, triumphal-looking arch spans the 70-meter width of the highway and the nearby Transrapid line, with the skyscraper climbing high above it to mark the traffic hub. From the heart of the city, Daimler-Benz executives set the direction of their company's future in weekly conferences.

Daimler-Benz controls the transport branch of the International Vehicles and Mechanical Engineering Union (IFMU AG), which manufactures cars, coordinates the production of helicopters by D-B's Messerschmitt subsidiary, and designs rail and maglev cars to be built in the northern region of the Daimler-Benz enclave. All train cars are rigorously tested on the expanded and redesigned AVUS racing track. Throughout its 150-plus years of

existence, quality and safety have been the constant watchwords for this corporation. Its vehicles, factories, and its Matrix system are among the safest, best-protected, and most efficient in Europe.

Gustav Grather runs his branch of the corporation with abundant personal energy and self-confidence. An innovative manager, he concentrates on preventing mistakes before they happen, by this approach becoming one of the most successful administrators of this or any other time.

>>>>[And one of the richest! I once tried, purely for fun, to crack his private bank account; take it from me, it's fragging impossible! Boy, am I glad BuMoNa operates in Berlin. . .]<<<<<

—Marrick Man (21:08:41/08-AUG-54)

### DEUTSCHE MEDIEN UND KOMMUNIKATIONS AG

**Chief Executive Officer:** Mr. Wolfgang Osterwald

Formed in the 20th century from the merger of Germany's three largest media corporations, the DeMeKo (German Media and Communications Corporation) has become one of the world's largest media corporations. Its wide range of offerings covers almost all areas of communications, from print media to trideo productions to the latest concoctions of various simsense stars. The Berlin market, saturated with media-crazed citizens, is one of DeMeKo's biggest. By manning an office in Berlin, CEO Wolfgang Osterwald suffers the price of direct access to this market; unwelcome attention from crazy fans, chipheads, simfreaks, and other lowlifes determined to get the newest releases before anyone else. Computer-controlled production of trideos and chips greatly reduces the risk of theft, but bootleg copies still reach the black market because expert and determined freelancers know exactly how to crack the corp databanks.

Many people consider a job with DeMeKo a dream come true; in addition to drawing a good paycheck, employees receive discounts on and special versions of new simsense and trideo releases that often include bonus tracks.

Deutsche Medien und Kommunikationen AG poses no threat to other interest groups because it sees no need to directly enter the struggle for political power. The corp sufficiently protects its interests by indirectly influencing public discourse through its media outlets. For example, the city-zine *Timeout* has found a niche in the media landscape from which no other product can hope to dislodge it. *SuperBild*, a yellow-press broadsheet available via the TelekomGrid for 1 deutsche mark, publishes a new edition every hour; its sterling reporting on Berlin life by a top-grade editorial and production staff earns it a regular readership of almost one million.

DeMeKo's main building, surrounded by various studios and printing plants, represents a classic example of the abstract architecture popular in the late 20th century. The main wing resembles an antiquated computer chip. It stands above the ground, resting on 40 giant columns each measuring 12 meters in circumference; the columns camouflage entrances to the main building and various small shops. The second floor appears to hang roughly 50 meters above the ground. The space in the building's center shelters a park covered with a transparent glass roof, secured by plastosteel rails. To the left and right of this rest area, the roof offers two heliports for the convenience of special guests.

### EUROPEAN MOTOR COMPANY (EMC)

**Chief Executive Officer:** Mr. Matthias Garau

The Berlin Office of EMC handles sales rather than production. The Berlin market's dense auto traffic represents a gold mine for this manufacturer of small, fast cars, making it worthwhile for EMC to maintain an office in the city. Despite its prodigious sales record, however, employees in other EMC offices regularly resist transfers to Berlin. The general reluctance to work in Berlin has earned that office the reputation as a dumping place for employees unable to live up to expectations in their former positions. Though the managers and employees at the Berlin office rotate in and out regularly, Garau has held his position for the past 19 months.

>>>>[Small wonder! That guy is so unscrupulous that he feels more at home in Berlin's lawlessness than anywhere else. A guy like him can only succeed where he can do whatever he feels like. He's probably the only employee who ever resisted being transferred out!]<<<<<

—Hulk (15:59:13/16-MAY-54)

### FUCHI BERLIN

**Chief Executive Officer:** Mr. Inoshiro Müller

Fuchi Berlin produces software, including help programs for the Matrix and simsense recordings. These days, Fuchi makes its biggest bucks providing custom software to Berlin's top earners. In entertainment, Fuchi Berlin's hottest seller is Car-Sim 88.9, a game simulating Berlin traffic. The user braves a holographic test run while connected to a battery that administers an electric shock every time the driver collides with another vehicle or any other object.

Inoshiro Müller has managed to lead this once-nearly bankrupt company into the black through aggressive and innovative changes in production, both the process and the product. Using his instincts for what will sell in the city, Müller consistently designs and creates software that the rich Berliners want. Information-hungry freelance deckers often try to breach Fuchi's Matrix security, hoping to steal

any one of the multitude of ideas waiting to become real at any given time, but the megacorp's efficient in-house security system still proves a formidable obstacle.

>>>>[Most observers believe that Fuchi Berlin is the focal point of Fuchi International's German intelligence-gathering operations. Proof? Consider that the subsidiary operated in the red for *six years* without a major change in management or direction. The corp's Yamana faction almost exclusively controls Fuchi's European operations, and they keep a tight reign on its operations. Inoshiro Müller is related to an important member of the Yamana clan on his mother's side. He's lucky to be in the position he's in.]<<<<<

—Tyger Taunter (20:19:27/08-SEP-54)

**MESSERSCHMITT-KAWASAKI**

**Chief Executive Officer:** Mr. Akator Meriande

A subsidiary of Daimler-Benz and affiliated with IFMU, Messerschmitt boasts little power within its corporate family. Though the subsidiary produces a range of vehicles, from minicopters (including the famous Grashäpfer) to larger copters packing the latest in drive and weapon systems, most production decisions are handed down from Mercedes. Messerschmitt management makes very few decisions.

However, Akator Meriande has managed to shake up the entire International Vehicles and Mechanical Engineering Union during his tenure as CEO, earning a reputation as a troublemaker. So far,

only his close friendship with the manager of the Daimler-Benz Berlin office has kept Meriande safe from dangerous repercussions. Though recalcitrant toward his superiors, Meriande is known for his even-handed and people-friendly management style, and, in a relatively short time, has developed a reputation as a good man for whom to work.

**RENRAKU COMPUTER SYSTEMS**

**Chief Executive Officer:** Mr. Shigei Kanazuri

A third high-tech corporation with offices in Berlin, Renraku produces topnotch hardware and software. In no respect taking a back seat to its main competitors, Fuchi and TelTech, the Renraku Building on the Alexanderplatz

in east Berlin is among the most impressive in the city, housing Renraku's European Operations headquarters.

CEO Shigei Kanazuri intends to protect Renraku's European offices against any incursions by the competition and remain competitive in the market, but he has only recently arrived from Chiba and remains somewhat unsure of German and European business practices. The Berlin affiliate must also deal with the extreme security precautions needed to protect its mainframes; the high security level slows down calculations and generally impedes the progress of work. Luckily for Renraku, its competitors must cope with similar problems. The market share belonging to Fuchi, Renraku, and TelTech changes daily, with any advance by one immediately matched by its competitors.

**SAEDER-KRUPP**

**Chief Operating Officer:** Mr. Karl-Heinz Berninger

It is impossible to overlook Saeder-Krupp's presence in Berlin. Having gobbled up Tempelhof Airport at a fraction of its value after the Euro-Wars, the corp makes a profit not just with the machines it produces, but also by leasing licenses for this East-West air-traffic hub.


The huge corporate enclave located south of the airport stretches all the way to the Tiergarten, the Berlin zoo that Saeder-Krupp renovated at a steep cost. Of all the corps in Berlin, only Saeder-Krupp offers its 85,000 employees more than the standard bennies.

Through the Tiergarten restoration and other, similar projects, Saeder-Krupp continues to show an exemplary commitment to offering a complete range of activities to its employees.

Lofwyr's corporate empire plays a powerful role in Berlin's fluctuating politics. Karl-Heinz Berninger plays various interest groups against each other with considerable skill in order to take full advantage of Berlin's ideal location as a base for Saeder-Krupp's export business to Eastern Europe and the Middle East.

>>>>[Interesting that the Berlin office is one of the pillars of the Saeder-Krupp empire, considering how much Lofwyr dislikes even the idea of the anarchist

Your plate won't be barren when you eat at...



**MUNCHAUSEN**  
The finest in "Germetahuman" cuisine.

state. Seems contradictory, but the great dragon obviously knows how to play the cards he's dealt.]<<<<<<  
—Kreiger-san (03:31:31/09-AUG-54)

### SCHERING PHARMA AG

**Chief Executive Officer:** Mr. Arndt-Wilhelm Koerting

In addition to ongoing genetic and viral research, this large pharmaceutical corporation conducts experiments designed to produce magical medication. So far, they have had little success. Their only hope of progress seems to lie in a joint venture struck with the Berlin office of Aztechnology in which the two megacorps agreed to share their knowledge for mutual profit. No other company has even come close to duplicating the two megacorps' results in this field. Mainframes and laboratories have only average security, but the actual research data is encrypted and poses a tough challenge for anyone trying to decipher it.

>>>>>[This guy is either sponsoring his own agenda or is hopelessly naive. I know of at least six different corps sponsoring mystical pharmacology projects; Fuchi's "Oasis" project, for one. Also, if Schering Pharma AG is involved with the Azzies, they're bending over while doing it.]<<<<<<

—Tuber Hopper (02:01:28/13-OCT-54)

Arndt-Wilhelm Koerting, a hermetic mage and pharmacologist, also knows his way around the business jungle. His corporation holds its own against the European competition and makes a tidy annual profit, most of which is reinvested in new medications and improvements to existing products.

### TELTECH HOLDING

**Chief Executive Officer:** Ms. Marika Garejewitsch

TelTech Holding, a corporation formed by the merger of several large Berlin companies, produces high-tech hardware. TelTech's major product lines include mainframe computers built with chips fashioned from high-temperature superconducting material. No other megacorp has yet produced such tiny chips with an equivalent memory capacity, and rumors abound that TelTech accomplishes this unparalleled feat of computer engineering using magic.

>>>>>[Nonsense! Nonsense! Nonsense!]<<<<<<

—Prof M. (21:44:02/19-MAY-54)

Unfortunately, this rumor is impossible to prove or disprove. In addition to mainframes and Matrix parts that require frequent replacement, TelTech also produces simsense chips and bodyware for export.

Marika Garejewitsch controls the Berlin office with a strong hand. Rumor has it that she herself is 80 percent TelTech cyberware.

>>>>>[Even the brain of that woman gleams with metal. Computers and especially the Matrix are the Lord's punishment for our sins. Smite the technosinners!]<<<<<<

—Dark Avenger & MichelAngelo (08:06:41/  
17-MAY-54)

### POLICLUBS

No other city in the world can boast such a multitude of organized, political interest groups as Berlin. The free city's anarchist politics allow policlubs uninhibited operation and action. Though the enmity of other policlubs, various organizations, and the megacorps may restrain them, no state-sponsored authority exists to challenge their existence. Many policlubs consider Berlin, the world's only functioning anarchy, as a paradise where they can realize as well as propound their goals and views.

Caught up in reveling in the freedom of Berlin, many of the lesser policlubs and political parties tend to forget that they must constantly compete with one another for influence over the population. Larger, better-established organizations watch their lesser brethren with serenity and a certain amusement, generally remaining aloof from the hullabaloo. The constant appearance and disappearance of small groups swells the ranks of the larger policlubs, which attract recently disenfranchised members precisely because they usually manage to reach their goals before internal conflicts split them apart or outside attacks destroy them.

The following list describes only the most durable, and so important, policlubs. Most have been around for at least several years.

### ALLGEMEINER STUDENTEN-AUSSCHUSS

These General Student Committees, composed of Berlin university students, play only a minor political role focused on advancing narrowly defined student interests. Though they enthusiastically enforce anarchist ideals among their supporters, they also run student cafés, organize rallies, debate such social questions as student housing, and so on. Many ASTA members learn to value the principles of anarchy as Committee members, and join the Nappies upon graduation.

>>>>>[They're just a bunch of bed wetters with no idea of what actually goes on in Berlin! They ape NAP rituals, but the Nappies and ASTA aren't worth drek. Anarchy, hah! Without us, not one corp would stay in Berlin! They'd go bankrupt, and Berlin would be a stinking hellhole. Royal Blue is the only party that can really get us anywhere!]<<<<<<

—Louis Carré (18:90:53/14-APR-54)

>>>>[Hey, Sysop! I thought you said you guys had gotten rid of all the trash comments.]<<<<<

—The Alien/Chaos I (00:15:22/07-NOV-54)

### LIBERTY OF SOUL AND BODY (LSB)

LSB, nicknamed the Lisbians, fights for individual rights in the anarchist state. Oriented toward democratic principles, this policlub espouses a socially and legally just government modeled on those that led western nations in the second half of the 20th century. According to the Lisbians, government should exist to control megacorporations and protect society's minority groups. To minimize the influence of possibly corrupt and biased politicians and megacorps, the LSB demands that all decisions regarding the state's citizens should be made by popular vote.

The party's routine work is done by a streamlined organization of officials, elected every three years. No official may hold office for two consecutive terms. Important decisions must be put to a membership-wide vote.

Its legitimate concern for data protection and the physical safety of its members prompts the LSB to mount better security than is common among democratic policlubs. The party's influence on politics and status in the constant struggle for power in Berlin remains slight, however, because the LSB's organizational structure works against quick decisions. By the time the LSB organizes a vote, the question posed has often become irrelevant.

>>>>[Idealists. Some idiots always believe that altruism works in real life. History has proven otherwise, but they never learn.]<<<<<

—Funky Peter (22:51:57/12-JUN-54)

>>>>[And apparently, they're not alone. How else do you account for the USPD supporting the LSB to the tune of billions annually?]<<<<<

—Sandmann (00:34:27/13-JUN-54)

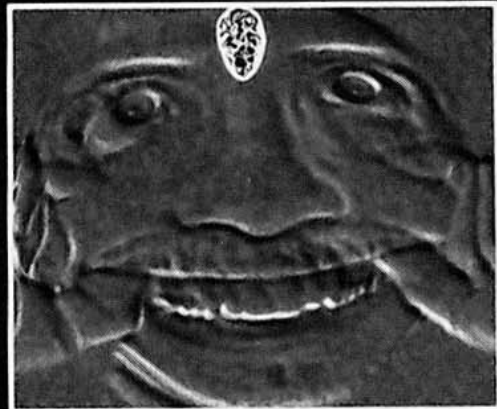
>>>>[Blackmail?]<<<<<

—Knows Better (03:20:14/19-JUN-54)

### NEO-ANARCHIST POLICLUB BERLIN (NAP)

The NAP, nicknamed the Nappies, is the largest policlub, and in part created the success of anarchy in Berlin. Along with other anarchist groups, they have grown steadily in membership since anarchy replaced the regular government, and despite a change of officials every four months, have remained a surprisingly effective organization. Recruited largely from university graduates, NAP members uphold a high intellectual standard and defend Berlin's anarchist power structure with tremendous energy. As Berlin's most important political faction, every interest group that wants to cut a rival down to size courts the Nappie's support.

## TONIGHT ON DAS IST UNGLAUBLICH!



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found on Mars—is it a hoax or is it  
**UNGLAUBLICH?**

Then, hosts Klaus Ahillen and Otto von Ored  
go undercover to discover  
what *really* goes on in Germany's policlubs.  
Monday 22:00 CET only on B1, Berlin

### ROYAL BLUE

As the monarchists' appeal increases for those disillusioned by other policlubs, Royal Blue's membership grows by leaps and bounds. Their rising membership includes an influx of conservative democrats disappointed by the failure of LSB to change Berlin, as well as left-wingers and radicals who see the monarchists as a tool with which to achieve their goals. The latter joiners feel that any system other than the present one offers scope to build on, and so they prefer a constitutional monarchy to anarchy or a non-functional democracy. Because few democratic policlubs have achieved enough influence and power to actually accomplish anything, many people disillusioned with anarchy look for salvation to Royal Blue.

>>>>[Haven't you heard of freedom? Just leave us alone!]<<<<<

—Funky Peter (23:22:41/19-MAY-54)

>>>>[Some list this is! Where's Der Nachtmachen?]<<<<<

—Curious Carl (20:19:18/21-JUN-54)

>>>>[Dead and buried. Der Nachtmachen exists as a policlub in name only, for the purposes of voter registration and block-filing. They've ceased to exist as an

important entity ever since the majority of their radical leadership "vanished," if you get my drift.]<<<<<<  
 —Prof. Forest (10:19:15/24-JUN-54)

>>>>>[Gone for now, perhaps. But in this Awakened world the dead can do amazing things.]<<<<<<  
 —Deadman (02:10:26/28-JUN-54)

**ETHNIC POLICLUBS**

Both humans-only and metahumans-only organizations exist in Berlin, with agendas ranging from benign "cultural empowerment" to overt political repression. Though metahumans make up roughly 60 percent of Berlin's population, no one pays them much real notice, and without ethnic policlubs, plenty of them might end up alone and forsaken in the gutter. The two policlubs listed below wield the most power in Berlin.

**Humanis Policlub**

Members of any ethnic minority are well advised to keep clear of Humanis members. This violently racist, humans-only policlub repeatedly grabs headlines, beginning with the Night of Rage in 2039. After suffering devastating defeats in the minor wars following that upheaval, these self-proclaimed members of the master race retreated to lick their wounds. In recent years, most militant Humanis activists have begun organizing into various gangs and launching bloody street fights.

>>>>>[Just a short time ago, about three dozen orks and trolls demolished half a housing block in Hohenschönhausen while hunting for a group of Humanis jokers disguised as bike freaks. They'd set fire to some warehouses and a gas station and the metas wanted revenge. When the orks finished with the Humanis, nothing was left but junk parts. That's what you get for not watching your steps. . .]<<<<<<  
 —White Label (22:09:43/16-JUN-54)

>>>>>[Aye, indeed. And the fires that lit the sky last night were a watch fire for all metahumans: your time is nearly done.]<<<<<<  
 —Dark Father (20:19:15/20-JUN-54)

**ORC Policlub**

Many of Berlin's orks and trolls have joined in this policlub to fight for their place in society. They fight for metahuman rights, with fists and weapons as well as with words. Despite anarchy, they remain an oppressed race: underprivileged, despised, and deemed only good enough for slave labor.

>>>>>[In case anyone is interested, I've gone chasing for some hard data and made a short list of the various policlubs' "vital statistics." The listed categories are

Matrix capability (M), paramilitary strength (P), influence (I), and estimated membership, with the first three categories rated on a scale from 1 (low) to 5 (high).]

Name	M	P	I	Membership
NAP	4	4	5	145,000
ASTA	3	2	1	32,800
Liberty (LSB)	5	4	2	67,500
Royal Blue	3	4	3	70,000+
Matrica	5	1	2	5,000
Humanis	3	5	3	23,000
ORC	3	5	2	7,000

Of course, this may all change before I finish this message. Ah—the sweet volatility of life.]<<<<<<  
 —Marrick Man (13:21:49/17-JUN-54)

**SECRET SOCIETIES**

Berlin's secret societies remain secret out of necessity, intention, or both in order to effectively influence matters from behind the scenes. Like conventional policlubs, they pursue certain goals, but with an extremely narrow focus and never openly admitting their agenda. Berlin has fewer secret societies than the rest of the German Alliance, but those few operating in the city include the Dr. Faustus Society, SIE, and the Lodge. Of these, the Lodge appears to hold the most power, though no one can tell for certain.

>>>>>[Who knows, we might get a real surprise from them someday. . .]<<<<<<  
 —White Label (21:52:37/25-MAY-54)

**The Lodge**

A secret organization that does not even use the Matrix, the Freemasons (commonly referred to as the Lodge) possess their own code of laws.

>>>>>[I haven't found a single trace of the Lodge anywhere within the BerliNet. No databank, no tracing shreds, nothing. Do they enter from outside Berlin? Without action, they won't get any shosan, that's for sure. Personally, I assume they've got a few deckers handy to check through the Matrix regularly for biz or mentions of their affairs. If anybody finds some info, I'd be grateful to hear about it. . .]<<<<<<  
 —Marrick Man (19:55:36/22-MAY-54)

According to rumor, membership consists mostly of high-level corporate executives and managers. Officially, the Lodge does not exist, and so Freemason membership and power can only be estimated. If the rumors are true,

the Lodge likely exerts considerable influence on Berlin's economy. The managers and board members in the Lodge may even use the organization for illegal, potentially destructive activities.

## GANGS

Berlin is overrun with street gangs, who recruit most of their members from the young and/or unemployed. The gangs offer like-minded people a chance to band together and translate their ideas and demands into concerted action. Many gangs stake out turf, usually defined down to the meter, and only fight within that territory. Other gangs roam throughout the city. Like polyclubs, many gangs form and disband at an amazing rate, and so the following list only discusses those gangs that are relatively long-lived and unlikely to disappear before this posting.

>>>>[Okay, mann. We know your name and where you hang out. And you don't look anything like a big, strong ork. See you soon!]<<<<<

—Mork the Ork (22:09:48/21-JUL-54)

## JIHAD B

An outgrowth of a religious sect that anticipates its salvation on the Day of Reckoning, members of Jihad B frequently commit acts of violence intended to bring that day about as soon as possible. On night rampages through Berlin, Jihad members commit arson and murder in the name of their religious convictions. Recently, however, Jihad B seems less active in its usual pursuits. It appears to have become a more middle-of-the-road radical Muslim gang usually saddled with the dirty work of unscrupulous Muslim fundamentalists who prefer not to get their hands dirty. Jihad B has the distinction of being one of the few religious groups openly persecuted by the Streiter Gottes.

	<p><b>WILHEM BECKER FINE MEATS &amp; SAUSAGE LUDWIGSHAFEN OUR WURST IS FURST!</b></p>	
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## GREEN BARDS

The Green Bards (Grüne Barden) formed when a trideo station rediscovered and popularized songs by the medieval troubadour Walther von der Vogelweide. These gang members consider themselves modern-day troubadours, courting the city's fair damsels with music. Unrequited love tends to bring out the worst in the gang members; many a cuckolded husband suffers painful injuries for his resistance to the bards' courting of his wife. The bards have little trouble recruiting new members from the city's youths, especially among pimple-faced, lispng nerds and perverts.

## THE HORDE

Among Berlin's most violent gangs, the Horde's membership is limited to large, physically powerful orks with an unquenchable hatred of anyone unlike them. Anyone or anything Horde members don't like, they break in half.

## KREUZRITTER

The Kreuzritters, or Crusaders, are fanatical Christians who consider it their duty to send those they define as heretics straight to hell rather than letting them waste precious oxygen by living out their allotted time on earth. Tourists should carefully consider their answer to apparently innocent questions asked by any friendly passer-by wearing a large red cross on his or her chest. Many innocents end up dead in the Spree River for giving the wrong answer to an apparently friendly 'Grüß Gott!'

>>>>[So how do you answer it? And what does that sound like, anyway?]<<<<<

—Edna above Average (13:42:51/02-NOV-54)

>>>>[It sounds like "greese got" and literally means "Hail God." It's a greeting from the south of Germany, a shortened version of "Hello and God be with you." The correct answer is to repeat the greeting exactly as given. If you speak German, resist any temptation to toss off flippant remarks like "Sure thing, next time I see Him" or

"Why, He around somewhere?" That's the kind of wrong answer the writer of this file is referring to.]<<<<<<

—Ragnal (14:09:01/02-NOV-54)

The accused sinners are tied up so that they cannot escape, washed, beaten with switches, and then skinned alive. The remains of the body are thrown into the Spree, as food for the fish.

>>>>[And the Lord saw the Berlin guidebook and it displeased Him mightily. Thus, He smote it and burned it to ashes on the eighth day, and cast the ashes upon the wind. And He said: wheresoever these ashes shall fall to the ground, there a crusader shall arise and proclaim My will with a clear voice, now and for all eternity.]<<<<<<

—Holy Scripture of the Crusaders (09:26:25/  
12-APR-54)

### MAGNIFIKERS

Active for several years, the all-male Magnifikers number about two hundred members. These gangers style themselves mages, and spend their lives diverting and often shocking passers-by with illusions and by conjuring minor spirits—mainly to part onlookers from their wallets. An illusion this gang finds particularly funny is maggots crawling from the victim's nose; until the mark pays up, he gets no relief from that horrible sensation.

>>>>[We got this one couple good. The slag was trying to tell his chica that he'd never had nothing with no other bounce, you know? So we projected some naked bobbers, and the old lady started screaming: "That looks like Lotte Schmidt! You've rubbed her, haven't you? And what about that joygirl I saw hanging around your door last week? That's her, isn't it? How many have you had it with, you fragging bastard?" She walloped him straight into hospital, she did. Pity he didn't have no money.]<<<<<<

—Magnify VII (17:42:48/14-JUL-54)

### RED SKINS

Sworn enemies of the White Skins, the Red Skins also shave their heads and wear implanted glass skull plates. Unlike the White Skins, they have little interest in politics, and only commit acts of violence against the White Skins when mistaken for members of that gang. If left alone, they stick to their favorite pubs, swill beer, and listen to slash-metal music.

### STREITER GOTTES

The Streiter Gottes (Fighters of the Lord) from the Berlin branch of the Christian Knights. Though a more liberal religious gang than the Kreuzritters, they share the conviction that they must do battle in the service of a Higher Power. In accordance with this belief, the Streiter Gottes readily ally with any religious policlub that re-

quests their help against the godless. Unlike other religious groups, the Streiter Gottes shy away from Berlin's infrequent religious wars; they view the various Supreme Beings of the world's religions as different aspects of the same Higher Power.

### SURFTURF

The members of this gang live in the U-Bahn tunnels, going outside only during rush hours. By implanting suction pads into their hands and feet, they can cling to the outside of the trains and try to scratch flying-lizard eggs, which command a good price on the black market as potency enhancers, from the damp tunnel walls without losing their grip. The gangers also love to shock the passengers in innovative ways, and spend a certain amount of time dodging earth spirits.

### WHITE SKINS

Even more radical than the notorious Humanis policlub, this gang promotes the notion that a pure Aryan race is meant to inhabit and dominate the entire solar system. As part of their racist agenda, they have developed a complex genetic test that they claim defines the genetic worth of a human being. Because the White Skins have been unable to garner the slightest glimmer of support in anarchist Berlin, they have resorted to furthering their crusade through such drastic means as cordoning off whole residential blocks and forcing everybody caught in their trap to take their test. Those who fail to measure up to the genetic purity of the "new Aryans" are killed and left to rot in the gutter. To distinguish themselves from so-called lesser mortals, all White Skins shave their heads to reveal the glass plates implanted in their skulls.

### LIVING IN BERLIN

Living conditions in Berlin can be summarized in one sentence; life's a frag in the eye!

>>>>[Oh, like that's only typical of Berlin! Try getting through the day in Dortmund, mann.]<<<<<<

—Hombruch-Hool (19:29:48/27-AUG-54)

### FOOD AND SHELTER

Anyone looking for a comfortable standard of living in Berlin needs plenty of money and at least a little influence. Those lucky enough to possess both can afford one of the many well-preserved villas located in the suburbs of Zehlendorf, Klein-Machnow, and others, offering exotically out-of-date architecture with panoramic windows and red clinker-work on the outer walls. Needless to say, the windows are made of armored glass, and well-trained gangs patrol the perimeters to keep out intruders. The well-to-do can never have too much security.

Though the villas are private property, the occupants are not necessarily the owners. More than a few megacorp executives have bought property in the suburbs and make hefty profits through extortionary rents.

>>>>>[And if any effing dealer or anarcho gets up my daddy's nose, he's out on his ear. Just like that!]<<<<<<  
—Bobby (17:19:48/23-MAY-54)

Most megacorp executives and their families live in their respective corporate enclaves, where living space is provided free of charge. However, accepting corporate quarters within the enclave tacitly demands a lifetime commitment on the part of the corp employee; the corporation collects back rent for all time spent in the enclave when an executive quits his job. The scarce living space available outside the enclaves is hotly contested, though average rent in Berlin runs to DM 60 (30Y) per square meter, a price that even a well-paid executive finds difficult to afford.

Salarymen below executive level, as well as the major segment of the population that makes a living by other means, live in tenement houses owned by small companies or private landlords. The steep rents cover surcharges for magical trash disposal and for the block's protection by various small gangs. Because Berlin has a plethora of gangs, a landlord dissatisfied with his present protection service can easily switch to another gang if he feels the need. This thriving protection market keeps the gangs on their toes, and makes for a fairly safe living environment. However, rent eats up the bulk of most tenants' income: many people work at day jobs but depend on moonlighting to get by. According to some estimates, one in three Berliners makes a living with activities that any other place would condemn as criminal.

Four large corporations supply Berlin's more than 400 grocery stores with food, drink, household supplies, and cosmetics: Kaisers, A&P, Luxus, and Ödnur. The latter, currently dominating the market, has connections to the Turkish megacorp of the same name that ships food

to customers around the world. Berlin's grocery stores never close. Attempts to do away with stores in favor of radio or trideo shopping failed; supermarkets remain a social meeting place, where many customers come to hear the latest gossip as much as to buy something.

Once inside a store, the customer receives a shopping card. If he or she wishes, he may shop in the time-honored fashion of strolling around the aisles pushing a small cart. If the customer prefers to shop without the bother of a cart, he simply slides his shopping card into the appropriate slot in various shelves throughout the store and types in the number of units he wants of a given product. The item automatically shows up on the customer's bill, and he collects his groceries at the store exit.

For shoppers who come for the pleasure of pushing a cart and choosing their own merchandise, after the cashier rings up all items purchased, he or she uses the shopping card to transfer the appropriate amount from the customer's account. A security man then carries the merchandise to the customer's place of residence, sparing the shopper the fascinating and exhilarating experience of being mobbed by Berlin's poor and homeless on his way out the door. The cost of delivery is included in the price of the merchandise.

>>>>>[And that's steep, mann! I'd rather to do without the secman and get something to eat! What do these guys think we're supposed to live on?]<<<<<<

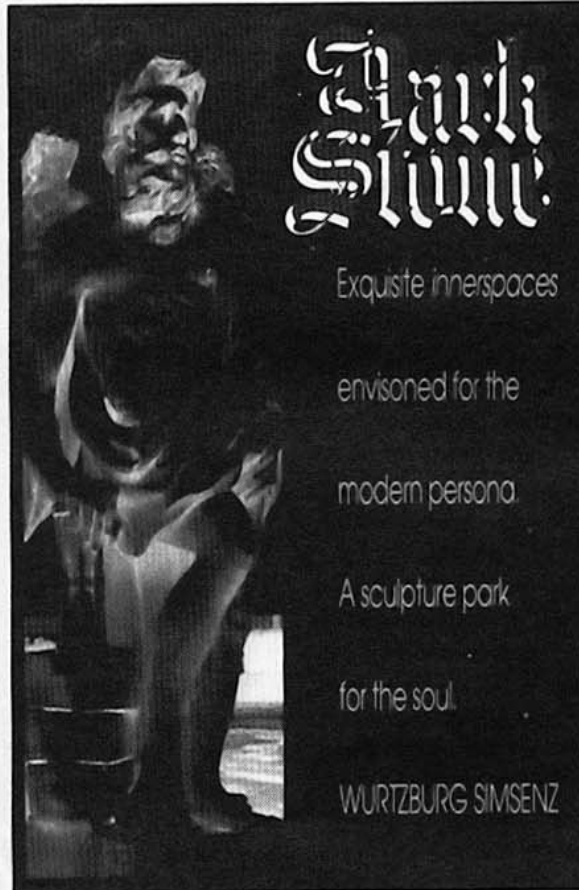
—Single (11:29:44/17-JUN-54)

### SOCIAL SERVICES

No government-provided social services exist in Berlin. The privatization of all public institutions opened the floodgates for unscrupulous exploitation of the needy, especially in the areas of health care and retirement benefits.

>>>>>[Without us, half of Berlin would be dead! How can that compare to the few measly bucks we get paid for our extra hours?]<<<<<<

—Prof. Dr. Dr. Fahrkus, M. D. (16:59:18/25-JUL-54)



**Dark Stone**  
Exquisite innerspaces  
envisioned for the  
modern persona.  
A sculpture park  
for the soul.  
WURTZBURG SIMSENZ

The city offers the services of three large hospitals, all run by private owners. A bed in an open ward can cost up to DM 900 a day; to have any hope of recovery, anyone falling ill must have money to spend getting well.

The hospitals make their biggest bucks on cyberimplants. Patients who bring their own cyberware into the hospital for implantation, usually after buying them on the shadowmarket, save money by not paying for hospital-issued cyberware; however, many doctors prefer to work with implants with which they are familiar, and a few deliberately botch operations to make their feelings on the matter clear. Though cyberware now pervades society to every class of citizen and walk of life, gang and polyclub members equally favor detection-proof weapon implants, as do those who make frequent shadowruns in Berlin's suburbs. Another widely popular implant is a radio receiver in the skull that enables the wearer to stay in constant touch with the multitude of radio stations in Berlin.

The charlatans who travel around Berlin and its suburbs selling horse urine laced with sugar as a cheap healing potion find themselves prosecuted with extreme prejudice by the Berlin Physicians' Association if caught inside the city. In accordance with tradition, the Association drowns the guilty in the Teufelssee (Devil's Lake), which has served as home to a toxic spirit ever since the Schering Pharma corporation surreptitiously dumped truckloads of bioenergetic waste into its waters. The toxic spirit relishes these small offerings, making an efficient disposal system.

Life insurance and pensions offer another field open to widespread exploitation. Berlin's few private life insurers demand tremendous premiums, and upon the death of a client often avoid payment indefinitely by disputing whether their client is actually dead or just continuing life on a higher plane of consciousness. Only occupants of the corporate enclaves qualify for pensions, and the corporations classify as pensioners only those employees who cannot work under any circumstances. Needless to say, few wageslaves qualify for pensions under these criteria. Megacorps forced to consider a worker as eligible for a pension invariably second the unfortunate slave to a university lab to fulfill a "final assignment" as an experimental subject. Understandably, workers avoid facing such a fate and prefer to die on the job.

## EDUCATION

Because Berlin's anarchist "government" abolished the state schools, the education a child receives depends entirely on the resources of his or her parents. All schools in Berlin are privately owned and most charge hefty tuition. Because the subject matter taught depends heavily on demand, Berlin children rarely receive a well-rounded education. For example, if the so-called experts predict an

impending decker shortage, many schools suddenly emphasize courses such as 'Theoretical Structure of the Matrix 101' or 'Information and How To Get It 202'.

>>>>[Why, you ask? You guessed it: the parents. As soon as the rumor mill proclaims an upcoming demand for mages, say, the parents hunt for schools that offer nothing but magic. For five years I did nothing but magic. I hate magic. I'm a chemist, not a charlatan. Any mage sets foot in my restaurant, I throw him out.]<<<<<<

—Bernd Becker of H<sub>2</sub>O (17:07:44/13-MAY-54)

>>>>[Shut Up]<<<<<<

—Fatima (19:18:26/25-JUN-54)

Depending on how long parents can afford to keep their offspring in school, students receive a low-, medium-, or high-level certificate upon graduation. Of course, many Berlin children have never seen a school from the inside.

The megacorps offer a free, general education for the children of all employees. Not surprisingly, these corporate schools overwhelmingly stress that knowledge each corporation considers valuable. Upon graduation, 80 percent of the students find employment with the corporation; the remaining 20 percent are tossed out of the enclave as "undesirable." With no experience to help them survive the harsh reality outside the enclaves, these rejects almost always join the ranks of the citizens living below poverty level. In general, metahumans such as orks and dwarfs scrape by on a marginal education, because few metahuman parents can afford school fees.

## EMPLOYMENT

Though the megacorps employ thousands of people, Berlin offers many other ways to make a living. The city has a constant need for workers to perform jobs that elsewhere would be classified as quasi-legal, or even outright illegal. Small companies take advantage of the lawlessness of the free city to manufacture items illegal everywhere else in the world, and regularly hire temporary workers disinclined to ask awkward questions. The couriers required to transport this merchandise to foreign markets, often at great personal risk, are in particularly high demand. Despite the dangers, many people willingly take this kind of job; the greater the risk, the greater the reward. Of course, the companies prefer to offer contracts for a lot of money without specifying the job until after the prospective employee has signed on.

>>>>[I lost both kidneys and a piece of my liver. And all the while I thought I had signed on for two years of hard labor at the Slippery.]<<<<<<

—Die Seuche (23:27:56/22-APR-54)

In addition to couriers, freelance mages can also find lucrative positions with relative ease. Good mages can earn more money than any corporate manager in Berlin; mediocre and even incompetent mages can easily find various small jobs. Good deckers are in constant demand; industrial espionage is an everyday occurrence, and freelance deckers willingly provide such services for an appropriate (or inflated, depending on their mood) fee. Other megacorps employ most freelance deckers, who consider each piece of information potential gold. No corporate wageslave decker comes close to the ability or income of a freelancer from Berlin's shadowmarket.

>>>>[Don't make me laugh! Where do you think the corps get their wageslaves, if not from the streets? Milksops like the so-called deckers outside Berlin couldn't hope to cut it here. The corps have no choice but to look for new people on the market.]<<<<<

—Hulk (22:01:56/18-JUN-54)

Chip pushers and cyberware salesmen crowd the city streets, selling anything the heart desires, especially to tourists. Though the city hospitals possess top-of-the-line cyberimplant stations, many tourists prefer to have their new cyberheart, internal radio receiver, or cybersex gadget (only available in Berlin) implanted straight away in a nearby small caravan or run-down apartment.

**LEISURE**

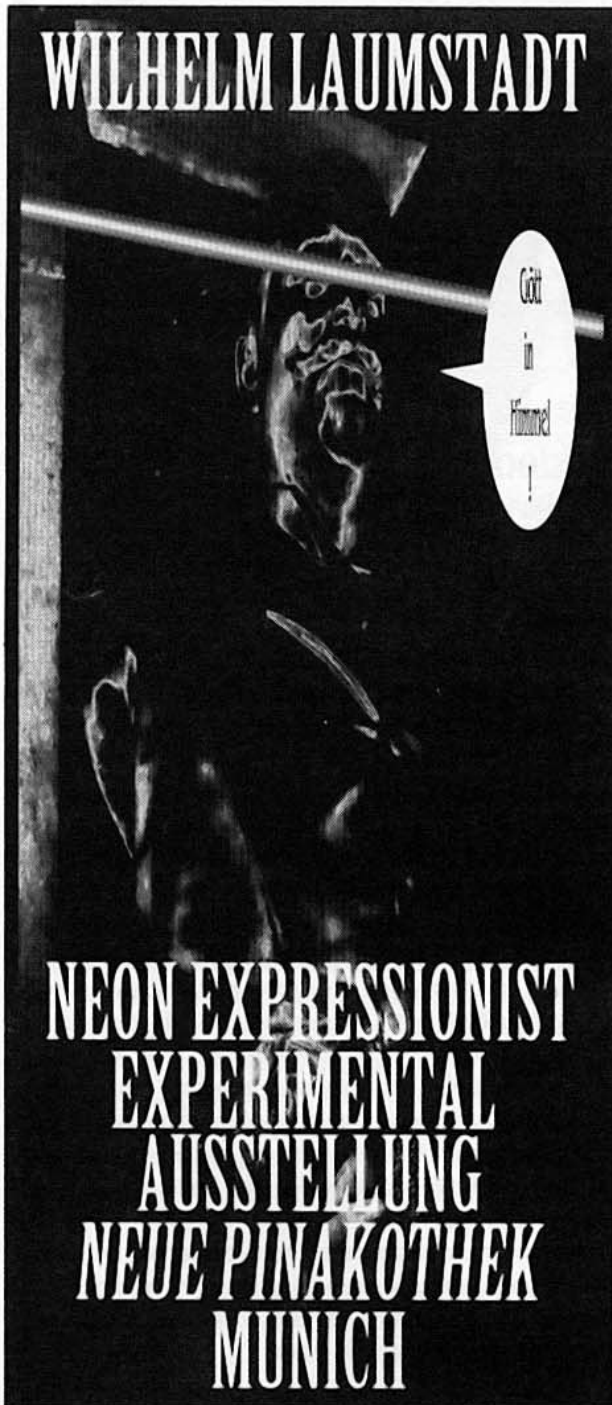
After a demanding day (or night) at work, people feel the need to relax and are willing to pay for that privilege. Those with culture visit the opera; the perverse visit the Slippery to have their brains blasted (metaphorically speaking).

>>>>[Don't make jokes about brain-blasting. It happened to a mate of mine not so long ago. He rented himself out, and they demanded he let someone blast his brains out. Ruined the carpet, but it really turned those megacorp bosses on.]<<<<<

—Mister Y (17:38:39/14-JUN-54)

In addition to shows of all kinds, Berlin supports an endlessly entertaining round of pubs, bars, bistros, and sporting events. Every day of the week, crowds of Berliners watch various matches and tournaments held in the Olympic stadium built in 2008.

Amateur sporting events include the Berlin Pentathlon, in which any citizen is eligible to compete. Every day, one hundred contestants try their luck at this brutal, often fatal contest. First on the list of feats is a swim across the Teufelssee, home of a toxic spirit. The lucky survivors receive treatment for their acid burns from a mage waiting on the opposite shore, then go on to the Wall Run. This event requires the contestants to run four kilometers along the top of a two-meter-wide wall in twenty minutes. At the start of the run, every contestant receives a club with which to knock down his opponents along the way. Their numbers usually reduced to half by this time, the remaining athletes must prove their skill at subway surfing. Marks are given for ingenuity, courage, and dodging earth spirits. The fourth event is a run through the Grunewald forest, one of the world's largest free-range genetic testing areas. Plant creatures and other monstrosities created in various corporate labs do their best to stop contestants from getting through. Those few that do reach the finish line end the contest with the so-called



banana test; each athlete must convince a rather evil-tempered chimp to eat a banana without using undue violence. The first ten contestants who feed the chimp their banana (and usually a few of their fingers in the process) go on to the final. The final has no rules; the winner of this free-for-all is the last one standing. This daily contest is shown live on trideo and covered by several radio stations.

**MEDIA**

The Berlin media scene has always offered more variety than that of any other city in the world, save perhaps New York and London. These days, gangs, policlubs, and corporations all enrich the diversity of public opinion beyond our capability to make a quick overview do Berlin's media justice. The following surveys of trideo, radio, and print media touch only the tip of the iceberg.

**TRIDEO**

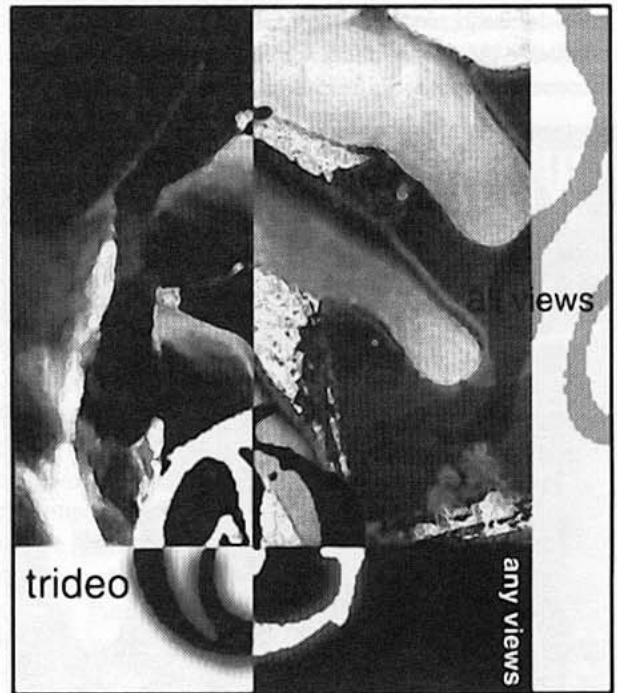
Berlin has three long-running trideo stations. The biggest station, B1, serves as a forum for public discussion, offering a 24-hour political broadcast on which any group may buy time to air its views. Every four hours, an expert panel of selected gang members, policlub representatives, corporation spokespersons, and randomly chosen audience members discuss the previous program. These discussions rate especially high with the viewers, as they often take spectacular, unexpected turns, quite a contrast to the often simplistic propaganda of the actual programs under discussion. Depending on the members of the panel, the discussion can develop into anything from subtle, verbal sparring to a physical fight.

The second station, Skreem, offers only entertainment, everything from quiz shows to porn. The quiz shows, offering such useful prizes as kitchen equipment, appeal mainly to the poorer segments of the population. Shows from the city's red-light district, especially the daily live show from the Slippery, reaches a wider audience, roughly 65 percent of the viewership.

>>>>[The other 35 percent are at the Slippery in person.]<<<<<  
—Pinguin (16:25:07/13-JUN-54)

Berlin's third trideo station, Sender 44 (Station 44), broadcasts movies, music, and live news reports around the clock. Its programming is generally considered a welcome alternative to the political B1 and the unrelentingly low-class attitude of Skreem. Berlin also supports two dozen 2D television stations of various persuasions, and a wide variety of additional programs can be accessed via satellite. All this adds up to complete freedom of choice for the Berlin viewer.

>>>>[By reading between the lines, one notices the interesting fact that Berlin's and most of Germany's telecom and media systems are technologically behind the times—households need different feeds for different purposes, and so on. The national Matrix grid is simple to run and crack, just like it is everywhere else. Private systems, however, are a very different story.]<<<<<  
—Ludwig Vonn Tech (03:20:49/12-10-54)



**RADIO**

Radio is still an important source of information in Berlin. New stations take to the air and old ones shut down every day, making radio reporting fresh and partisan, interested in uncovering the most intimate of details. The moment anything unusual happens in Berlin (it is sometimes hard to distinguish the standard unusual from the truly unusual), hordes of journalists converge on the scene to make the experience of the newest scandal up close and personal. No mass murder occurs without at least one reporter pointing her mike at the scene of unimaginable violence and robbing it of impact with a cynical comment. Those few Berliners not bombarded with the babel of voices from radio broadcasts in the car, bus, or U-Bahn frequently wear an ultralight earphone radio to stay in tune and in touch. Anyone looking for the whole story about any incident must listen to at least four different stations to sift through the bias common on the Berlin airwaves and get close to the truth.

Many stations cross unwritten restrictions on subject matter and broadcast everything they get, stopped only by their opponents' bully boys or a decker good enough to program their gear into trash.

**PRINT MEDIA**

An almost infinite number of newspapers and magazines blankets Berlin, despite the fact that the omnipresence and speed of radio news makes any information old hat within five minutes. Within the last few months, the city-zine *Timeout* has made its mark; anyone opening a new body art, simsense, magie noir, or pain-painting show or exhibit announces it in *Timeout's* pages. *Timeout* gives plays, concerts, lectures, readings, executions, and every other event in Berlin a glitzy layout; a chip incorporated into the magazine allows readers to book seats and pay in advance.

The *Lilie* (Lily), a semi-electronic newspaper that readers can download and print from the Matrix every morning, features want ads in which a prospective customer can find anything from an artificial canary to mercenary troops. The *Lilie's* "Heart seeks Heart" section has lots of enthusiastic readers who respond to entries such as "Tender dwarf girl seeks elf-like playmate who likes muscles and hair."

The remainder of Berlin's print media includes corporate publications, gangzines, and the policlub pamphlets offered on every street corner. Policlub magazines have high print runs, though almost no one reads them; the friendly but firm manner in which policlub sales agents insist that unlucky passers-by take a closer look at one to twenty copies of the latest issue has quite a lot to do with the policlub material's apparent popularity. Gangzines, a unique class of publications, offer unique and often useful articles that would be considered illegal anywhere other than Berlin. Burying them within the unbearable propagandistic praises of the gang's favorite politics, gangzines provide hints for perusing the hidden areas of the Matrix and tuning your deck without attracting undue attention, helpful information about various corps, and other such important topics. As gangzines have low print runs and are lovingly produced with great attention to detail, they are instant collectibles.

>>>>>[Continuing my comments from earlier, note that the Germans have not yet discovered the datafax. Though the *Lilie* comes close, the Berlin telecomm net can't handle true datafax traffic. That, plus the fact that few Berliners can afford the multi-function home telecoms that connect phone, video, fax, datalink, and so on, has slowed the city from using the potential of this form of expression. Just a matter of time, however, before they modernize and get it.]<<<<<<

—Ludwig Vonn Tech (03:39:41/12-10-54)

**SHADOWRUNS IN BERLIN**

Runs in Berlin. Anyone with good insurance has no problem; otherwise, a smart runner holds his head down, stays alert, and keeps his fingers crossed. To brave the tough security of some megacorps, a runner has to be first class or own a BuMoNa contract. If he cannot claim either, he should cut his losses and leave well enough alone, unless he plans on gaining weight by having bullets forcibly inserted into his flesh.

Because Berlin has no laws against the efforts of shadowrunners, corporations install especially tough security arrangements. Many smaller companies avoid the high cost of Matrix security by purchasing memory and access to a large and well-protected mainframe in cooperation with others, and save money on physical security by settling in an already protected area of Berlin. Breaching such security and getting out alive poses great risks and requires meticulous planning to accomplish. These conditions put Berlin shadowrunners in demand; anyone who can survive in Berlin is almost impossible to stop elsewhere.

>>>>>[There was this one Stuttgart hero who thought he could waltz into the target corp via the Matrix, get the data, and beat feet. I really felt sorry for the guy when I heard what happened to him. He got away from the black IC okay, but forgot to protect his meat body. He learned from his mistake the hard way (for a split second) when razor blades belonging to a friendly, corp-sponsored elf caressed his useless throat.]<<<<<<

—Hulk (21:39:45/16-MAY-54)

Though average Matrix runs pose a relatively minor risk of discovery and often allow perpetrators to escape unharmed, the risk of brain-burn rises exponentially with the size of the target corporation and the importance of the information. Only the hottest console cowboys or freaks with a death wish care to attempt most such projects.

>>>>>[Like it says, chummer, running's no go without some excellent insurance. Even that won't guarantee you'll ever breathe the smog again. . .]<<<<<<

—Marrick Man (19:19:48/21-MAY-54)

Deckers usually face fewer risks in physical runs, where their job may be limited to tackling site alarm systems. The security systems of smaller corporations may not be connected to the Matrix, so deckers are less likely to fight corporate Matrix cyberjocks. Small-corp security systems also tend to be less complicated than the protections surrounding sensitive datafiles, and require far less concentration to crack. Once the decker takes care

of these preliminaries, the mages and street samurai can get to work.

Berlin's shadowmarket and gangzines represent ideal sources of field-tested security busting tricks. From interfaces to blueprints, the data is there for the taking, in return for hard deutsche marks. Berlin offers it all—from cyberdeck tuning to cyberimplants to just about anything else of use to a professional. However, smart runners always play it cautious. Checking sources before buying or trying anything is always a good idea.

>>>>>[Right, unless you want to croak after surgery because the doc didn't sterilize his instruments or forgot to adapt the implants to your physiological specifications. A friend of mine almost met his Maker because he cut a deal in a shady operating theater down a dark alley in Kreuzberg. We couldn't find a trace of the quack afterward—but that's no surprise! My chummer Mark spent six weeks in a private clinic just to get halfway back to normal. It took six more months for him to regain full control of his left side.]<<<<<<

—Marrick Man (22:07:48/  
26-JUN-54)

>>>>>[Marrick, I owe you one. But the shop looked dependable. . .Merde! And here I thought I could rely on my knowledge of human nature in Berlin.]<<<<<<

—Mark Apache (23:53:13/  
26-JUN-54)

Good contacts are as valuable as good gear; in Berlin, reciprocity is everything, and lone wolves are the first to be cut down. Some fixers and informers work for a cut of the profits; the runner gets the background information he wants, and in return the informer gets a percentage of the shadowrunner's paycheck. Contacts of all sorts can also prove useful in tracking rumors, knowledge of which can protect a runner. Fixers and informers can find out which corps might be on a runner's tail, or how many enemies he made by snagging a well-paying contract, or even how much profit a pending present contract is worth according to the word on the street.

For runners who set off alarms in the course of their work, Berlin's chaotic traffic offers any number of getaway strategies once off corp property. Between buses, taxis, the U-Bahn, and so on, plus possible help from a fixer listening in on corp pursuit orders and tipping him off, an enterprising runner should find it relatively easy to duck out of danger. Because few corp troops or security teams maintain connections in the poorer quarters of Berlin or any areas not populated by corp execs or salarymen, a runner's trail can lead nowhere fast.

Runners should understand, however, that Berlin's megacorps can exact revenge on a troublemaker in more ways than one. Getting away from pursuing corp troops does not necessarily put the runner in the clear. The corps keep tabs on everything and everybody in Berlin, and so can respond swiftly to events. Their constant struggle to hang on to their share of power in the city-state requires them to support fixers and informers in all groups and quarters who listen in and report on everything from board meetings to street jazz.

>>>>>[The corps aren't always fast, but they're relentless. They hunted Ragtime Blues for at least a year. Circuits know what they stole from whom; rumor has it that they snuck into Messerschmitt, technically a mission impossible. Of course, the corp couldn't leave that unpunished. The execs pulled every lever they could to bring Ragtime Blues down.]<<<<<<

—Marrick Man (21:38:27/  
27-JUN-54)

>>>>>[Personally, I'd say the Blues systematically crossed every important corp we've got, until everybody wanted them dead.]<<<<<<

—Hulk (02:08:39/  
30-JUN-54)



## PLACES OF INTEREST

A day's activity in the city of Berlin pales in comparison to the action after dark: that is when the city really wakes up. Restaurants, bars, night clubs, and other establishments open their doors and vie for customers. What morning people see as a blank, concrete wall may sport a glittering neon sign after sundown, advertising one of

Berlin's many Drink-Inns. Lucky visitors who survive their first night on the town may resort to the ever-popular skullfiller to knock out the hangover and let them repeat their nightlife sightseeing tour. What to do when your evening is just beginning and you've already lost your date? Pick up a copy of Berlin's most popular city-zine, chummer, and start hunting. *Timeout* offers more tips about Berlin at night than anyone could use in a month.

>>>>[Everything you are about to read is stolen from the *Timeout Guide to Berlin*. You can get the scenezine on chip, too, if you know where to get them bugs.]<<<<<<  
—Pumuckel (18:09:28/17-JUN-54)

## HOTELS

### Domhotel (Cathedral Hotel)

Average Hotel Archetype/67 Kronenstraße/Walter Mumau, Proprietor/LTG# 345 675 87.

Once a first-class establishment, the Domhotel has seen better days, its decline partly due to its location in Berlin's turbulent city center. Currently, the Domhotel offers shady customers a place to spend the night, including those just passing through or for any reason lacking a permanent place to stay. Spartan but functional rooms include a bed, a water tap, and numerous Matrix and telecom jacks.

Most of the hotel's customers find its cellars to be of particular interest, hosting as they do a considerable volume of black-market trading. The cellars also provide several exits into the city's sewer system.

### Congress-Palace

Luxury Hotel Archetype/9 Jacobystraße/Manfred von Meiersfeldt, Manager/LTG# 222 768 90.

The Congress-Palace, frequented by respectable Berlin visitors, lies only three minutes' walk from the giant DeMeKo Building. Patrons of this hotel can almost feel the pulse of the city generated by its hyperactive media. The Congress-Palace is among the safest locations in Berlin; the hotel is completely surrounded by corporate enclaves guarded by topnotch corporate security services.

### Little King's

Cheap Hotel Archetype/112 Malchower Weg/Henrietta Spoerl, Proprietor/Bias Against Humans/LTG# 140 144 35.

A tiny boarding house of the type found in the suburbs of Hohenschönhausen and Hellersdorf, Little King's highest-volume customers are metahumans and sorcerers. Humans trying to book a room generally receive a response ranging from indifferent to downright unfriendly, depending on the color of their money. Little King's offers subsistence-level food and lodgings, and many of its patrons are down on their luck.

### Metropolitan

Luxury Hotel Archetype/251 Friedrichstraße/Kendo Yamashida, Manager/LTG# 525 525 00.

Corp execs and other VIPs visiting Berlin consider the lavish Metropolitan Hotel their personal preserve. Situated between Berlin's major corporate enclaves, just at the edge of the Tiergarten, the Met is only minutes away from the Zoologischer Garten train station. This hotel's fame rests partly on the tremendous range of culinary styles offered by its kitchens, from brilliantly prepared synthfood to fine venison to wines dating back to the turn of the century. Suites are equally impressive, each featuring its own Matrix terminal and trideo wall.

### Zum Alten Stift (Old Convent)

Luxury Hotel Archetype/12 Zum Weißensee/Dieter Limperich, Proprietor/Slight Bias Against Non-Elves/LTG# 786 564 89.

This inn stands in Berlin's elven quarter close to Weißensee Lake, within the venerable walls of a former abbey. Elven visitors in from the western Länder on long weekends or brief vacations usually stay at this luxury hotel. In contrast to Zum Alten Stift's centuries-old exterior, its small apartments are furnished with modern furniture bought outside Berlin.

## RESTAURANTS AND BARS

### Gore

51 Schumannstraße/Menjo Henhiro II, Proprietor/LTG# 781 566 66.

Dinner at the Gore is an experience that marks one for life. To dine at this unique establishment requires a lot of nerve and plenty of hard cash, meaning deutsche mark chits. Ecus and nuyen are not welcome at the Gore. It has no menu; you eat what you get. Anyone who fails to clean his plate is taken to the kitchen, never to return in one piece. Diners at the Gore play Russian roulette with nausea, but should keep eating steadily; to do otherwise can cost you your life. When you find the first ring or brooch in your stew, or a pair of hairy ork ears, just keep eating and try not to think about the poisons that collect in body tissue. Do not try to sneak into the Gore through the back yard. You might become part of the goulash, and your eyeballs may end up swimming in someone's drink. Always, always clean your plate!

>>>>[You've got to be kidding. . .]<<<<<<  
—Dieter (19:53:32/09-MAY-54)

>>>>[They are kidding. ATTENTION, ALL READERS!!! The Gore does not, repeat *not*, exist. This whole entry is just some fragger's idea of a sick joke.]<<<<<<  
—Sollo Bollo (02:20:18/21-JUN-54)

>>>>[Are you sure?]<<<<

—Ace of Aces (05:41:20/21-JUN-54)

>>>>[Dead sure. (Sorry, couldn't resist the pun.) I've been to that address; it's a dry cleaners run by a nice little family of Turkish orks.]<<<<

—Sollo Bollo (06:56:02/22-JUN-54)

## H<sub>2</sub>O

Small Restaurant Archetype/48 Schadowstraße/  
Bernd Becker, Proprietor/LTG# 345 888 22.

Proprietor Bernd Becker prepares all the food served in H<sub>2</sub>O. Once a chemical engineer designing artificial foodstuffs, Becker felt an instant affinity for a much simpler method of creating food that garnered a well-known mage the Nobel Prize for Magic. Within a year of the new technique's appearance, Becker quit his career and opened a restaurant serving pure synthfood featuring the extravagant color, taste, and smell of real food. At H<sub>2</sub>O, dieters can order decadently delicious dishes containing zero calories. The restaurant does not deliver, but customers can order take-away meals by phone. These meals have an indefinite shelf-life, as long as they do not get wet. Our favorite house specialty is sodiumbisuccyllynate B14 on green AgarAgar, complemented perfectly by a pleasant PEG5000.

If Becker is in a good mood, he sometimes entertains the guests by playing on an ancient, battered trumpet. Mages should avoid this restaurant; they may never leave.

## Medikus

133 Luisenstraße/Peter Paul Wolff, Proprietor/LTG# 554 132 88.

The Medikus gives the students of Berlin University's magico-medical faculty the chance to make a few ecus on the side. Instead of being shown to a table, guests in this restaurant lay down on a stretcher and the "waiters" connect them to an IV, inserting the tube straight into the portal vein to allow direct access to the liver. Each member of the constantly changing staff specializes in an intravenous solution, and the guests take their chances. The students use the guests as experimental subjects for their particular specialty, and so every "meal" is unique. After a "meal" at the Medikus some "diners" can no longer tell up from down. Because they know they can never again experience the same hallucinogenic flash, some customers fling themselves in front of a Transrapid when their meal begins to wear off. Lucky customers get aphrodisiacs, weak hallucinogens, and brainfeeders; the unlucky consume headcrashers, paralytic agents, and disintegrators. The "cooks" are well insured by the university, and receive the life insurance of deceased customers as a salary. Ask for Ursel (pronounced Oursel), and cancel your life insurance before entering.

>>>>[Alright, all right, cut the simsense! Where's a guy gotta go to find a real place to eat around here?]<<<<

—Sollo Bollo (06:56:30/22-JUN-54)

>>>>[Will someone please get the sick jokers off the board and give us some real addresses for a change?]<<<<

—Goethe (10:43:01/22-JUN-54)

## BARS/PUBS

### Far Side 5

Bar Archetype/30 Lindenufer/Johnny G., Manager/  
LTG# unavailable.

Known for watery drinks and salty food, Far Side 5 is only worth a visit to hear the confessions of the Mutates Anonymous who meet here every other night. Poor unfortunates born with a mixed genetic heritage, members include elves with troll beards, dwarfs with ork hands, and every other imaginable combination, all who meet here in peace. Peeping Toms should keep to their well-hidden alcoves and keep their mouths shut; above all, no eavesdropper should ever give in to the impulse to laugh. Mutates Anonymous may sound like a collection of whiners, but they can inflict considerable harm on people bold enough to insult them. Interested visitors should ask a trustworthy local for the time of the next meeting.

### Jehova

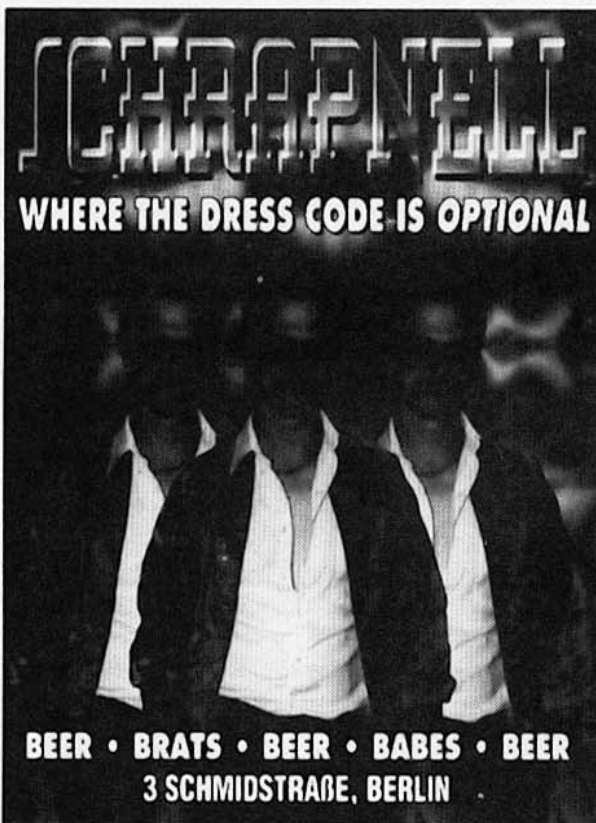
Bar Archetype/77 Hirtenstraße/Rashi Abumad, Proprietor/LTG# 115 001 77.

Rashi Abumad uses the Jehova to gather followers who see the VITAS catastrophes as evidence of the divine Rashnu's hand in history. According to their beliefs, the god Rashnu views the world as a giant, infected bacteria culture that has reached the end of its existence. The VITAS plague was the Great Dying, caused by His infinite power and will. Believing that the end of the world is imminent, Rashi Abumad offers the best beer in the city for free; he wants to use up the good brew before he progresses to his next life, and has no need to make money. However, only those subscribing to the "pure faith" may enter this bar. Anyone interested in joining the unending party should shave his head and don a yellow caftan. Try peeling some onions to get the watery eyes of the true believer.

### Meld In

Bar Archetype/12 Grenzstraße/Vera Heinkel, Proprietor/LTG# 474 539 97.

A species-tolerant bar, Meld In is the current meeting place of choice for polliclubs dedicated to improving relations between humans and metahumans. Predictably, this clientele makes Meld In a frequent target of the racist Humanis polliclub and its allies.



>>>>>[We weren't even serious before. Death to all goblin fraggers!]<<<<<<

—Krupp (15:09:06/02-APR-53)

>>>>>[Nice of you to mouth off, Krupp. And here I thought you were still working outside. You know how I've been dying to meet you again. Time to hand in your lunch pail.]<<<<<<

—Sigmund (18:11:56/03-APR-54)

#### **Moving**

Bar Archetype/Here and There/K. Fiebig, Proprietor/LTG# unknown.

Moving deserves its name; the same place turns up in a different location every night. When asked how he manages to move an entire bar every night, owner K. Fiebig only lifts his eyebrows and grins. Oddly enough, Moving is the preferred bar of Berlin's upper crust. To see and be seen here is the only thing that counts. Fiebig serves topnotch alcoholic ingredients only available on this side of the galactic core, and drinks are priced accordingly. Anyone lucky enough to find Moving should seize the day, buy a drink, and damn the cost. He may never be so lucky again!

#### **Onestone**

Bar Archetype/277 Unter den Linden/Enrico Marotti, Proprietor/LTG# 111 111 99.

The Onestone took its name from a famous scientist who supposedly said, "You don't have to know everything. You just have to know where to look it up." The Onestone meets this criteria, as the leading lights of Berlin's intelligentsia drop in frequently at this café. Interested tourists often rub elbows with VITAS researchers, Nobel Prize-winning mages, and other intellectual VIPs. Anyone managing to wheedle his way into this bar has the chance to enjoy genius-level conversation about such esoteric subjects as the concave nature of the space-magic-time continuum while sipping watered-down drinks. Unless the tourist can hold his own in debate, however, he is advised simply to listen. For those inclined to speak up, never state anything in concrete terms and remember to include at least eight subordinate clauses in every sentence. Also, never ask anyone to prove what he just said. He might be able to.

#### **Schrapnell (Shrapnel)**

Bar Archetype/3 Schmidstraße/Oliver Lenz, Proprietor/LTG# 367 599 76.

This insider bar offers extraordinary drinks and esoteric food at a bargain-basement price. The exact definition of "esoteric food" changes daily; prospective nosherers should be cautious. Though located in a settled area, getting into Schrapnell can be difficult; the management sowed a minefield around the premises. A warped wooden plank marks the only safe path through this no man's land. The management often uses the plank as a form of behavior modification, as well as for defense. Whenever government officials come around or a brawl explodes inside, bouncers remove the plank. Until they put it back, bar patrons enter and leave at their own risk.

Newcomers to Schrapnell should wear sunshades and try to look chiller. Staring at other guests is the worst kind of bad behavior, and nothing betrays the outsider faster. Those who violate the unwritten code against staring will not find the plank when they leave.

#### **Softline**

Bar Archetype/13 Breite Straße/Julian Kinkers, Manager/LTG# 354 453 88.

Anyone looking for an experienced decker, a new deck, or cutting-edge cyberware can find it any evening at the Softline. Prospective buyers need to play it cool; deckers and cyberdealers at the Softline keep their assets very close to the chest. Relax, have a few of the house's far above average drinks, stay quiet, and wait for someone to make an offer. Though the steep prices demanded might feel like extortion at first, dealers at the Softline never offer less than top-quality merchandise; the place upholds its reputation.

Prospective buyers who are willing to wait can find anything they want; completely biological designer prosthetics, hormone capsules, the latest simsense, all kinds

of sophisticated technical accessories, cutting-edge microtechnology, and much more. To find the best deal, enjoy a few drinks and pretend that nothing holds any real interest for you. A frosty customer is more difficult to assess, and that makes prices tumble. And do not ask awkward questions about guarantees or serial numbers.

#### **Tarantel (Tarantula)**

Bar Archetype/36 Gömitzer Straße/Proprietor Unknown/LTG# 778 998 7.

Rumored to be the principal hangout for arms dealers from all over Europe, the Tarantel looks like a standard, neighborhood, medium-price bar. This bar's less dangerous amenities include good pop music and decent snack food. Sophisticated dress (jacket and tie) is a must.

>>>>[Quark. Tie. All you need is an idea. I got in by nibbling on the decorations.]<<<<<<  
—Bumm (16:34:12/02-APR-54)

#### **Wolfsschanze (Wolf Lair)**

Bar Archetype/62 Tiefwerderweg/Klaus Kühnen. Proprietor/LTG# 344 456 79.

Anyone who favors recycling non-Berliners in general and all metahumans in particular for raw materials can find plenty of like-minded friends in this cellar bar named for Hitler's Berlin bunker. An ultra-right wing clientele gathers here to conspire over bowls of real Berlin meat and cabbage soup. Proprietor Kühnen is one of the Humanis head honchos, and his polclub guarantees the safety of the premises and customers. Prices, of course, reflect the cost incurred by this protection. Discussion groups form on some evenings, allowing participants to show off the new and fascinating ways they have found to rephrase their hatred and bigotry. On other nights, Wolfsschanze screens ancient propaganda movies, a thrill superseded only by the additional opportunity to pass around and gawk at "sacred relics" of the Humanis movement. People inclined to drop in should visit at a late hour when the intellectual level of conversation has reached rock bottom. Fitting in requires close-cropped hair and clipped sentences. Do not, under any circumstances, use subordinate clauses. Can't afford to sound too educated, mann. Not in this place.

### **NIGHT CLUBS**

#### **Helter Skelter**

Night Club Archetype/35 Rissenbeckstraße/Hauke Behrens, Proprietor/LTG# 552 556 57.

Frequent patrons of Helter Skelter need either top-quality dampers or enough cash to afford a fresh pair of cyberears every two weeks. The preferred hangout of deathcore trashers, the premises are supported by steel beams that keep the bass vibrations from ripping the place apart.

>>>>[It's so loud in there, and the smell of gunpowder is so strong, that you could fire a whole magazine without anyone on the far side of the room noticing. Better bring some friends in case trouble starts.]<<<<<<

—Fahrenheit (11:08:57/03-APR-54)

>>>>[There's a machine-gun nest in the ruins of the second floor, in case your friends aren't enough.]<<<<<<

—Bumm (16:52:01/05-APR-54)

#### **Metropolis**

Night Club Archetype/199 Willy-Brandt-Allee/Laura Parker, Proprietor/LTG# 252 252 25.

Runners may want to give the Metropolis a miss. Considered the in place for Berlin's in crowd, Metropolis hosts trideo and simsense stars, high-level corp execs and other members of "high snobiety" who gather for small-talk orgies over hyper-expensive, designer cocktails. A fair share of wannabes with too much cash and not enough pride regularly join the real hoi polloi. However, not just anyone can walk into this exclusive club. Well-built doormen, said to be unbribable, guard all entrances and exits of Metropolis, and most clientele travel with the usual train of loyal sycophants and bodyguards.

>>>>[Lemme tell ya about those well-built doormen. Some chums and me needed to have a little talk with a corpboy spending some time inside there once. . . an urgent kinda talk, you scan? By the time we got through with 'em, those doormen didn't look so well built no more. You really want in, you can get in!]<<<<<<

—Kamikaze Joe (21:45:33/19-AUG-54)

#### **Mörlin**

Night Club Archetype/216 Kurfürstendamm/Jean Girood, Proprietor/LTG# 677 666 54.

In this unique nightclub, Maddin the Magician shows off his magic tricks to entertain the champagne-sipping customers, assisted by various enthusiastic newcomers. Maddin's color-and-light show is unsurpassed, and he has a tremendous gift for making the audience feel like part of the show. His experienced hand can quickly turn a simple champagne flute held by an unsuspecting customer into a glass of blood-red water fizzing with luminous, green bubbles, followed by a metamorphosis into a blue, sand-crystal decanter that suddenly blows apart in a silent but colorful explosion. (Audience members subjected to this trick receive a fresh drink, compliments of the house.) Maddin is an exceptionally skilled practitioner of the hermetic arts, but the other performers sometimes fail to meet his standards. More than one trick has gone wrong, to the delight of the customers who manage to stay out of harm's way. For example, one amateur magician turned half the women in the audience to female goats, much to the surprise of their dates. Other customers have found



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SCHWARTZ  
WALD  
TOURS



Artwork by Michael Weaver

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themselves victims of internal metamorphoses, some of them quite unpleasant. Small keepsakes the Mörlin has accidentally given its customers include knotted intestines, small balls of glass lodged inside the lungs, and a shot glass inside the liver. Prudent spectators always leave after Maddin's show. The key thing to remember is to never draw the attention of an inexperienced mage by clapping too loudly. He may interpret it as encouragement to try an especially daring spell, with potentially appalling consequences.

#### **U-Bahn (Subway)**

Bar Archetype/46 Kurfürstendamm/Joslyn Hanks, Proprietor/LTG# 443 967 54.

A good place to meet insiders with good info and connections, this garish bar and sometime nightclub plays loud psychospeed and gives subway jockeys a place to play. Two subway-car simulators let newbies train for subway surfing without risking their lives. Experienced jockeys like to thrill the crowd by trying out new tricks.

>>>>[Insiders? Mann, that dive degenerated into a tourist attraction half a century ago and never recovered. Forget it.]<<<<<<

—Opa Kurt (16:19:36/02-APR-54)

#### **TOURIST ATTRACTIONS**

##### **Berliner Rat (Berlin Council)**

Platz der Republik/LTG# 100 100 99.

Once the pivot of city politics, the Berliner Rat building remains a showcase of sorts for Berlin's anarchist pseudo-government. Located in the turbulent and dangerous city center, the Berliner Rat rises above the spot once occupied by the Palast der Republik, parliament building of the former East Germany. The old building was razed in the riot of 2032, along with the Reichstag. The newer building belongs to the modern, somewhat dull, technological school of architecture common to the first part of the 21st century. Much more interesting than its bland exterior are the often heated discussions that go on inside the gigantic Saal der Anarchie (Anarchy Hall). The atmosphere in the hall is as unique as the city itself.

##### **Berlin University**

Victoriaplatz (Kreuzberg)/LTG# 100 110 01.

After the violent confrontations between students and city government ended in triumph for anarchy, no one bothered to rebuild any of Berlin's three universities, all damaged in the struggle. Instead, the NAP and other prominent anarchist groups constructed Berlin University on Victoriaplatz in the Kreuzberg quarter, building the new institution around the existing buildings of Schult heiß Brewery. Open to students of any age or educational experience, the university offers courses in an almost

endless variety of subjects. Each class becomes part of the curriculum as soon as each course's self-proclaimed teacher gathers at least four students. To earn a diploma from Berlin University, a student must study a subject for at least four semesters. As interest in any given subject fluctuates wildly on both sides of the lectern, few subjects remain in vogue long enough to reach diploma level.

>>>>[Then again, you can buy an excellent forgery of any kind of diploma in any bar near the campus. Me, I'm a certified landlord-mage-cook-chemist-business administrator-electrician. . .]<<<<<<

—King-Jones (11:09:18/22-JUN-54)

Though its students rarely graduate, Berlin University is famous throughout Germany and the world for the tremendous creativity that practically oozes from its campus. At Berlin University, anything goes. For example, if a magic student wants to try summoning a dragon, his teacher usually encourages his efforts.

>>>>[Too bad that the dragon never appears. Instead, try to explain to your parents that the girl with seven breasts refuses to leave your side because your thoughts strayed at the worst possible moment. When she claims you made her what she is today, do people understand that she's not using a metaphor?]<<<<<<

—Olivus Lenzus (23:18:51/18-JUN-53)

Many risky but effective magical techniques originated at the university and were later copied by magicians around the world. The field of computer technology boasts similar accomplishments, including breakthrough simsense techniques hacked up for exams and life-threatening Matrix excursions that tested experimental decking styles.

>>>>[That bum Akbär programmed my deck solid and left me hanging inside the Matrix. I've been here for years. Those fraggin' bone merchants on the medical faculty have long since carved up my body for monkey chow to feed the campus chimp. If Akbär jacks into the Matrix just once, I'll shred his icon. And all because Hasenula loves me and not him. Not that it matters anymore.]<<<<<<

—Ingo-Dingo (19:45:45/16-JUN-54)

>>>>[Piss off, you old cyber zombie, and quit whining.]<<<<<<

—Akbär (23:09:31/19-JUN-54)

>>>>[Gotcha!]<<<<<<

—Ingo-Dingo (09:38:21/20-JUN-54)

The best deckers money can buy usually begin their careers at the university by taking decks apart and putting them back together. Older deckers teach their tricks of the

trade to the kleiner, and anyone caught snooping on someone else's tutorial gets his comeuppance in the Matrix. According to the most reliable sources available, no university-trained decker has ever taken corp employment. As might be expected, these exceptional console cowboys prefer the high pay and high excitement of shadowrunning.

From a tourist's point of view, the university's unique buildings, designed by architect Alfred von Josten-Schlenck, are well worth a look. A descendant of the famous Berlin architect Schinkel, Josten-Schlenck tried to combine the feel of H. P. Lovecraft's stories with the optical illusions of M. C. Escher's art. The architect succeeded. Not a single line in any of these structures is straight, and the sum of the angles does not add up to the values of conventional geometry. One can go down a stairway and end up upstairs, or look out a window and see one's own back. These bizarre effects drive many a visitor insane. The university generally takes advantage of this occurrence by installing the unfortunate loonies as caretakers for the chimpanzee. The administration also uses these incapacitated visitors as a cheap source of subjects for minor, mostly harmless experimentation, receiving families' permission by representing the experiments as therapy.

#### **Deutsche Oper (German Opera House)**

10 Richard-Wagner-Straße/Markus Kämper, Manager/LTG# 341 024 99.

Before the dawn of anarchy, gentlemen in dinner jackets and ladies in exquisite ball gowns filled the opera house and promenaded on its grounds. Performances in those days featured both classical and modern music expertly executed by the premier artists of the age, always enthusiastically reviewed in the daily papers. During the privatization orgy in anarchy's first days, media giant DeMeKo bought the opera house and now uses it to stage the gala known as the Bazaar of the Bizarre. For four hours every evening, famous master of ceremonies Max Rieddorf presides over the Deutsche Opera presentation of the most grotesque, perverted sideshow known to man. The famous-names mud-wrestling match highlights every show. In this event, top megacorp managers and execs battle each other in living slime specially created for the Bazaar by Schering PharmaAG. The first contestant to throw his opponent down on his back and feed him a kilo of mud wins a night with Olga Schwarz, Berlin's most famous lingerie model.

>>>>[Rumor has it that Olga chooses her lovers herself. The mud is said to be intelligent as well as alive, making it more than just the contestants' business who wins the match.]<<<<<

—Max-Max (21:49:48/17-JUN-54)

>>>>[All it takes is one kick in the privates. Even a perverted, creeping slime can't change the winner of that match. Have at it; Olga's mine tonight.]<<<<<

—Kiffing John (01:06:49/02-JUL-54)

The second most popular event is exchange night, which always begins by Max Rieddorf strolling to center stage and offering a fabulous prize for the audience-voted most bizarre act performed by an audience member. This event rotates nights throughout the week, and the audience only knows they have hit the jackpot when Max begins the evening with, "I've got a beautiful, functioning Fuchi cyberdeck valued at 250,000 deutsche marks to give away tonight. What bizarre act would you perform to get it?" The audience helps choose the three wildest suggestions, and the selected contestants perform in front of cameras that broadcast their efforts around the globe.

>>>>[One guy offered to swallow alive all pets in the audience and excrete them again, still alive, at the end of the show. He got three hamsters, a parakeet, four dachshunds, and a full-grown thortail. The guy managed to "return" all the pets alive, but the thortail nearly shredded the chummer's intestines in the process.]<<<<<

—Slim Jim (18:19:45/02-JUL-54)

The weekly freak show holds a firm third place in box-office hits. This event is open to anyone willing and able to perform a sufficiently unwholesome act. The best two of each night's twenty performers reach the finale, when they each select five members of the audience with whom to produce a living sculpture appropriate to the evening's theme. The winner gets the incredible amount of DM 200,000; the winning sculpture is covered in dry ice and left on display until the next freak show finale. As soon as the new sculpture is chosen, the previous creation is thawed out, untangled, and hopefully, resuscitated.

>>>>[I remember one unbelievable sculpture where no one could tell what body part belonged to whom. Bodies got twisted at impossible angles, and the three-legged freak who built it just stood next to it grinning like a maniac, knowing full well that no one, and I mean NO ONE, could disentangle its component parts. When they thawed out the sculpture two weeks later, I was proved right. An uncle of mine was part of that experiment, and he's had three cyberlimbs ever since.]<<<<<

—Kerrunch! (11:09:39/23-MAY-54)

Seats at the opera mostly belong to season ticket holders, though sell-backs occasionally show up on the shadowmarket. Only people who know the right people even find out about these few tickets. Tourists who can swing it will definitely find a visit worthwhile; no other city on earth offers a spectacle quite like it. Avoid sitting in the

front five rows, because most audience participants are chosen from those seats. No cameras are allowed inside the opera house; dress is optional, and pets are welcome.

### Shadowmarket

Friedrichstraße (usually)/LTC# unavailable.

Anyone staying in Berlin without visiting the shadowmarket cannot really claim to have visited the city at all. The best place to look for the shadowmarket is Friedrichstraße, though it sometimes shows up elsewhere. The area it usually occupies on Friedrichstraße was once a flea and art market, over time transmuting into the shadowmarket. Covering five square kilometers with a wildly varied mix of stalls, tents, lean-tos, and caravans, the shadowmarket is the place for anyone wanting to sell something fast in Berlin. Customers can find any kind of merchandise: information, cyberware, tickets to the opera house, chips, exotic liquors, talismans, unique simsense sleaze programs, and so on. Want to buy TelTech's security layout? The Humanis policlub membership roll? A holochip of the latest Slippery orgy starring Darci Lords III and Big Jim Him? Berlin's shadowmarket offers these things and more, especially those items considered illegal or subject to confiscation in other Länder.

Making a systematic trip through the market to find any one item is virtually impossible. Once into its warren-like aisles, only luck or an exact knowledge of his position allows a strolling shopper to find a way out. The lanes between the stalls twist and split repeatedly, and stalls shift position a number of times during the evening. On weekends, the market's busiest time, shoppers rarely need to walk; they just flow with the masses. Visitors to the market should keep close tabs on their wallets and other valuables at all times. Try to avoid being drawn into arguments—many visitors who involve themselves in disputes or scuffles end up in the gutter with a knife buried in their backs.

Imaginative stall displays make profligate use of magic, and customers should remember that anything that can be seen or touched is most likely worthless. Interested buyers should ask in a forthright but courteous manner to see the merchant's best wares, which every merchant can produce. Settle down with a decent cup of tea, look at everything offered, and prepare to drive a hard bargain.

Once a customer decides to make a purchase, the haggling begins. A merchant often digs deep into his bag of sales tricks to get the price he wants. For example, he may claim that the too-expensive opera tickets will only end up in the dustbin if the customer cannot meet his price, or even fake a heart attack. The buyer looking to negotiate a decent deal should show no interest in the merchant's falling health or complicated family situation, and try to ignore the razor nudging his earlobe if the haggling gets sticky. With luck, the buyer and seller will reach an agreement before either makes a fatal mistake.

>>>>[What's the point of all those effing stupid hints? Those blockhead tourists are at our mercy anyway, and we do them for whatever we feel like. We get their money, anyway. Either they give it up of their own accord, or we take it.]<<<<<

—Beppo Fürchtegott IV (07:22:29/18-JUN-54)

Though owned by no one, the shadowmarket is not available to everyone. Like Berlin itself, the market operates under a complex set of unwritten, unofficial rules. Anyone making trouble finds out the hard way about the protectors the merchants pay to provide security. These muscle men rarely make an appearance because a quick knife brings most arguments to a swift end. The faces of those who sell there change as frequently as the city's radio stations, but the shadowmarket itself remains the same.

>>>>[Nice promo—thanks. For the latest in hardcore simsense, come and see Lissa. Flicks for the demanding customer who wants a totally real feel.]<<<<<

—Lissa (23:49:48/21-JUN-54)

### The Slippery

112 Kurfürstendamm/Maritta Olgowski, Proprietor/  
LTC# 666 666 66.

The Slippery grew out of Sexyland, one of Berlin's biggest peep shows and sex shops. Its doors open for one hour every evening, then close until early the next morning. In the interim, this establishment offers the most decadent sex show on earth, including banned simsense screenings, live orgies, and a variety of shows starring dwarfs, elves, orks, and other metahumans.

In exchange for enough deutsche marks, a visitor with a taste for adventure can enjoy the fully synthetic miracle partners of the famous mage Bernd U. Satisfied customers swear that Bernd's creations make an encounter with any living woman, man, ork, or other race pale by comparison. Those who run out of money before the Slippery opens its doors again can rent themselves out to the management, but must then endure other customers' wildest desires. Many wealthy citizens visit again and again, specifically to enjoy this particular rule from both sides.

>>>>[OK, call me boring and mundane, but I think the Germans were pulling both legs with some of those entries. Cannibalism? Come on!]<<<<<

—Rico (03:20:28/12-16-54)

>>>>[Why don't you head on over and check it out, Rico? File a book report or something.]<<<<<

—Uncle Creepy (04:29:17/12-16-54)

# GERMAN MAGIC

**S**hamanism? That is a purely American phenomenon!

—Berthold Vlsser, Dean, Department of Thaumaturgy, Cologne University

The first people to practice magic in Germany after the Awakening belonged to such so-called "marginal" groups as neo-pagans, feminists, metahumans, and national minorities such as Serbs, Sinti, and Roma. The latter two groups especially, known and persecuted for centuries as gypsies, saw magic as their first real chance to effectively combat increasingly hostile German officialdom. The military government that ruled Germany from 2009 to 2014 repeatedly tried to force the few remaining Sinti and Roma bands to settle in shantytowns created for that purpose, ostensibly to preserve public order. When a few Roma tribes used witchcraft to force entry into the Berlin government quarter to present a petition demanding an end to forced resettlement, this first public use of magic opened the puppet-Senate to such public ridicule that its downfall became inevitable.

Like the Roma, female adherents of various feminist and ecological movements initially devoted considerable energy to nature magic. However, this brief flowering of nature-related magic ended in 2028, when Heidelberg University became the first German university to establish a hermetic discipline. In the minds of most modern-day Germans, magic means hermetic magic. This orderly discipline uses formulas, graphs, and figures, techniques that the ever-methodical Germans seemed to take to like fish to water. Not surprisingly, German universities offering thaumaturgical studies are among the best in the world.

>>>>[Natural magic is not absent from Germany; it has simply become less important. Most Germans think of hermetic magic as the principal accepted form of magic, and natural magic such as shamanism, druidism, witchcraft, and so on as second-rate and of questionable validity. This attitude does not reflect reality, but is merely a public prejudice.]<<<<<

—Initiate of Hern (09:20:10/09-JUL-54)



## HERMETIC MAGIC

After the Czech Republic, the German Alliance offers the world's best training and research in hermetic magic. Scholars such as Albertus Magnus, Paracelsus, and Agrippa von Nettesheim kept magical teachings alive during the ages before the Awakening, and institutes such as the New Erfurt University, Heidelberg University, and the Langenzell Institute for Thaumaturgical Studies (LIFTS) provide splendid opportunities for modern-day thaumaturgical research.

## TRAINING

Even in this Awakened age, true mages remain scarce within the German Alliance.

Anxious not to waste a single one of their few magical resources, the Länder governments require their school boards to screen all children for magical aptitude at puberty, when magical gifts tend to first appear. In the Länder of Thuringia, Brandenburg, and Westphalia, all children also undergo monthly aura checks to determine magic potential. If a child shows any signs of magical talent, parents can expect a deluge of talent scouts eager to tender offers to educate the child. In addition to the public magic schools, at least eight corp-owned boarding schools offer special programs to entice magically talented youngsters.

This thorough examination of all children ensures that few with magical talent remain unexploited. Even lesser talents are trained, giving the German Alliance the world's highest percentage per capita of magical adepts. Magically gifted children whose parents are members of a nature cult frequently become the subject of conflicts about care and custody; despite growing acceptance of the so-called Weise ("wise"), authorities in certain Länder and in the megacorporations greatly prefer to send these children to hermetic boarding schools so that their powers are not "wasted" on nature magic. Boarding-school education almost invariably leads these children to university and a career in research; only a few mages escape university and then corporate control. The corps support most university magic programs with substantial monetary grants, and so the universities tend to dance to the corporate tune.

Even those who lack talent for its practice can study the theoretical side of magic. At Gymnasien (high schools) in Thuringia, students may choose magical theory as a subject for their final exams even if they lack the faintest shred of magical ability.

**HERMETIC UNIVERSITIES**

Beginning with Heidelberg University in 2028, Germany's older, established universities first founded departments of thaumaturgy. The pioneering Heidelberg University paved the way for the colleges of Göttingen, Tübingen, Marburg, Cologne, and Berlin. Younger universities followed suit in the 2030s, and after the Euro-Wars established the Fachhochschulen (professional schools), a third wave of magical studies programs. These schools offer thaumaturgy courses oriented toward practical applications.

An academic degree from any university, particularly the most prestigious institutions, gives its bearer much-sought-after social recognition in Germany. In 2036, the Alliance government established the system of academic grades currently used throughout the German Länder to include recognition of magical academics.

A "Dr. Mag. Herm." often abbreviated to "Dr. Mag.," denotes a scholar of hermetic magic. The New Erfurt University also grants the title of "Dr. Utr. Mag.," meaning "doctor of magical theory," denoting a scholar of both hermetic and shamanic magical theory. In addition to these degrees, there exist countless magister and bachelor grades, most of which refer to theory rather than practical mastery of magic.

>>>>[Quite correct. To earn a "Bac. Mag." from, say, Auersbach, one need only be able to tell a fireball from a soccer ball and know why one should not kick the former. . .]<<<<<<

—Prof. M. (21:15:23/21-JUL-54)

The "Dipl. Mag." certificates given by many Fachhochschulen, on the other hand, guarantee that the bearer possesses solid practical skills.

Not counting the few corporate-owned research establishments, the German Alliance today contains 67 departments of magic within 46 universities and 21 Fachhochschulen. The institutions best known throughout the Alliance for the quality of their programs and/or research are listed under **Magical Sites**, pp. 139-147 of this section.

**Corps Astralla Jenense**

Formed in 2029 as part of the Allgemeine Deutsche Burschenschaft (General German Student Society) at Schiller University in the town of Jena, this fraternity continues the centuries-old tradition of student societies. As of 2054, 26 chapters exist at various universities throughout the German Alliance.

**Type:** Initiatory  
**Members:** 380 (approx.)  
**Limitations:** Male hermetic mages only.  
**Strictures:** Belief (see Customs, below). Fraternity. Obedience (to chapter superiors and alumni).  
**Resources/Dues:** High level. Equipment available to chapter members at participating universities is generally good to excellent, despite relatively low dues of 20 to 60 ecus per month. All members are honor bound to support the fraternity with large grants once they finish their studies and land a paying position.  
**Patron:** Any members of the society's alumni who hold influential positions in research and industry. Many alumni occupy such positions; so many, in fact, that some people have hinted at a relationship between the Corps and the Illuminati.  
**Customs:** Members hold an anachronistic view of the world centered on proof of masculinity, romanticism, vague nationalism, and excessive beer consumption. Higher-level initiations often require ritual duels. The scars left by these fights are considered marks of honor; some chapters have a ranking system based on the number and location of facial scars.

**RESEARCH**

Unlike America and Japan, Germany supports very few large, corporation-owned research institutes. Within the German Alliance, most research is still performed at public universities.

>>>>[Which are heavily funded by the corps. For example, four-fifths of Heidelberg University's budget comes from AG Chemie.]<<<<<<

—Prof. M. (04:09:22/13-JAN-54)

The exception to this rule are the institutions established by foreign corporations. Aztechnology has magical research laboratories in the Bavarian Alps, in Thuringia, and near Heidelberg. Though rumors frequently surface of

top-secret magic labs run by other corporations and devoted to combat spell research, no reliable information exists on this subject.

### Alchemy

Alchemy and its related fields form the main thrust of German magical research. Both because of their close relation to the physical sciences and their enormous practical value, the enchanting and other use of magical materials and artifacts holds a secure position at the top of thaumaturgical research. Currently, Heidelberg and Cologne Universities devote the most time and effort toward researching the scientific approach to such magical phenomena.

>>>>[Supposedly because of a lack of space, the alchemical departments of both universities recently moved to AG Chemie's client cities of Leverkusen and Mannheim, respectively. Coincidence? I think not.]<<<<<<  
—Prof. M. (08:55:31/31-MAR-54)

Alchemical research is concentrated in two areas: conversion of base metals into gold, and the magical processes involved in enchanting foci. In the latest attempts to solve alchemy's most famous puzzle, innumerable mages are testing ancient recipes for transforming base material into gold, hoping to find a working formula. The frustrating lack of results so far has prompted many large research departments to shift their priorities toward foci; many of those still looking for the alchemical gold formula are amateur occultists laboring in backyard labs.

Research into enchanting foci poses a special problem for the corporate sponsors of most university labs. Virtually all foci and fetishes only aid the use of magic, effectively limiting the market for these products to magically active consumers, most of whom currently or will work for the corporations. A real market breakthrough requires researchers to discover substances that can be used by the vast majority of consumers who lack magical abilities.

## NATURE MAGIC

Though similar in many ways to the American shamanic tradition, German nature magic incorporates a number of elements that make it unique. The two traditions share a common concern for the spiritual development of (meta)humanity and its relationship to nature, regarding such questions as more important than the complex theories and abstract principles beloved of the hermetic tradition. The traditionally close association between nature magic and certain political movements and ancient religions makes nature magic less accepted than hermetic disciplines in Germany; according to an INFAS poll conducted in 2050, 78 percent of Germans regard hermetic magic as respectable, but only 29 percent have the same respect for nature magic.

The largest groups of those who practice nature magic include the Hexen (witches) and Weise ("wise"). These women and men were among the first to recognize and use the newly Awakened magic. Various circles of magically active metahumans, a few pagan-nationalist groups, and the magically gifted members of the Sinti and Roma tribes round out Germany's collection of nature-magic practitioners. The magical practices of the Sinti and Roma lie the closest to traditional shamanism.

### IDOLS

The majority of German nature magicians practice their craft with the help of entities they call idols, virtually identical in behavior and nature to American shamanic totems. Most Germans, however, see idols as very different from totems, generally considering animal spirits secondary to the humanistic imagery of the idols. Many German nature magicians regard the idols as actual gods, best served by the erection of a temple and establishment of a cult following; "wise folk" that come from a vaguely Christian tradition prefer to call these spirits saints or guardian angels. The few animal totems followed by German magicians reflect creatures native to the German countryside. For example, Coyote has no followers in Germany; the German totem closest in nature to Coyote is Fox.

>>>>[Gods? That nature stuff some kinda church, with priests and such?]<<<<<<  
—Manfred (09:12:31/23-MAY-54)

>>>>[Not quite. Some see their chosen idol as the manifestation of an idea rather than a deity. By the way, no proof exists that a so-called "god" has ever influenced the real world.]<<<<<<  
—Prof. M. (10:00:00/23-MAY-54)

>>>>[There is little point to arguing theology in these files, so I will not bother to bore or insult the readers by doing so. Suffice it to say that the beliefs (or lack thereof) expressed in these files reflects the minority opinion of German and world society. Regardless of what these writers would have you think, people still believe. Their faiths take many forms and directions, and each spiritual path is as valid as any other. Does "God" exist? Yes, in many and varied ways. It takes only a clear mind and pure spirit to see proof of His existence all around us.]<<<<<<  
—Penetant (20:28:27/19-JUL-54)

Each idol is associated with a classical deity, and is represented by a variety of names, symbols, and legends in various cultures. Gender is a much less significant feature than it appears; the male and female forms given for the idols listed below refer to the gender assigned to each idol by the majority of European nature mages. The gender assigned to an idol does not affect the magic of the person who follows it.

>>>>[Sometimes gender depends on language. Most European cultures, certainly the Roman and Greek traditions, see the sun as male and the moon as female; their languages, if they include grammatical genders, reflects this viewpoint. German tradition, by contrast, sees the sun as female and the moon as male; therefore, the sun is "die" Sonne (feminine) and the moon is "der" Mond (masculine). Interestingly, though, most nature mages conform to the opposite, classical interpretation.]<<<<<<  
—Prof. M. (11:21:09/15-JUN-54)

#### **Creator (Der Schöpfer)**

The artisan of the gods, the Creator shuns the splendor of his brethren, preferring instead to tinker with his own creations. Though this idol did not create the world, he did create many of its treasures. Even more than his finished handiwork, the Creator loves what has yet to be created. His mind is so full of plans and ideas that deceit and intrigue have no place there; the many legends that tell of the Creator being tricked by more cunning gods reflect his dreamer's good nature. He does, however, learn from experience.

Embodiments of the Creator include Wayland the smith, the classical deity Hephaistos/Vulcan, and numerous dwarf deities from legend and fantasy literature.

#### **Dragonslayer (Der Drachentöter)**

This most heroic of the gods also loves fun the most. Though he fights joyously to protect his own against all dangers, even more than combat he loves a party. His followers see him as a big brother who takes a friendly interest in every aspect of their lives. Like any young boy, he is open, friendly, and occasionally naive; a staunch friend, he makes a dangerous opponent. The dragons that he slays have changed with the times; rather than attacking the dracoforms of legend, the Dragonslayer now fights such modern-day "dragons" as crime, pollution, and corruption.

Embodiments of the Dragonslayer include Thor of Norse myth, the classical hero Herakles/Hercules, and St. George of British tradition.

#### **Great Mother (Die Grosse Mutter)**

The Great Mother represents life-giving nature in its purest form; she gives her bounty freely to all who have need. The farmer, the fisherman, and all others who make a living from nature's offering feel an affinity for this idol. Those who mistake her generosity for weakness, however, invite upon themselves a world of trouble. Like any mother, she fights to death and beyond for endangered children.

The Great Mother's followers are healers, both of the body and the troubled psyche; their devotion to their idol requires that they aid and succor anyone in need. Short of begging themselves, they will share their possessions with their friends.

Typical embodiments of the Great Mother include the earth and fertility goddesses of all times and cultures.

Gaea or Gaia remains a particularly popular name for this powerful idol.

#### **Horned God (Der Gehörnte)**

The embodiment of procreative power and energy, the Horned God is the unfettered lord of the wild. Ancient and animalistic, he is ruled more by instinct than intellect. Physical action and sensation shapes his world, which includes enthusiastic brawling and lewd behavior. Of all idols, he is the most traditionally masculine, and attracts male-dominated groups; his followers tend toward classic definitions of machismo and prefer action to patience. Many followers of the Horned God run the shadows for the dangers of the lifestyle and the chance to display their strength. These nature magicians appear friendly and reliable, if somewhat overpowering; they tend to pay extravagant attention to the opposite sex, often more than is strictly wise.

Among the Horned God's best-known names are Pan, Cernunnos, and Eichenfürst (Lord of Oaks). Without doubt, this idol inspired the horned devil of the Christian tradition.

#### **Moon Maiden (Die Mondin)**

The Moon Maiden, goddess of the night sky, symbolizes all the aspects traditionally ascribed to femininity. Moody, changeable, emotional, mysterious, other times gentle and pleasant, sometimes wild and uninhibited, Moon Maiden exists as one with nature. Her realm encompasses all the world: the sky she illuminates, the fertile ground, and the water whose tides she controls. The Moon Maiden's followers draw on these almost clichéd aspects of femininity as sources of ancient, potent power; for them, the Moon Maiden represents the ultimate superiority of woman's gentle and nurturing nature over man's destructive impulses. Not surprisingly, male followers of the Moon Maiden are rare. Many established moon goddesses exist; the Roman Diana is by far the current favorite name for the Moon Maiden.

#### **Wild Huntsman (Der Wilde Jäger)**

An outsider among the idols, the Wild Huntsman roams the world consumed by rage, followed by his enraptured entourage. He constantly walks the thin line between sanity and madness, but his frenzy hides an intimate knowledge of the universe's sacred mysteries. As the idol who gave mankind the intoxicating Cup of Knowledge, the Wild Huntsman is the patron of numerous secret, esoteric cults.

Typical embodiments of this idol include the Norse Odin, the Greek/Roman Dionysus/Bacchus, and so on.

#### **ADEPTS**

As is true in the shamanistic discipline, certain human and metahuman practitioners of nature magic cannot wholeheartedly commit themselves to their magical art. The equivalent of American-style shamanic adepts, such persons are known as adepts of their idol.

>>>>[Keep that in mind, folks. An adept of the Great Mother is called that because she has attached herself to a single aspect of the Deity, not because she has received consecration. She is not a priestess, or anything like one, and is usually far less proficient in ritual than others of the Weise.]<<<<<

—Gundel Gaukeley (00:05:44/05-APR-54)

Because the adept lacks any other magical experience apart from his or her connection to the idol, the adept can only learn certain magic associated specifically with that idol. For example, an adept of the Horned God can use combat spells and conjure Spirits of the Land, only because the Horned God has a specific affinity for such magical activities.

### DRUIDS

Though considerably fewer in number than their brethren in other lands, druids of both shamanic and hermetic leanings practice their craft in Germany. Druids are among the few German magicians who follow totems rather than idols. Both groups model themselves on their British counterparts in terms of the totems they follow, the regalia they wear, and the intrigues they sponsor. In spite of their similarities, however, the German shamanic and hermetic druids rarely get along.

### PATH MAGIC

A whirlwind of rumors has surrounded the elves of Pomorya in the wake of the recent revelations about the path magic practiced by the elves of Tir na nÓg. Though the Duchy of Pomorya has proven connections to the Tir, no other facts about their relationship can be pinned down. All speculation on that relationship has been edited from these files for lack of evidence.

>>>>[Really? How interesting. I wonder why such musings were exorcised, so to speak.]<<<<<

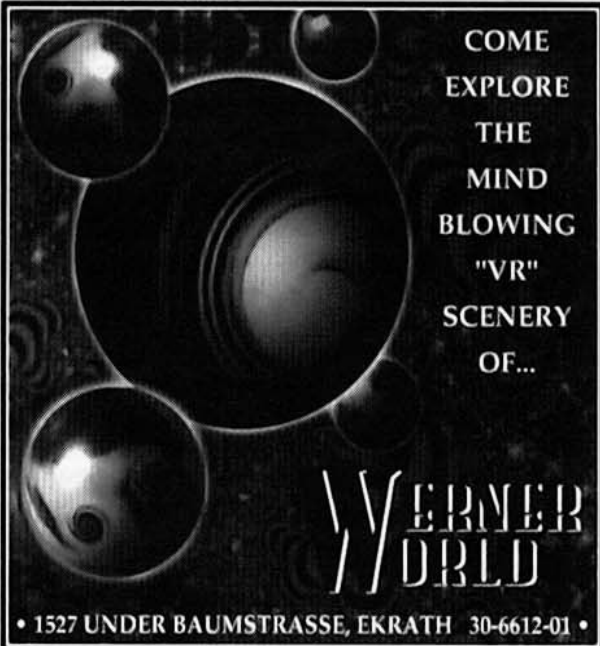
—Go Figure (02:17:51/20-NOV-54)

### BRANCHES OF NATURE MAGIC

The following groupings represent Germany's major practitioners of nature magic.

#### Witchcraft (Hexenwesen)

Germany's tradition of witchcraft, or hexenwesen, dates back to ancient times. Even in antiquity, people knew and feared the magic of the striga or maleficia. Contrary to popular belief, however, belief in the existence of witches was considered heresy by the Church during the Middle Ages. The ghastly witch hunts that caused the death of innumerable women and men through superstition and denunciation to serve ulterior motives only began with the dawn of modern times. Latter-day interpretations of witch hunts include a clerical hatred of women, a deliberate, methodical attempt to eliminate midwives knowledgeable in herbal lore (including birth control), and an attempt to eradicate hidden cults dedi-



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cated to the old gods of nature. The latter especially became the focus of unreasoning hatred around the middle of the 20th century, less because social scientists identified them than because many among the Weise dared to go public before the Awakening.

The blossoming of witchcraft around the turn of the 20th century began in Britain and the United States in the 1960s, when feminist and ecological movements discovered and espoused the ancient, esoteric nature worship. Practitioners of what they called "Wicca, the Craft of the Wise" such as Gerald Gardner, Doreen Sanders, and Starhawk paved the way for the witchcraft explosion during the last years of the 20th century and the first of the 21st.

>>>>[Those witches started rumors about real magic even then, more than a decade before the "official" return of magic to the world.]<<<<<

—Prof. M. (22:05:11/27-SEP-54)

The term Wicca is derived from the Anglo-Saxon "wicce," or witch; native German groups as well as those in America used it originally because the native term "hexe" carried too many negative connotations. The American Wicca movement, based primarily on European myth, declined with the rise of Native American power. The formation of the Native American nations made many magical sites inaccessible to Anglos, because they lay within NAN territory, and the rise of shamanism lured away many Wiccan devotees.

These days, only a few Wiccan groups still practice in North America, most of them in the California Free State. In North Germany, the witchcraft movement produced nature magic's most prominent practitioners; even men and women who had considered magic sheer fantasy or escapism before the Awakening willingly looked to witch-

craft in an attempt to understand their radically changed environment. The publicity generated by Native American shamanism led to sudden, brief popularity for such borrowed terms such as totem, medicine lodge, and others. Gradually, however, German nature magicians developed a tradition of their own, dropping most Native American terms and even replacing the name "Wicca" with the solidly German "Weise."

>>>>[I'd be more inclined to trust a witch who didn't style herself Magica de Spell, even in her German incarnation.]<<<<<

—Idle Savant (12:01:02/02-NOV-54)

The Weise almost always meet in covens, virtually autonomous groups of thirteen members. Despite this autonomy, however, Brocken Mountain in the Harz hills has become the primary focal point for German witchcraft. Aside from the Brocken, twelve additional sites in specific areas of Germany are used for powerful rituals. For certain rituals, the "guardians" of these thirteen sites form a High Coven, a gathering that the Weise consider the world's mightiest magical group. Interestingly, the Duke of Pomorya is a member of the High Coven.

For the Weise, the idols, their bonds to nature, form the central truth of existence. The Great Mother is the principal deity, often paired with the Horned God. Several groups especially venerate the Moon Maiden in the persona of Diana; of these groups, many espouse hostility toward men. These groups sometimes venerate idols usually considered male, such as the Dragonslayer or the Wild Huntsman, in female form. The beliefs of the Weise are as varied as those who hold them. For example, some Weise oppose what they term "submissive veneration" of idols as gods, and instead choose an animal totem. These magicians almost always choose Cat, Magpie, or Snake.

Most Weise view the idols as overlords rather than gods; among such people, worship of the deity more resembles an exuberant celebration than a subdued prayer meeting. Though ecologically conservative, most Weise grant the necessity of a responsible use of nature's resources, including the consumption of meat; the vegetarianism common to many Weise comes purely from personal preference, and is not magically significant.

Reusable fetishes preferred by the Weise include the ritual dagger known as the Athame, silver chalices, necklaces, bangles, and pieces of red string and cloth. Expendable fetishes include flammable mixtures such as incense, resins, or cannabis; consecrated salt; and small items made from such organic materials as wood, wax, and leather.

### Roma Magic

Though even in 2054 the gypsy's life is not an entirely happy one, the Awakening brought to the persecuted Sinti and Roma various ways to use magic against their tormentors. The first documented uses of the newly Awakened magic in Germany were recorded among the

wise women of several Roma tribes; in 2014, these women used magic spells to boldly walk into the headquarters of Germany's repressive military government. That single incident prompted most Germans to regard the Sinti and Roma with awe and even fear their power as magicians.

In actual fact, the Sinti possess no particular talent for magic. Native to Germany for centuries, the Sinti make up just 18 percent of the total gypsy population, and their magical profile shows no significant difference from that of Germans as a whole. Only the Roma, who came to Germany by way of Eastern Europe more recently, show a particular proclivity for magic. The troubles in the Balkans during the 1990s and the Euro-Wars of the 2030s sent a massive Roma population to Germany; as of 2054, roughly two million Roma live within the German Alliance.

Almost all Roma magic is shamanic and related to nature. Except for a few basic, general precepts, the Roma subscribe to no consistent world view; many Roma have Catholic or Orthodox Christian leanings, others have an Islamic bent, and a growing number seek to explore their people's Indian roots. However, almost all tribes see the Great Mother as the most important power. By whatever name the different tribes choose to call her, she is the idol of most Roma magicians. The Dragonslayer and the Wild Huntsman are the next most common.

Most Roma fetishes are nature-oriented, though they also use tarot cards to forecast the future. The city of Berlin is home to the Roma's most important institution, the Zentralrat (Central Council). The Roma maintain loose, but friendly connections to the Weise; nationalistic schools of magic such as the Runenthing treat them with open hostility. With the significant exceptions of Erfurt and Berlin universities, academia's magicians tend to ignore the Roma.

### Reformed-Orthodox Church of Awakening

The Reformiert-Orthodoxe Kirche Der Erweckung is an umbrella organization established in Berlin by a number of magical sects of Christian origin. Shamanic groups that developed from the Russian Orthodox Church wield major power in this organization; it also contains a few Protestant Free churches, as well as pseudo-Catholic movements such as the Meister-Eckhard-Bewegung.

All these groups share a mystical view of the world that believes mortals can reach a particular kind of holiness of which mundane power is a faint shadow through devotion, love of God, and the practice of certain rites. The faithful of these churches use common objects from worship services as fetishes, including such items as incense, holy water, altar candles, crucifixes, and other Christian-inspired icons.

Even though established churches despise and oppose the Reformed-Orthodox Church, growing numbers of converts from traditionally pious segments of the population are joining its ranks. This church provides devout Christians with the miracles they only heard about

before. So appealing is this experience that the governments of Bavaria, Saxony, and Westphalia, fearing a massive infusion of members into a group over which they have no control, have prohibited membership in the Reformed-Orthodox Church. This ban has failed to slow its growth. The church-owned cable station Die Stimme des Herrn (The Voice of God) propagates its gospel and features preachers from all churches. Needless to say, that particular cable channel is not available within Bavaria, Saxony, and Westphalia.

**Runething (Verband für Völkische Zauberei)**

The Runething, also called Association for National Sorcery (Verband für Völkische Zauberei), is a small but spectacular group of mages practicing a peculiar brand of shamanism. The word "thing" in Runething, pronounced ting, means "meeting" in old Norse; the group's idols reflect its veneration of the Norse heritage. Favored idols include Wotan the Wild Huntsman, Donar the Dragonslayer, and Froh, the Great Mother in a male incarnation. Some members also follow certain totems considered sufficiently Germanic, such as Eagle, Bear, and Wolf. Runething members aggressively "Germanize" all magical expressions; for example, they call astral space "Sternklarwelt," German for "Star Bright World."

Most Runething members combine patriarchal, nationalist views with a romanticized view of nature, leading some observers to name them eco-nationalists. The Runething has declared as its enemy all corporations pursuing environmentally harmful policies, invariably controlled by "foreign" headquarters; however, they also despise feminists, Christians, political liberals, and laissez-faire capitalists.

So far, the Runething avoids a governmental ban only because the majority of its followers vent their hatred verbally rather than physically. Some Runething members, however, appear to have been actively involved in recent attacks on their archenemy, the feminist secret society SIE, as well as against installations belonging to various Japanese corporations.

**Spökenkiekerel**

The Spökenkiekerel, or Spirit Watchers, play a role in traditional North German legends. As with many aspects of ancient tales of magic, what was traditionally accepted as fact came true after the Awakening; many "natives" of the German lowlands have proved remarkably sensitive to astral apparitions. However, such individuals do not show any talent for spellcasting, conjuring, or enchanting in any form. The power to see spirits is at least psychologically associated with the individual's eyes; if blinded, they lose the ability.

>>>>[How come? After all, you scan with your head, not your eyes!]<<<<<

—Mithrandir (12:54:31/31-MAR-54)

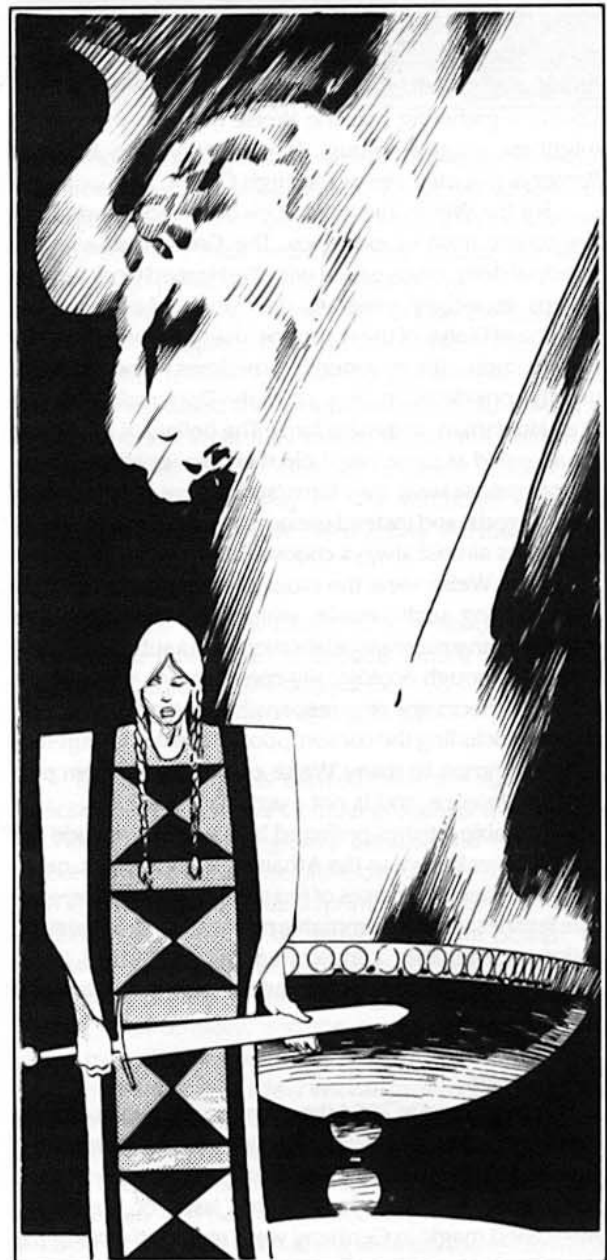
>>>>[Psychology; weren't you paying attention? If you "saw" the spirits before, you "know" you cannot do so with cybereyes. Therefore, you can't see them anymore because you believe you can't.]<<<<<

—Streetwizz (15:23:32/31-MAR-54)

Spökenkiekerel come exclusively from old North Germany, an area almost identical to the current states of the North German League, Brandenburg, and Westphalia. However, the Berlin and Hamburg sprawls negatively affect Spökenkiekerel, and few in those areas fulfill their potential as spirit watchers.

>>>>[Mind you, the general flight away from the coast means Spökenkiekers can be found all over Germany.]<<<<<

—Prof. M. (20:09:44/10-JUL-54)



## MAGICAL SITES

Though present everywhere in Germany, magic seems easier to perform, or perhaps just easier to perceive, at certain sites. Ancient cities, locales of legends and fairy tales, sites of worship belonging to ancient nature cults, and such recent installations as corporate and university sponsored centers for magical research are among Germany's most magically potent areas. Based on the latter two categories, it appears that the constant use of magic in a particular location imbues that location over time with ever-higher levels of background etheric energy. The following list of magically significant sites offers only a brief selection of the best-known areas. Many more likely exist, just as potent but less well known.

The entry for each magical site includes its location, accessibility, magic level, and background count. **Location** gives each site's Land, followed by the administrative district in which the site lies. **Accessibility** indicates the ease or difficulty of reaching the site, using the following codes:

- A:** Generally accessible. Some of these sites may be located in wilderness areas.
- B:** Open to tourists, usually for a fee; closed in the evening and sometimes on weekdays.
- C:** Restricted access. These sites are on private property, and visitors must have the owner's permission.
- CC:** Significantly restricted access. Most of these sites are on fenced-in or corp-owned private property.
- CCC:** Inaccessible. These sites are on guarded private or corp-owned property.

Within sites that cover entire settlements or large areas, particular buildings or zones within those areas may be more restricted than others or than the site as a whole.

>>>>>[I have taken the liberty of adding to that last category the following information. To wit, more than three Cs significantly increases the quality of the guards at "CCC" sites. For any listing with more than four Cs, definitely get permission to be there. Otherwise, have your priest give you whatever passes for Last Rites in your faith before you go.]<<<<<<

—Prof. M. (02:28:51/11-MAR-54)

**Magic** refers to each site's innate magical power. Most magical sites support magical activities requiring a specific level of magic; the higher the number given in this entry, the higher the innate magic level. Whenever these sites positively affect certain types of magic, such affinities are also noted. If a site does not have innate magical power, it does not have a magic level. This is true of many universities and research areas.

Finally, **Background Count** refers to the general level of ambient influences, magical or otherwise, that can affect or disrupt the etheric medium and thus affect all magical activity. This background count is especially

strong at the sites of highly emotional events or magical happenings, and also in polluted areas.

The writers of this file take no responsibility for the correctness of the data presented; unforeseeable magical or other events may change accessibility, magic level, and/or background count at any of the listed sites.

### DUCHY OF POMORYA

In contrast to the rest of the German Alliance, this semi-autonomous Baltic state stresses the value of nature magic over the hermetic tradition, supporting this view by resurrecting ancient, polytheistic cults and rebuilding temples and sacred groves. Today, most of Pomorya's elven and human inhabitants follow the local nature religion, whose high priests double as talented shamans.

#### Kap Arkona (Cape Arkona)

**Location:** Duchy of Pomorya, Saßnitz Crown Domain

**Accessibility:** CCC

**Maglc:** (3) for conjuring nature spirits

**Background Count:** 4 (Nature cult site)

In the extreme north of Rügen Island, the white cliffs of Kap Arkona rise above the Wittow peninsula. For a thousand years, this cape has been the site of a major temple of Svantevit. Among the pagan gods, this Slavic deity and cult defied the Christian influence the longest.

The modern-day temple, built by Pomoryan elves from living wood and named the Jaromarsburg in honor of their duke, also rises from a sacred grove. Most of Pomorya serves Svantevit, an incarnation of the Dragonslayer whose enemies are no longer monsters and demons, but the toxic spirits of the poisoned Baltic Sea.

Near Jaromarsburg lies a site sacred to the Great Mother, where shamans and nature mages from Pomorya and beyond gather every month to participate in a worship ritual conducted by Duke Jaromar.

#### Ernst-Mortz-Armdt University, Greifswald

**Location:** Duchy of Pomorya, County Greifswald

**Accessibility:** B

**Maglc:** Hermetic Library (8)

**Background Count:** 1 (Research institution)

An island of hermetic mages surrounded by a sea of nature magic, that department at Greifswald University owes its existence to its overlord, Count Kasimir Tyminski. Until the founding of Pomorya, the university did not even have a department of magic. But when the Polish hermetic mage Kasimir Tyminski became Greifswald's ruler he personally supported the establishment of a magic department and worked diligently to recover the many manuscripts dealing with magical themes that had been moved from Central Europe to Russia during the Euro-Wars. Siberia's metahuman population cooperated willingly in this effort, and Greifswald U. now boasts one of the best hermetic libraries in Europe.

>>>>[And has constant trouble with the original owners of the manuscripts to show for it.]<<<<<<  
 —Prof. M. (20:09:12/26-DEC-52)

**NORTH AND EAST GERMANY**

This section covers magical sites in the North German League, Brandenburg, Saxony, Berlin, and Hamburg. In general, these Länder regard magic in a positive light, usually supporting research rather than hindering it. Though most significant magical sites require an explanation for their power, some sites in north and east Germany possessed legendary importance before the Awakening. For these sites, listed at the end of this first geographical division, that importance simply shifted perspective.

**North Sea Shore**

- Location:** North German League, Kiel District
- Accessibility:** CC
- Maglc:** (2) for conjuring toxic sea spirits
- Background Count:** 5+ (Extreme pollution and heavy death toll after flash flood)

Formerly a productive agricultural area and tourist destination, the North Sea shore north of the new mouth of the Elbe River has become a toxic desert, where centimeters of poisonous sludge cover much of the ground. Lacking the funds to perform expensive revitalization, the district government simply fenced in the entire area and abandoned it.

The shore's few inhabitants include scavengers specially licensed by the government to plunder the ruins of Husum, Helde, and Itzehoe from their motorboats, as well as a few particularly stubborn Frisians clinging to the holms of Eiderstedt and Neu-Westerland. The Frisians consistently report sightings of a modern-day Schimmelreiter, a ghostly figure of German legend associated with cursed places. In 2054, the Schimmelreiter represents a demonic harbinger of doom, riding his pale horse across the stinking waves and poisoned fields on stormy nights, attacking everyone he meets. Among other things, the Frisians blame the Schimmelreiter for the destruction of a farm on the holm of Dithmarschen.

>>>>[Seems to be a malevolent storm spirit.]<<<<<<  
 —Roland von Bremen (11:24:29/09-AUG-54)

**Spreewald**

- Location:** Brandenburg, Cottbus District
- Accessibility:** A-C
- Maglc:** (2) for conjuring water and forest spirits, (1) for healing spells
- Background Count:** 3 (Nature cult sites)

Southeast of Berlin lies the scenic Spreewald, a wetland full of small brooks and islands that is sometimes called "rural Venice." Though government authorities once planned to drain the Spreewald and grow crops on the swampland, the Länder rezoning of 2014 and the Awakening forestalled the project. The rezoning returned control of the Spreewald to its Sorbic natives, east Germans

of Slavic descent who carefully restored it to its original green splendor. Today, the Spreewald, or Blota as the Sorbs call it, is once again a peaceful, apparently untouched landscape. Its inhabitants travel across it by boat or raft, and every island farm maintains its own quay. The major settlement of Ljubenow (Lübbenau), a small town famous for various Sorbic cultural institutions, serves as the entrance to the Spreewald. On the town's east side lies the ritual site of an ancient nature cult, a place considered holy by the Weise. Several similar, though somewhat less powerful sites can be found within the peaceful Spreewald's dense thicket of islands.

>>>>[It's not always so peaceful. During their main festivals, witches and sightseers arrive from all over Saxony, Brandenburg, and Berlin; some of them cause real chaos.]<<<<<<  
 —Prof. M. (13:09:31/28-DEC-52)

According to legend, the Spreewald is the realm of the Snake King, a mighty creature resembling a gigantic snake wearing a silver crown. Possession of the crown supposedly confers good luck and riches. Though this mythical creature has yet to make a physical appearance, the Sorb natives of the Spreewald include more Snake shamans than any other Central European people.

**Sachsenring of Verden**

- Location:** North German League, Bremen District
- Accessibility:** A
- Background Count:** 3 (Ritual site of Siegfriedbund/Runenthing)

According to tradition, the Frankish conqueror Charlemagne ordered 4,000 Saxons executed at Verden an der Aller because they refused to submit to Frankish missionaries. To honor the Saxon dead, Adolf Hitler's Third Reich erected a monument of 4,000 stones on the site in 1937. Built in the style of North German stone graves, the Nazis called it the Sachsenring (Saxon Ring).

With the fall of the Third Reich and its virulent form of German nationalism, the Sachsenring should have dwindled in significance to a minor embarrassment. Unfortunately, after the Awakening, a few nature magicians of a nationalistic bent chose this spot, either through ignorance or misguided patriotism, for a central cult site. The ceremonies and spells conducted and cast within the stone circle for the past forty-odd years have given the ring a certain magical potency, enough to make it noticeable in astral space.

>>>>[The real danger here lies with certain nutcases considering this place their property and trying to "protect" it against trespassers, even though the area is owned by the Land and should be freely accessible.]<<<<<<  
 —Streetwizz (01:44:12/04-AUG-54)

**Worpswede****Location:** North German League, Bremen District**Accessibility:** A–B**Magic:** (4) for conjuring toxic water spirits; no other conjurations possible**Background Count:** 5 (Severe pollution)

In contrast to most of Germany's magical sites, this small North German village does not belong to legend or host traditional cult activities. Before the Great Flood of 2011 swept over it, Worpswede's location at the borders of the idyllic, scenic Teufelsmoor (Devil's Moor) attracted countless artists. The village even gave its name to a specific school of painting.

>>>>[I'd like to know how that moor got its name.]<<<<<<  
—Infomaster (23:45:21/21-DEC-52)

>>>>[Believe me, you would change your desire once you looked into it. . .]<<<<<<  
—Roland von Bremen (23:54:05/21-MAR-54)

The flash flood of 2011 drove the poisonous waters of the North Sea all the way into the Teufelsmoor and blighted its former beauty. It remained a dreary place after the waters receded, but artists continued to come. As befitted the village's changed surroundings, these new artists styled themselves dark visionaries, composers of morbid hymns to decay, decadent hedonists, and spiritualists. This last group believed themselves gifted with the talents commonly ascribed to mediums, and were among the first to call themselves mages following the Awakening.

>>>>[Even though from a scientific point of view, they were all simply mentally or emotionally unstable dilettantes.]<<<<<<  
—Prof. M. (04:57:29/19-FEB-54)

>>>>[They still are, but they're dangerous fools.]<<<<<<  
—Streetwizz (05:04:34/19-FEB-54)

Following the acquisition of a simsense studio by the artists' group Schwarzer Zirkel Worpswede (Black Circle Worpswede), these artists' fantasies now reach a wide audience via simsense. Thanks to the Worpswede artists' notorious reputation and a significant percentage of the population with amazingly bad taste, certain in-circles have made a trend of using these chips, making them expensive items on both the black and gray markets.

**MINOR NORTHERN SITES**

The following four magical sites offer power to those who worship within their confines. Their magical potency derives from long use by faithful followers, rather than a single, remarkable event.

**Kloster Loccum (Loccum Cloister)****Location:** North German League, Hannover District**Accessibility:** B**Background Count:** 4 (Monastic community)**Hildesheim Cathedral****Location:** North German League, Hannover District**Accessibility:** A**Background Count:** 4 (Christian site)**Putlos****Location:** North German League, Lübeck District**Accessibility:** B**Background Count:** 4 (Nature cult site)**Ratzeburg Cathedral Island****Location:** North German League, Lübeck District**Accessibility:** A**Background Count:** 4 (Sacred site of various religions)**SOUTHERN GERMANY**

Most south German states view magic as a tool, when and if they consider it at all. Württemberg corporations use magic to further their own agendas, the government of Franconia uses it as a tourist attraction. Bavaria distrusts magic, and tries to limit its practice to a few, tightly regulated research facilities. The trolls of the Black Forest seem most comfortable with magic in all of its manifestations, but even they consider magic a tool rather than a path for spiritual development. The loosely organized, almost anarchic Marienbad Council holds a different attitude toward magic from petty ruler to petty ruler, but it is interesting to note that the Council numbers several mages among its kings, princes, and statesmen, and a few outright charlatans.

**Nördlingen****Location:** Free State of Franconia, Ansbach-Mittelfranken District**Accessibility:** B**Magic:** (1) for conjuring fire spirits**Background Count:** 4 (Site of ancient meteorite impact)

Because it is one of Germany's remaining medieval towns that still possesses its ancient city wall, the former Free City of Nördlingen is a favorite destination of overseas tourists. Nördlingen draws its magical importance from its location in the center of the Nördlinger Ries, a 15-million-year-old meteor crater 25 kilometers in diameter. Mages who attempt to conjure spirits in the crater say that the local earth and fire elementals, as well as the forest spirits in the area, display strange features and habits, compared to similar elementals summoned elsewhere. Many mages find it as difficult to understand these spirits as to comprehend a toxic spirit's nature.

Most explanations for the peculiarity of these spirits speculate on whether or not the astral reverberations of

the meteorite impact had lasting effects on the spirits. A few scientists hold an opposing, minority view, claiming that these odd spirits hail from a different world and are only stranded on Earth, not native to it.

>>>>[He forgets to mention that the usual "strange behavior" of these spirits is to suck you in no matter how potent you think your powers are.]<<<<<<  
—Streetwizz (21:52:00/23-MAY-54)

>>>>[Personal experience?]<<<<<<  
—Roland von Bremen (22:0:00/23-MAY-54)

>>>>[Almost. A mate of mine risked it once, and I needed all my strength to get out alive. That little experience left me with awfully cute cyberlegs and eyes. . .]<<<<<<  
—Streetwizz (22:37:05/23-MAY-54)

>>>>[They improved your appearance. Trust me.]<<<<<<  
—Harley "The Boss" Hog (23:01:32/23-MAY-54)

The Wiese of Bavaria, Franconia, and Württemberg consider the town of Ipfhill on the border of the Nördlinger Ries an important site, though none but the Weise know whether this importance comes in spite of or because of the oddities of the local spirits.

#### Langenzell Institute

**Location:** Bavaria, Niederbayern District

**Accessibility:** B

**Maglc:** Hermetic Library (6)

**Background Count:** 1 (Magical research institute)

The Langenzell Institute for Thaumaturgical Studies (LIFTS) earned fame for the innovative theoretical and philosophical interpretations of its research. According to the Institute's leading scholar, Professor Jewgeni Artuschenko, both the shape of magic and its unexplained genetic expression correlate with the background count and type of magic prevalent at a certain location. Though harmless-sounding in scientific jargon, this theory represents political dynamite. For the extreme right, it points the way to stopping the birth of more metahumans; the far left, on the other hand, accuses Artuschenko of espousing distasteful, "blood and earth" ideology. Though research is still in its infancy, and no practical application is in sight, the Langenzell Institute has already been the target of several bomb threats.

>>>>[For EC 500,000, I will deliver a copy of the research.]<<<<<<  
—Wichita Cathedral (18:49:53/14-APR-54)

>>>>[Refrain from such jokes, mein junge, or you will soon take delivery of something quite different.]<<<<<<  
—Prof. M. (21:07:32/14-APR-54)

>>>>[All right: for EC 1,000,000, I won't deliver it.]<<<<<<  
—Wichita Cathedral (22:06:39/14-APR-54)

#### Neuschwanstein

**Location:** Württemberg, Friedrichshafen District

**Accessibility:** B

**Background Count:** 1 (Tourist attraction)

Though the current remake of Bavarian King Ludwig II's famous "fairy tale castle" is only 200 years old, it nevertheless represents the archetypal German castle for millions of tourists from overseas. Every day, thousands of sightseers wander through the throne room and feast halls, gawking at the overdone interior. Oddly enough, this travesty of a castle appears to be haunted by a genuine ghost of a rather classic type; for the past seven years, a translucent figure in rich robes can be seen walking through the halls at night and wailing. When accosted, it disappears. No one has yet determined the source of this apparition, though a recent trideo feature produced by a UCAS station convinced legions of ignorant tourists that it is the ghost of murdered, Mad King Ludwig. A local enhancement of the tale claims the king walks and wails because his beloved castle belongs to Württemberg.

#### Schwarzkoppe

**Location:** Marienbad Council, Duchy of Furth

**Accessibility:** CCCCC

**Maglc:** (2) for conjuring mountain spirits

**Background Count:** 3 (Presence of a dragon)

Looming over the southern end of the Council region, the Schwarzkoppe Mountain rises high above the town of Furth im Wald. Once a scenic spa town, its tourist attractions included an annual parade and the Drachenstich (Dragon Kill), in which a costumed knight rammed his lance into a wood-and-paper dragon. This town custom paid bitter dividends a few years ago, when a western dragon named Schwarzkopf appeared on the peak of the Schwarzkoppe, flew over the town, and declared himself its new ruler. The Weise Duchess of Furth tried to fight, but failed and fled before the dragon's wrath.

The dragon Schwarzkopf now rules the mountain, the town, and the surrounding area. He reportedly finances his extravagant lifestyle by squeezing the country dry with exorbitant taxes and demanding hefty traffic tolls from drivers on the Munich-Prague autobahn. Unable to fight Schwarzkopf, the almost-nonexistent central government in Marienbad conceded his sovereignty over the duchy. According to rumor, however, the exiled duchess continues to plan ways to retake her throne.

>>>>[The Schwarzkoppe used to be a major ritual site for the Weise, and the duchess is a member of the High Coven. Suggestive, no?]<<<<<<  
—Prof. M. (09:24:55/28-FEB-54)

**Dr. Faust Universität Auerbach**

**Location:** Marienbad Council, Kingdom of Falkenstein and Auerbach

**Accessibility:** B

**Background Count:** 0

Despite its famous name, Dr. Faustus University is one of the least respected in Europe, infamous among professional magicians for its low competency requirements. Magic is the university's only course of study; the level of teaching is rumored to be no higher than that of a high-school seminary in Thuringia.

>>>>[In short, the Auerbach Cellar gives you a "Dr. Mag." for knowing the plural of the word "focus." For anyone dying to get a fancy title without much work, this is the place. If you're too lazy to appear in person, money alone can buy you an "H.C." degree.]<<<<<

—Streetwizz (17:45:31/09-JUN-54)

**THURINGIA**

Much of the magic attributed to Thuringia in legend proved real after the Awakening, and Thuringia's reputation as a magic-rich Land draws many magical researchers to its borders.

Even in historical times, a single ruler rarely presided over Thuringia's 16,251 square kilometers. Instead, different rulers split this tiny Land into several, miniscule statelets where attempts by every ruler to outdo his neighbors in subsidizing palaces, libraries, and theatres gave Thuringia a rich and varied culture.

Thuringia owes its multitude of ongoing magical research projects to political changes wrought in 2026, when the coalition government of the liberal ESP and LDFP parties liberalized magical research laws and granted local political entities considerable administrative control. These days, areas of the Land the size of a political county are independent in fact, if not in name. Some of these smaller entities have been annexed by corporations or partly absorbed by large-scale sociological experiments, and the Land government exerts little control over either.

Thuringia is also unique for its broad-based support of magic even at the elementary school level, and the surprising success of political parties based on magical or pantheist philosophies. For example, the Landtag elections of 2051 gave the Holistic Life Party 8.9 percent of the vote, giving it a place in government alongside the ruling ESP.

**Harz Mountains**

**Location:** Thuringia

**Accessibility:** A-B

**Magi:** (4) for conjuring forest and mountain spirits

**Background Count:** 5 (Sacred site of Central European nature cult)

This famous mountain range hosts one of Thuringia's largest magical research projects, Freie Erde (Free Earth) Harz. This so-called "magical-feminist field test," con-



trolled by a branch of the Mother Earth polidub known as the Bloxbergbund (BBB), covers the whole Upper and Middle Harz and centers on the Brocken.

>>>>[Thuringia is a state of Weise!]<<<<<

—Streetwizz (05:33:12/01-APR-54)

>>>>[So?]<<<<<

—Gundel Gaukeley (05:45:23/01-APR-54)

The BBB council holds its meetings in Bad Harzburg, publishing center for the feminist/Wiccan magazines *Aradia* and *Bianca*.

>>>>[Which contain some useful info about witchcraft and Wicca, but also plenty of feminist, ideological claptrap. Oh, and fashion hints. Ever so helpful.]<<<<<

—Streetwizz (13:06:55/03-NOV-52)

>>>>[You chauvinist jerks should try reading the Faustian paper: 64 pages of club gossip and conflicts between board members. Ever so useful.]<<<<<

—Gundel Gaukeley (13:45:00/03-NOV-52)

The Brocken peak is the most hallowed location within the Harz Mountains, site of seasonal festivities attended by Weise from all over Europe.

>>>>[And despite persistent rumors, men are not banned from those occasions. On the contrary, they are welcome as fellow celebrants and followers of the Great Goddess.]<<<<<

—Gundel Gaukeley (20:02:37/28-NOV-52)

The festivals only add to the Brocken's innate power. So far, reliable reports have confirmed the presence of nine free forest and mountain spirits on the peak, whom the Weise of the Harz regularly contact.

The coming of the Sixth World also apparently reactivated some formerly exhausted lodes in the historically ore-rich Harz. All minerals ever mined from the Harz mountains, such as silver, copper, iron, gold, and so on, are being mined again in the tunnels of the Unterharz. Though many abandoned mines have been left to the Awakened creatures believed to inhabit them, a group of dwarf women founded the project Montan-Project Sangerhausen to revitalize the mines in the southeast of the mountain range.

The Sangerhausen project incorporates a number of small towns and villages in the Unterharz. The dwarf women who run it regard the area as their own little country, and intend it to balance the ingrained discrimination against women in the Grand Duchy of Westrhine-Luxemburg. Their relations with projects located in the surrounding localities are cooperative, especially so with the BloxBergBund in charge of the neighboring Freie Erde Harz project. From the start, the BBB has offered the women of the Sangerhausen project advice as well as physical and magical support.

>>>>[Small wonder. I know from reliable sources that the dwarfs are mining orichalcum; just a little alchemy, and it's incredibly valuable to mages.]<<<<<<  
—Flint (18:22:58/21-AUG-54)

>>>>[Nonsense! Orichalcum cannot exist naturally. That fact has been conclusively proven.]<<<<<<  
—Prof. M. (18:46:35/21-AUG-54)

>>>>[Careful, Prof. In a power center like the Harz, the "impossible" has been known to happen.]<<<<<<  
—Streetwizz (20:30:00/21-AUG-54)

>>>>[Beg pardon for interrupting your theories, but guess who still owns those supposedly played-out installations, and still reaps big profits from them? Good ol' Treuhand. . .]<<<<<<  
—Roland von Bremen (22:05:42/21-AUG-54)

#### Kyffhäuser

**Location:** Thuringia, Sondershausen District

**Accessibility:** B

**Maglc:** Undetermined

**Background Count:** 1 (Ritual site)

The Kyffhäuser, an undistinguished range of hills that lie south of the Goldene Aue, figures in various legends. The best known of them claims that the 12th-century Emperor Friedrich Barbarossa (Frederick I, Holy Roman Emperor) sleeps beneath the hills and will wake when Germany needs him. This particular legend prompted nationalist groups such as the Runenthing to take control of the part of the mountain that includes Friederich's

monument. There they await the Emperor's return and practice "Germanic magic."

>>>>[LEGEND of Barbarossa? You children can't know this, of course, but during the Euro-Wars in 2032, I knew Friedrich von Staufen, a mercenary general of the highest order. He stopped the ayatollahs for us; without him, Germany would have drowned in the tide of infidel hordes. Guess where he first made himself known and hired his first soldiers? Bad Frankenhausen, next to the Kyffhäuser monument.]<<<<<<

—Crusader (04:58:36/18-OCT-53)

>>>>[I've heard a different story. This one says that a group of neo-Nazis waited for their redeemer at the Kyffhäuser in the 2020s. One day the magic door opened, and a troll with red hair and a long beard strolled out. No gold, incense, and myrrh for Barbarossa that day: just lead, Molotov cocktails, and kerosene.]<<<<<<

—Streetwizz (06:09:43/18-OCT-53)

#### Wartburg

**Location:** Thuringia, Eisenach District

**Accessibility:** B

**Maglc:** Hermetic Library (3)

**Background Count:** 2 (Site of numerous magical acts)

Even before the Awakening, Wartburg, towering high above the town of Eisenach, was one of Germany's most interesting castles. Its claims to fame include the Sängerkrieg and the place of Martin Luther's exile. Nineteen years ago, a man calling himself Klingsor von Ungarland bought the castle for 5 or 10 million ecus and turned it into a refuge for magically gifted humans and metahumans, drawing his guests from throughout southern Europe. Over the years he purchased other large plots of land around Eisenach, until he owned both town and county.

Klingsor himself remains as mysterious as ever. Newspapers and street rumors call him an agent of dark powers, and sometimes a gypsy king. Though Klingsor apparently maintains friendly relations with the Roma, no one knows the truth of that relationship. Most locals believe him to be a shaman or nature mage, citing as evidence the fact that he consecrated a cult site to the Wild Huntsman and the Great Mother on the legendary Hørselberg southeast of Eisenach. The Wartburg itself is reserved for seasonal festivals, various types of shows, and other cultural events.

#### Jena

**Location:** Thuringia, Jena District

**Accessibility:** A

**Maglc:** Hermetic Library (2)

**Background Count:** 1 (Magical research site)

Despite the impression created by Zeiss Corporation's advertising, the town of Jena contains considerably more than the Zeiss optical works. Once called the "depot of knowledge," Jena is still home to the long-established

Schiller University, which supports one of Germany's best-known magic departments.

Unlike many university research departments, which devote themselves to alchemy and enchanting, Schiller focuses its research on the wide field of perception magic, including astral perception. Zeiss Optical almost single-handedly finances this department, giving critics fuel for their accusations that Schiller is a technocratic, corp-owned university. The validity of these accusations aside, it is an open secret that no research result reaches the public unless Zeiss approves its usefulness to the corporation.

>>>>[Here's a hint on their latest project. I hear they are working on a prototype of binoculars that can show traces of auras and reveal magically invisible objects.]<<<<<

—Infomaster  
(02:32:22/27-APR-54)

>>>>[Ey, can you recognize individual perspiration with that thing?]<<<<<

—Harley "The Boss" Hog  
(03:10:48/27-APR-54)

>>>>[Shut up, you stupid peasant!]<<<<<

—Infomaster  
(03:43:29/27-APR-54)

Because so many student societies spring from its ranks, observers conclude that Schiller University must hold conservative attitudes, which is a fairly accurate assessment. Among other groups, its students founded the Astralia Jenense student society for mages.

**Weimar**

**Location:** Thuringia, Weimar District  
**Accessibility:** A  
**Magics:** Hermetic Library (8)  
**Background Count:** 0

Weimar, long known as the city of Goethe, Schiller, and Herder, remains a major center of learning. At the turn of the century, the German National Libraries of former West and East Germany, one in Frankfurt and the other in Leipzig, merged to form a single institute in Weimar.

>>>>[They didn't manage to finish the job, so now we have three of them.]<<<<<

—Prof. M. (17:09:52/22-JUL-54)

Today, the Universal Library of Weimar contains at least one copy of nearly everything ever published in German, and is famous for its vast collection of writings on

magical theory and occult knowledge, dating from the time before the Awakening through the present. Its priceless collection and geographical position between the towns of Jena and Erfurt have made it the official library of the departments of magic at both Schiller and New Erfurt universities. Unfortunately, the traditional rivalry between the two institutions frequently disrupts the work environment.

>>>>[That's putting it politely. Not too long ago, a few witches and frat members of the combat magic departments had at each other; they left one dead and four severely injured. Fortunately, they limited their damage to each other and spared the library.]<<<<<

—Prof. M. (11:01:00/  
02-MAR-54)



**Erfurt**

**Location:** Thuringia, Erfurt District  
**Accessibility:** A  
**Background Count:** 1 (Site of magical research)

The former Land capital of Thuringia, Erfurt retains only the Landtag (state parliament) and a few administrative offices in the decentralized state. One of these offices, the Landesamt für Raumordnung, holds special interest for mages, because behind its drab facade, proposed, large-scale magical projects receive thumbs-up or thumbs-down.

The city of Erfurt enjoys a long cultural tradition. This former bishopric, once praised as "Thuringia's most awe-inspiring city," housed a university second in size only to the University of Prague in Czechoslovakia. That university closed in the 19th century, but within the last half-century the Neue Universität Erfurt (New Erfurt University) took its place, occupying the same buildings scattered throughout the city. Erfurt University placed major emphasis on magical research beginning with the Awakening, but because it devotes equal research and teaching time to nature magic and hermetic magic, the university's reputation among many conservatives is poor. Some circles deride the university as a "medicine hut."

Erfurt's traditional rival, Schiller University at Jena, offers a purely hermetic curriculum, which only adds fuel to the academic fire. In addition to the university, various nature-magic circles exist in Erfurt that make their spiritual homes in the sacred groves and similar sites that lie within the city's numerous parks. City fathers planned Jubilee Park, built in 2038 to celebrate 200 years of gardening expositions, in close cooperation with local nature magicians.

**Suhl**

**Location:** Thuringia, Suhl District  
**Accessibility:** B-C  
**Background Count:** 1 (Magical research site)  
 Almost every town in Thuringia has magical research projects related to their major industry or income source, and Suhl is no exception. As a center of armaments production, especially hunting guns, Suhl's magical research centers on projectile and other hunting weapons. For example, the family-owned Härte! company makes an old-fashioned hunting knife known as a Hirschfänger, or stag-catcher, out of virgin materials under the supervision of a company-employed artificer. However, fervently reported "insider information" on developments such as SMGs that can fire orichalcum bullets and so on appear to be no more than hot air.

>>>>>[The knives are bloody expensive, for anyone considering buying one.]<<<<<<  
 —Streetwizz (19:06:26/03-SEP-54)

**Altenburg**

**Location:** Thuringia, Altenburg District  
**Accessibility:** A  
**Background Count:** 1+ (Site of magical experiments)  
 The site of the Altenburg-Stralsunder Spielkarten (ASS) factories, Germany's major manufacturer of playing cards, has gained a reputation for magical significance in the Sixth World. The Treuhand turned over control of the factories to the Roma in accordance with the Reparation Law of 2039, and the Roma promptly expanded the production line of standard 32, 54, and 64-card decks to include tarot decks, which have become the standard tool for divining the future all over Europe.

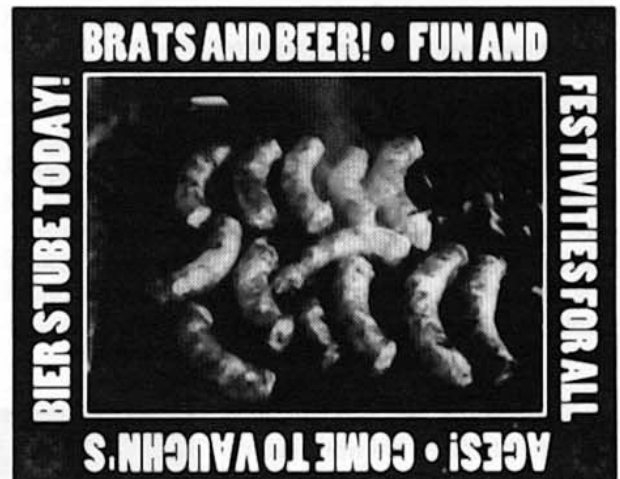
In addition to the standard tarot set, used by many mages as a meditation tool or fetish, ASS also produces an expensive, deluxe tarot deck that acts as a magical focus for certain perception spells. Maryam Salvicz-Meyer, a nature magician of some repute, supervises product development.

**WESTERN GERMANY**

This section describes magical sites in the Länder of Northrhine-Ruhr, Hesse-Nassau, Westrhine-Luxemburg, Greater Frankfurt, and the Badensian Palatinate. Germany's western states include two giant metroplexes as well as more rural areas, leading to an interesting mix of magical styles. In western Germany, academic mages compete with witches, and reclusive nature magicians live right next door to well-funded hermetic research facilities.

**Loreley**

**Location:** Hesse-Nassau, Limburg District  
**Accessibility:** B  
**Magic:** (1) for all actions by followers of the Moon Maiden  
**Background Count:** 2 (Ritual site of the Weise)



Despite popular claims to the contrary, the story of the beautiful but deadly Loreley who sat on the Rhine cliff of the same name, combing her long tresses and luring boatsmen to their doom, is not 'a legend from ancient times.' When the poet Heinrich Heine wrote that famous line, the story of this imposing cliff was only a few decades old, written by one Clemens von Brentano.

With the Awakening, even a romanticist fairy tale can become real, and in the 21st century, the Loreley is indeed a place of magic. The 20th-century concerts and fairs held on the cliff's summit gradually gave way to Wiccan and other magical gatherings. In fact, the burgeoning Wicca movement held one of its first mass assemblies at the site in the early 21st century. Since that event, thousands of the faithful regularly gather at Loreley for seasonal festivals, enhancing the site's magic through their rituals. Loreley is consecrated to the Moon Maiden, and many festivities held there are open to women only. Because the groups that attend these festivals sometimes harbor openly hostile attitudes toward men, some festivals have become the target of attacks by opposing movements.

**Emscher River**

**Location:** Northrhine-Ruhr, Essen District  
**Accessibility:** A  
**Magic:** (1) for conjuring toxic river spirits  
**Background Count:** 5 (Severe pollution)

Until two hundred years ago, the Emscher River was an idyllic tributary of the Rhine. Beginning in the middle of the 19th century, however, industrial development progressed swiftly in the Ruhr area, turning the Emscher into an industrial sewer. The Awakening of magic created new dangers in what had become the Ruhr's cesspool. In 2026, people began reporting attacks by a creature living in the Emscher that resembled a crippled killer whale. To date, authorities blame this creature for the deaths of dozens of people and 50 million ecus worth of damage to boats and buildings.

The local population promptly assumed that the Emscher monster was the killer whale Orca that disappeared from the nearby Duisburg dolphinarium in 2024, and gave it the same name. So far, all attempts to kill the

creature have failed. The most recent hunt by the river police resulted in 14 deaths and damage worth 1 million ecus. Though the Emscher's highly corrosive waters eat away at other living beings, they apparently have no effect on Orca.

>>>>>[Dolphinarium, hah! I was there when we freed the killer whale in '24 and brought it to the shore.]<<<<<<  
—Waldschrat (23:34:48/17-JUN-54)

>>>>>[Where it must have faced a horrible death, you fraggin' bleeding-heart idiot! Anyone know anything else?]<<<<<<  
—Roland von Bremen (23:54:04/17-JUN-54)

>>>>>[One o' those witchmen once told me that him and his drekhead mate tried to conjure a river spirit from the Emscher years ago, but something went wrong.]<<<<<<  
—Dator (00:04:28/18-JUN-54)

>>>>>[The real fun will start as soon as this Orca gets interested in the Rhine-Datteln Canal, which runs right beside the Emscher. . .]<<<<<<  
—Kumpel Anton (00:32:43/18-JUN-54)

#### Vogelsberg

**Location:** Hesse-Nassau, Gießen District

**Accessibility:** A-B

**Magic:** (1) for conjuring mountain and fire spirits

**Background Count:** 2

The 820-meter Vogelsberg (Bird Mountain) is a circular volcano, always believed to be dormant until it erupted explosively on the night of March 6, 2042. According to eyewitnesses, "a column of fire rose to the sky." Despite the staggering power of the eruption, the surrounding area sustained far less damage than expected, leading some to speculate that the apparent "eruption" was actually the manifestation of a fire elemental.

#### WESTPHALIA

Anti-magic Westphalia seems an unlikely region to acknowledge its magical sites, but a few do exist for the use of the Land's tightly controlled hermetic mages. Nature magic and shamanism, of course, are prohibited in Westphalia as heresy.

#### Westphalian Wilhelm University, Münster

**Location:** Free State of Westphalia, Landamt Münster

**Accessibility:** A-B

**Magic:** Hermetic Library (3)

**Background Count:** 2 (Research institution)

Despite rumors to the contrary, the University of Münster does offer a chair of theurgy within its theological department. Within this specialized magical group, selected students of theology study so-called "white," or "divinely approved" magic, less to learn the use of such powers than to identify and repel all heretical influences. Only the highest-level students may conjure spirits, and

the whole body of learning is severely restricted; theurgy students are taught only such metamagic techniques as dispelling, shielding, combat, and healing spells, though they begin to learn these in their initial classes.

>>>>>[To whom it may concern: watch out. They're not the weaklings one might expect!]<<<<<<  
—Roland von Bremen (14:09:52/04-OCT-54)

#### Visbeker Gräber (Visbek Tombs)

**Location:** Free State of Westphalia, Landamt Cloppenburg

**Accessibility:** CC

**Background Count:** 1

Near the small village of Visbeck, by Westphalia's border with the North German League, stand the Visbeker Braut (Bride) and the Visbeker Bräutigam (Groom), two mysterious grave mounds dated as early as the late Stone Age. The Visbeker Braut is 82 meters long, and the Visbeker Bräutigam is 108 meters long. What could (and probably does) serve as a "sacrificial stone" lies near the Visbeker Braut, making it particularly interesting to magicians. Spirit forms materialize frequently at the tombs; once believed to be heathen souls, today most people believe them to be nature spirits trying to communicate. The repeated and enthusiastic efforts of some Weise to contact these spirits has recently led the Westphalian authorities to fence off the two monuments.

#### Externsteine

**Location:** Free State of Westphalia, Landamt Paderborn

**Accessibility:** CCCC

**Magic:** (2) for conjuring nature spirits

**Background Count:** 4 (Sacred site of various religions)

The Externsteine, a series of jagged, sandstone cliffs, served as a pagan shrine in prehistoric times and became a Christian pilgrimage site during the Middle Ages. In modern times, a wide spectrum of groups ranging from nationalists to occultists treat them as a popular cult site.

Though situated in Westphalian territory, the Externsteine stand within sight of the North German League border. As with the Visbek Tombs, this proximity leads to a sometimes delicate situation. The Westphalian Catholic Church consecrated the site and regards it as inviolate; however, various individuals and groups, from the Mother Earth policlub to Siegfriedbund, regularly attempt to reach the stones in order to conduct magical rituals on the site. In a concerted effort to avoid any type of incident, the Westphalian government has fenced in the entire area and the Westphalian Bishop's Guard keeps a sharp eye out for intruders.

>>>>>[Yep. And if they catch youse, they'll nail you with their Holy Hand Grenades of Antioch. . .]<<<<<<  
—Sir Galahad (02:12:54/21-JAN-54)





# MAGIC RULES

This section includes specific rules for gamemastering the peculiarities of German magic described earlier in this sourcebook. The gamemaster should review that material thoroughly and consider the consequences of using unique German magic before adding these rules to his or her game.

## IDOLS

Except for the differences in imagery, the German idols described in this sourcebook function exactly like totems. The gamemaster should roleplay and otherwise use idols in the same way as totems, keeping interactions between these mysterious, aloof, enigmatic beings and their mortal followers at a symbolic level. Note that the Advantages and Disadvantages in the descriptions below work the same way for idols as for totems. Also note that an idol-adept character uses the same rules as a shamanic adept (p. 124–25, **SR11**).

## CREATOR

The artisan of the gods, the Creator shuns the splendor of his brethren, preferring instead to tinker with his creations. Though this idol did not create the world, he did create many of its treasures. Even more than his finished handiwork, the Creator loves what has yet to be created. His mind is so full of plans and ideas that deceit and intrigue have no place there; the many legends that tell of more cunning gods tricking the Creator reflects his dreamer's good nature. He does, however, learn from experience.

**Favored Environment:** Small cities or woods.

**Advantages:** +2 dice for enchantments; +1 die for conjuring hearth and city spirits.

**Disadvantages:** Like their idol, followers of the Creator often find dealing with people awkward and uncomfortable. Though trusting by nature, they make bitter and determined enemies when wronged. In combat, they prefer to rely on foci and fetishes rather than their own powers, and suffer a penalty of –1 die when casting combat spells. New artifacts fascinate followers of the Creator; when confronted with something unusual or unique, this adept must make a Willpower (4) Test. If the test is unsuccessful, he immediately moves into astral space to examine his find for a number of turns equal to 3 minus the number of successes rolled, regardless of the current situation.

## DRAGONSLAYER

This most heroic of the gods is also the most fun-loving. Though he joyously fights to protect his own against all dangers, even more than combat he loves a good party. His followers see him as a big brother who takes a friendly interest in everything they do. Though sometimes naive, he makes a staunch friend and a deadly opponent.

The dragons that he slays have changed with the times; rather than attacking the literal dragons of legend, the Dragonslayer now fights such modern-day 'dragons' as crime, pollution, and corruption.

**Favored Environment:** Any dry land.

**Advantages:** +3 dice for combat spells; +1 die for conjuring hearth spirits.

**Disadvantages:** The Dragonslayer's followers are direct and above-board, even in combat, and suffer a penalty of –2 dice when resisting. They also tend to believe what they see, hear, or read, and so suffer a penalty of –1 when resisting perception-related spells and illusion spells. Their impatience and impulsiveness can bring down the most carefully constructed plans in no time at all. Like their idol, the Dragonslayer's followers fight hard and strike fast, preferring to end battles quickly. A follower of the Dragonslayer willingly sacrifices himself for a friend, because he feels responsible for people he knows. Because he hates to be contradicted, the Dragonslayer's follower may doubt the honesty of anyone who disagrees with his opinions or actions. He has no room for self-doubt in his mind.

## GREAT MOTHER

The Great Mother represents life-giving nature in its purest form, giving her bounty freely to all who have need of her. Those who mistake her generosity for weakness are asking for trouble. Like any mother, she fights to the death to protect her children. Followers of the Great Mother are healers, both of the body and the troubled psyche; they cannot refuse aid and succor to anyone who needs it.

**Favored Environment:** Everywhere.

**Advantages:** +2 dice for all healing spells; +2 dice for conjuring all field and forest spirits as well as Spirits of the Waters.

**Disadvantages:** Of all nature mages, the followers of the Great Mother obey the strictest moral code. They all know and hate corruption, defining its existence depending on the situation in which they find themselves: for example, environmental pollu-

tion, war or other violence, certain forms of sexuality, and so on. Such corruption so disturbs them that they suffer a 2-dice penalty for all tests made in the presence of corruption.

### HORNED GOD

The embodiment of procreative power and energy, the Horned God is the unfettered lord of the wild. Ancient and animalistic, he is ruled by instinct rather than intellect. Physical action and sensation shapes his world, including brawling and lewd behavior.

Of all idols, he is the most traditionally "masculine," and male-dominated groups tend to venerate him. Like him, his followers often tend toward a classic attitude of machismo and prefer action to patience.

**Favored Environment:** Any dry ground.

**Advantages:** +2 dice for all combat spells; +2 dice for conjuring all Spirits of the Land.



**Disadvantages:** The Horned God's followers tend to be vain, arrogant, and often aggressive. If a fight occurs anywhere near him, a follower of this idol must make a successful Willpower (6) Test to keep from joining the brawl. Any time he meets an attractive member of the opposite sex, a follower of the Horned God must make a Willpower Test against a Target Number equal to 10 minus his new love interest's Charisma. If the test is unsuccessful, the follower desires this particular person and must constantly try to impress her.

### MOON MAIDEN

The Moon Maiden, goddess of the night sky, symbolizes all the aspects traditionally ascribed to femininity. Moody, changeable, emotional, mysterious, sometimes gentle and pleasant and other times wild and uninhibited, the Moon Maiden exists as one with nature. To her followers, the Moon Maiden represents the ultimate superiority of woman's gentle, nurturing nature over man's destructive impulses. Not surprisingly, few men follow Moon Maiden.

**Favored Environment:** Everywhere.

**Advantages and Disadvantages:** A follower of Diana accepts no rules and regulations save for her personal convictions and the laws of Nature.

### WILD HUNTSMAN

An outsider among the idols, the Wild Huntsman roams the world in a rage, followed by his enraptured disciples. He constantly walks a thin line between sanity and madness, but his frenzy hides an intimate knowledge of the universe's sacred mysteries. As the idol who gave mankind the intoxicating Cup of Knowledge, the Wild Huntsman is the patron of numerous secret, esoteric cults.

**Favored Environment:** Woods, mountains, heath.

**Advantages:** +2 dice for perception and illusion spells; +2 dice for conjuring storm spirits.

**Disadvantages:** The Wild Huntsman's followers are unpredictable, and can be as frightening in their joy as in their anger. Sometimes apparently half crazy, and often unkempt, they may not eat or sleep for days when in the thrall of a particular idea or emotion. When faced with a particularly galling setback (at the gamemaster's discretion), they may lose control and fly into a berserker rage. In this situation, the player must make a Willpower (4) Test. If the test is unsuccessful, the follower of the Huntsman remains out of control for a number of turns equal to 3 minus the number of successes rolled. During that time, the gamemaster handles the player character. Typical actions he may take while out of control include senseless babbling, attacks on friends or imaginary foes, or sudden jaunts into astral space. Occasionally, if the gamemaster deems it to be in the best interest of the adventure's progress, the player character may even manage to do something useful in his or her manic state.

## SPÖKENKIEKERIN

**Shadowrun** characters of first- or second-generation European descent may be spokenkiekerei (see **German Magic**, p. 138). This status allows them to use the following optional rules at the gamemaster's discretion. During character generation, a player may assign a Priority of "D" to his Magic category in order to give that character rudimentary astral perception. With this level of ability, the character only gains astral perception, and *cannot* astrally project, cast spells, conjure spirits, enchant objects, be initiated into a magical group, or use metamagic. Note that a player *cannot* assign multiple priorities to one category, such as assigning both priorities "B" and "D" to his Magic category in order to give astral perception to an adept that normally cannot have that power.

A spokenkieker's astral perception works in the same way as standard astral perception (see p. 145–46, **SRII**) except that the character must spend 1 point of Good Karma (see p. 190, **SRII**) to use the ability. Once expended, the Karma is lost. All normal rules for astral perception apply: the character is astrally present and therefore vulnerable, and so on. Note that an astrally perceptive character also gains an effective Magic Attribute, and only retains his astral perception ability as long as his Magic Rating remains higher than 0. Rules pertaining to magicians and Deadly wounds (see p. 115, **SRII**) also apply to spokenkiekerei.

## MAGICAL SITES

The following text provides rules for using the fictional information on magical sites (see **German Magic**, p. 139).

### MAGIC

The Magic level given for each magical site actually indicates the number of bonus or penalty dice a player receives when his or her character practices certain kinds of magic at that site. The gamemaster determines whether the player adds or subtracts the dice indicated, and within what area of the site the bonus or penalty applies.

### BACKGROUND COUNT

The Background Count refers to the game concept discussed on page 89 of the second edition **Grimoire**. Characters whose magical affinities and abilities do not agree with those of the site suffer a penalty to their astral target numbers equal to the value given for Background Count in each entry. Because the Weise influence so many magical sites, the background count affects all magical tests. For more information, see **Background Count and Druidic Magic**, p. 32, **Grimoire II**.



**DIE UNIVERSELLE BRUDERSCHAFT**  
 SCHEINT IHNEN DER WEG ZUR VERWIRKLICHUNG IHRER LEBENSZIELE VERBAUT?  
 EIN LICHT IN DER FINSTERNIS  
 REGIONALBÜROS IN HAMBURG, BERLIN, ESSEN, FRANKFURT, STUTTGART  
 WE ARE ALL BROTHERS UNDER THE SKIN.

# PARANORMAL ANIMALS

*Barghests, harples, Incubi, that's all minor stuff! The only predator I hate to face is humans.*

—Sebastian Krull, Big-Game™ hunter

Many of Germany's paranormal animals are the same creatures found in the rest of Europe and in North America, though a few regional variants live in the Allied German States. Only the wolpertinger is of purely German origin, and even within Germany it lives only in the Bavarian Alps. Similar to most highly industrialized nations, Germany's animal population is declining both in number and in diversity, which largely accounts for the dearth of exclusively German paranimals. Legally, hunters in Germany must hold an official hunting license, but such controls grow lax in the Alliance's lonely wilderness areas. Amateur hunters should be aware, however, that they risk confrontations with militant environmentalists in such places, and therefore may become the hunted.

## AWAKENED CREATURES

The following brief descriptions refer to creatures from **SRII** and **Paranormal Animals of North America (PA)**. More detailed descriptions of Germany's paranormal animals can be found in **SRII**, **PA**, and the **Paranormal Animals of Europe** sourcebook. For additional information on minotaurs and ogres, gamemasters who own the **Paranormal Animals of Europe** sourcebook should refer to *Metahuman Variations*, **Appendix 2**, page 122 in that book.

In the following descriptions, the German name of each creature appears in the text after the English name. As the only creature of solely German origin and habitat listed, the wolpertinger appears first in the listing of paranimals and has been given a more complete, detailed description.

### WOLPERTINGER

*Mythobestia Bavarica*

**Identification:** Though most wolpertingers vaguely resemble large rodents such as squirrels or martens, parazoologists still cannot say definitively what they look like. The wolpertinger appears to be one of the most variable paranormal species in existence; documented cases exist in which the young of a clutch bear only a superficial resemblance to each other or to their dam. Most wolpertingers reach a height of 30 to 50 centimeters and are

built like small rodents, but have no other common features. One or another of such additional characteristics as chamois or deer antlers, wings, cockscombs, and so on may or may not appear from individual to individual.

**Habitat:** Woodlands and mountains.

**Magical Capability:** Innate.

**Habits:** Nocturnal creatures, wolpertingers live in packs of up to ten individuals, most of whom are omnivorous. A few individuals behave like herbivores or predators, for reasons as yet unknown.

**Range:** Bavarian Alps.

**Commentary:** The wolpertinger's pre-Awakened precursor is unknown, though most parazoologists consider the squirrel, the tree marten, and various other mustelids as the most likely contenders. An opposing but largely fringe theory, noting the wolpertinger's place in Bavarian folklore, holds that these animals are a completely alien species.

**Powers:** Confusion, Fear.

**Weaknesses:** None.

### BANDIT

Called wäschbar in German, this Awakened form of the raccoon has almost completely supplanted its pre-Awakened precursor. Bandits can be found near the Frankfurt Metro Area and along the Middle Rhine valley.

### BARGHEST

Large barghest populations exist throughout Germany's forested hills. The government of Westrhine-Luxemburg has declared a bounty on these dangerous, wolf-like predators. So far, no one has successfully domesticated a barghest.

### BAT

The pre-Awakened precursor of the paranormal bat, or fledermäus, almost died out in Germany before the Awakening. Germany is home to various fledermäuse, among them the dangerous speifledermaus (*Myotis saxi*), related to the stoneloinder, and two species of giant bats, or riesenfledermaus (*Eptesicus gigantus*). All bats prefer dark ruins and caves close to human civilization. Rumors of vampire bats abound but so far remain unconfirmed.

### BLACK ANNIS

Known in Germany as the *grosser mandrill*, 20 or so of these German variants of the black annis live in the Hunsrück and Taunus hill regions. Local people do not interfere with them, and they have never been known to attack humans.

### BLOOD KITE

This Awakened hawk species, known colloquially as the *feuerfalke*, is mostly native to Germany's hill regions. So far, no one has attempted to tame one.

### BOGIE

In addition to the barghest, the bogie is one of the most common Awakened dog species on German soil. It is not, however, nearly as bloodthirsty as its German name, *schwarzer bluthund* (black bloodhound) suggests. Bogies are most common in northern Germany.

### BRACKWASSERQUALLE

An invertebrate similar but not identical to the American fideal, the *brackwasserqualle* favors ponds and small lakes left by the Great Flood of 2003. Its affinity for these tainted waters has made it immune to poisons.

### CHIMERA

Found exclusively within the SOX, these serpentine monsters have earned the colloquial name of *SOX-chimäre*. Though similar to its American cousin, this German variant can reach a length of up to 5 meters and is immune to radioactivity. Only four of these individuals have been sighted so far, each light brown in color.

### COCKATRICE

The cockatrice is not native to German soil. Some German corporations own trained cockatrices (*schreckhahn*); a few escaped cockatrices may have settled in southern Germany.

### CORPSELIGHT

Called *irrlight* in German, these rare and dangerous beings frequent swamps and bogs. According to several reports, the *corpselights* of the toxic marshes are especially aggressive.

### DEVIL RAT

The devil rat, or *riesenratte*, was one of the first Awakened beings to flourish in Germany. Between 2012 and 2015, these animals spread throughout the Federal Republic of Germany; these days, most rat colonies live in the Rhine-Ruhr megaplex, Berlin, and other major urban sprawls. An aquatic variant is common in Hamburg and most marshy areas.

### DRACOFORMS

The only dracoforms native to Germany are western dragons (*Draco occidentalis*), of which perhaps a dozen individuals exist. All of these known dragons live in wooded hillsides or the foothills of the Alps. The most prominent of the great dragons, *Lofwyr*, is the major shareholder of Saeder-Krupp and also holds smaller blocks of shares in various other corporations. Though *Lofwyr's* hoard is said to lie somewhere in the Eifel hills, the dragon himself wanders far afield.

### DZOO-NOO-QUA

Approximately 200 of these HMHV-infected trolls live in the Black Forest and in the Marienbad Council. Within the Troll Kingdom, these unfortunate, so-called "grottentroll" are recognized as full citizens, but kept under close watch by their healthy cousins. In the Bohemian Forest region of the Czech Republic near Marienbad, they have formed small tribes. The German states of Saxony and Westphalia have declared a bounty on these creatures.

### ELEMENTAL SPIRITS

German elemental spirits sometimes manifest as salamanders (fire), gnomes (earth), sylphs (air), and undines (water). Though countless sightings of elemental spirits have been reported, none have yet been scientifically confirmed, nor has any

instance of conjuring a salamander. For a description of the powers of these spirits, see p. 224, **SR11**.

### EMBRACER

Sighted several times in the Eifel region and in the Vogelsberg and Kaiserstuhl hills, *embracers* are believed to have a unique sensitivity to seismic activity. Local people call them *nacktgorillas*, and leave them unmolested. So far, none have been known to attack humans.



**FIRE Drake**

This smallest of all known dracoforms, known locally as the vulkanwurm, has so far only been sighted within the Eifel hills. A population of approximately 100 individuals reportedly exists in the barren hill country.

**FRESHWATER SERPENT**

Two of these animals, called seeschlange in German, supposedly live in Lake Constance. So far, authorities have not confirmed a sighting.

**GARGOYLE**

Individuals and pairs of gargoyles have been sighted in the Bavarian Forest and the Alps, and the frequency of such sightings is increasing.

**GH OUL**

So loathed are these gruesome humanoid that the confederate government has declared a bounty of EC 10,000 for a dead or captured ghoul throughout the German Alliance. According to rumor, ghouls lurk in Berlin, the Rhine-Ruhr megaplex, and in Germany's toxic marshes.

**GLOAMING OWL**

This Awakened species of common owl, known locally as the grosse eule, is found throughout the Hunsrück and Sauerland regions.

**GREATER UNICORN**

These creatures' predilection for the Alpine region earned them their German name of bergeinhorn (mountain unicorn). An estimated 200 individuals live in a protected habitat in the Alps. So far, all reports of greater unicorns being tamed and ridden remain unconfirmed.

**GRIFFIN**

At present, two pairs of griffins, or greifs, live on the Nebelhorn and Watzmann mountain peaks. Despite the protests of some Alpine farmers, griffins have earned government protection.

**HARPY**

So far, harpies have been sighted almost exclusively in the Black Forest and the Alps. All are reported to be savagely aggressive.

**HELL HOUND**

These animals function as watchdogs in Germany. As far as anyone knows, no free populations of hell hounds (hollenhund) exist in the German Alliance.

**INCUBUS**

This octopus species, known as kanalkrake in German, can live in any type of water: fresh, salt, even polluted. Its amazing adaptability has allowed the incubus to spread throughout all of Germany's rivers and into almost all city sewer systems. Unlike its North American counterpart, the European variant is resistant to toxins.

**ICEDRAKE**

The only reports of icedrakes, or eiswurm, have so far come from isolated Alpine valleys and are therefore considered unreliable. A few parazoologists theorize that icedrakes, if they exist, may be related to fire drakes.

**LESHY**

Called waldgeister (forest ghosts) or waldmenschen (forest people) in German, about a dozen families of leshy are said to live in the Hunsrück, Sauerland, and Harz regions. These shy creatures avoid human contact whenever possible.

**MANTICORE**

Preferring a healthy, unpolluted environment, these monsters are extremely rare in the industrial German Alliance. According to rumor, however, a few manticores have been sighted in the Spreewald and Harz regions.

**MERROW**

These ocean dwellers have two German names; wassermann is the male form, nixe the female. So far, only unconfirmed rumors hint at the existence of several merrow clans in the revitalized parts of the

Baltic Sea; supposedly, they are cooperating with the Pomoryan elves to restore the sea's damaged ecosystem.

**MIST LYNX**

The mist lynx, known as geisterluchs (ghost lynx) and nebelluchs (mist lynx) in Germany, is native to the Bavarian Forest and Hunsrück regions. Some of these animals allegedly seek the company of humans, with whom they stay for an extended period of time. So far, no mist lynx has been reported attacking humans.



**NATURE SPIRITS**

The following text lists nature spirits common to Germany and surrounding nations. Unless otherwise indicated, these spirits are the same as those listed on pp. 228-229 of **SRII**. Any differences between the following spirit forms and those described in the standard **Shadowrun** rules are noted in the text.

**City Spirit**

**Powers:** See p. 228, **SRII**.

**Appearance:** The appearance of German city spirits depends very much on their surroundings; significant differences exist between spirits of vast sprawls and those of small, rural towns. During one well-documented conjuration in Rothenburg ob der Tauber, the city spirit appeared as a Japanese tourist complete with loud shirt, sunglasses, and a trivideo camera.

Note that the domains of a city spirit are the streets, alleys, and squares of a town or city. The actual buildings "belong" to their particular hearth spirits, parks to the forest spirits, and so on.

**Field Spirit**

**Powers:** See p. 228, **SRII**.

**Appearance:** See p. 228, **SRII**. German field spirits may be conjured from any land used for agricultural purposes, such as pastures, fruit orchards, ornamental gardens, and so on. According to at least one report, a mage has successfully conjured a field spirit in a tree nursery. In Germany, field spirits apparently consider the line between field and forest a little vague.

**Forest Spirit**

**Powers:** See p. 228, **SRII**.

**Appearance:** German forest spirits resemble their North American cousins (see p. 228, **SRII**) on the rare occasions when they manifest. They are native to Germany's forest regions, particularly in the hills of the Mittelgebirge.

**Heath Spirit**

**Powers:** Accident, Alienation, Confusion, Guard, Search

**Appearance:** Heath spirits, a term referring to all spirits of heath, moor, and fen regions of northern Germany, replace the desert and prairie spirits common to North America. They most often appear as colorful heather or broom bushes, their twigs dancing in the wind. If forced to take human shape, they resemble child-sized shepherds clad in long, green coats and green felt hats.

**Hearth Spirit**

**Powers:** See p. 228, **SRII**.

**Appearance:** Though most appear as noted on p. 228 of **SRII**, a few unusual specimens look strikingly different. For example, the hearth spirit of the Thyssen highrise in Düsseldorf appears mirrored from top to toe.

Note that for game purposes, all buildings erected by (meta)humans have a hearth.

**Lake Spirit**

**Powers:** See p. 228, **SRII**.

**Appearance:** See p. 228, **SRII**. Lake spirits only exist in the few lakes with little or no pollution.

**Mist Spirit**

**Powers:** See p. 228, **SRII**.

**Appearance:** See p. 228, **SRII**.

**Mountain Spirit**

**Powers:** See p. 228, **SRII**.

**Appearance:** See p. 228, **SRII**. German mountain spirits live only on the highest slopes of the Alps, above the tree line.

**River Spirit**

**Powers:** See p. 229, **SRII**.

**Appearance:** See p. 229, **SRII**. Up until recently, river spirits could not exist in the heavily polluted German rivers. Recent cleanup efforts, however, may permit the conjuring of river spirits at the gamemaster's discretion.

**Sea Spirit**

**Powers:** See p. 229, **SRII**.

**Appearance:** See p. 229, **SRII**. Germany's sea spirits exist only in the cleaned-up portion of the Baltic Sea off the Pomoryan coast. All other sea areas around Germany remain too polluted to sustain them.



**Storm Spirit**

**Powers:** See p. 229, **SRII**.

**Appearance:** See p. 229, **SRII**.

**Swamp Spirit**

**Powers:** See p. 229, **SRII**.

**Appearance:** See p. 229, **SRII**. Swamp spirits live in Germany's only remaining intact swamp, the Spreewald (see **Magical Sites**, p. 139).

**NEW BOAR**

Troops of new boars (riesenwildschwein) occasionally appear in eastern Germany, crossing the Oder River from Poland to search for food. New boars are favorite prey for the few remaining amateur hunters in Germany.

**ROCKWORM**

Common in southern Germany, the stone-consuming rockworm (steinwurm) is blamed for a number of collapsed buildings and landslides.

**SABER-TOOTH CAT**

Though they resemble mountain lions more than tigers, the term sabre-tooth tiger, or säbelzahn tiger, refers to the large cats native to the Bavarian Forest and Schwäbische Alb hill country.

**SHADOWHOUND**

Specimens of the shadowhound (schattenhund) exist in the cities of Hamburg and Berlin, and the beasts are also said to be common in the Rhine-Ruhr and Frankfurt sprawls. Parazoologists believe that some of these animals may carry a virus similar to rabies.

**SHAPESHIFTER**

Reports about shapeshifters, werewolves, and similar creatures abound in Germany's backwater regions, though none of these sightings of the so-called gestalt wandler have been confirmed. Despite this lack of confirmation, most people remain convinced that several wolf and bear shapeshifters operate in Alliance territory.

**SIREN**

Germany's few, documented sirens live in southern Germany and at the edges of the German hill ranges.

**STORMCROW**

Though common throughout Germany, the stormcrow (sturmkrähe) avoids smoggy areas.

**TALIS CAT**

The talis cat, called alpkatze in German, has so far been spotted only in southern Germany near large metro areas such as

München and Nuremberg. Parazoologists believe that no more than two dozen of them exist within the German Alliance.

**TOXIC SPIRITS**

In any industrialized country with corresponding levels of pollution, toxic spirits appear. The number of these beings within the German Alliance, however, goes far beyond the statistical mean. Toxic water spirits populate the entire North Sea, and toxic water and earth spirits inhabit many of Germany's coastal areas.

Toxic water, earth, and air spirits frequent the Ruhr area, the region around the chemical-producing city of Leverkusen, and the industrial regions surrounding Halle and Leipzig in the state of Saxony. Almost all toxic spirit sightings to date have been of free spirits; no one has conjured these entities, nor discovered techniques for doing so. So far, at least, Central Europe seems to have escaped the local equivalent of the North American toxic shaman.

**TROGLODYTE**

Groups of these humanoid creatures, known locally as grottenschrat, have been reported in the Erzgebirge Mountains and in the disused mine shafts of the Ruhr region.

**UNICORN**

Called einhorn in German, meaning 'one horn,' few of these noble beasts exist in Germany. A wandering herd of ten individuals allegedly ranges between the Lüneburg Heath in northern Germany and neighboring areas in Poland, but the herd has so far avoided human contact.

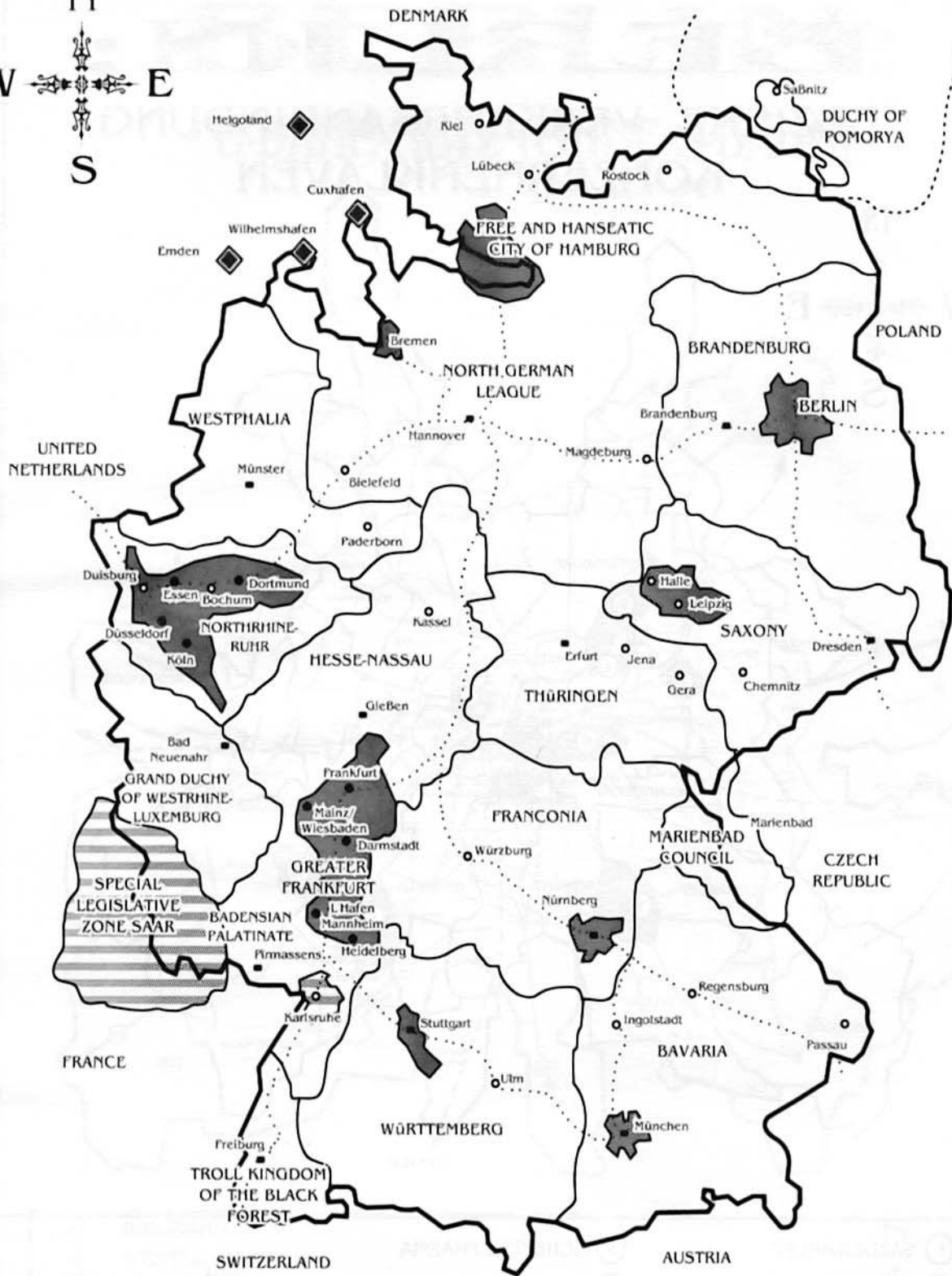
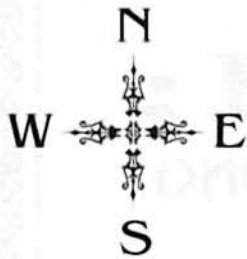
**VAMPIRE**

Though individuals afflicted with the disease of vampirism must be reported to the health authorities, an estimated twenty active vampires exist in Germany and move about the Alliance unmolested.

**WYVERN**

This possible relative of the dragon, called lindwurm in German, reportedly exists in the Alpine foothills, the Riesengebirge mountain range, and the Eifel hill region. A few also live within the irradiated SOX.





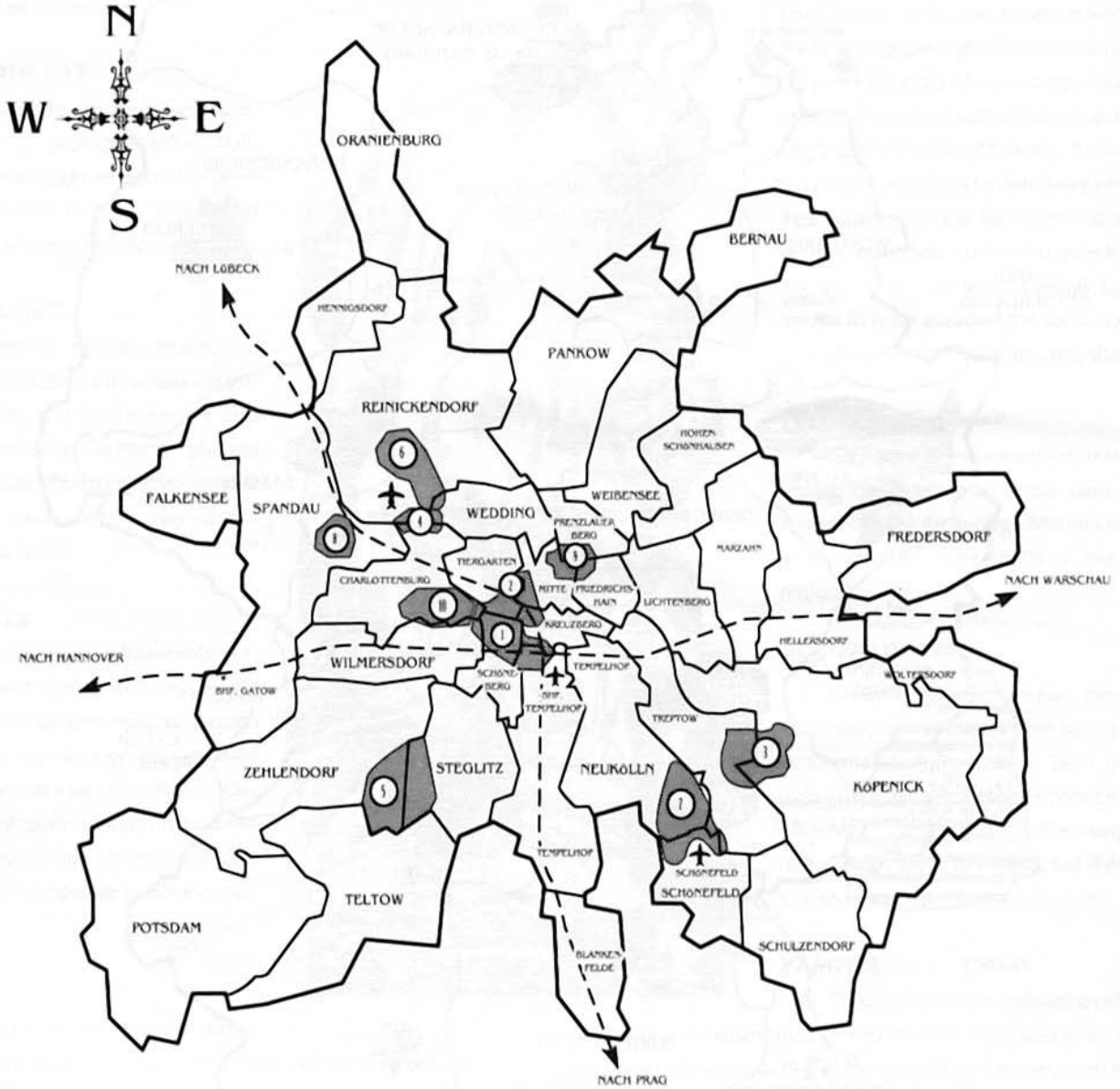
## LÄNDER OF THE GERMAN ALLIANCE

- FREIBURG > LAND CAPITAL
- HEIDELBERG > ADMINISTRATIVE CENTER
- ◼ > SPRAWL
- ULM > CITY
- ◆ EMDEN > ARKOBLOCK
- ..... > TRANSRAPID LINE
- ▨ > SPECIAL LEGISLATIVE ZONE



# BERLIN:

## BEZIRKE, VERKEHRSANBINDUNG, KONZERNENKLAVEN



① SAEDER-KRUPP

② DAIMLER-BENZ

③ EMC

④ TELTECH HOLDING

⑤ FUCHI

⑥ SCHERING PHARMA

⑦ MESSERSCHMITT-KAWASAKI

⑧ AZTECHNOLOGY

⑨ RENRAKU

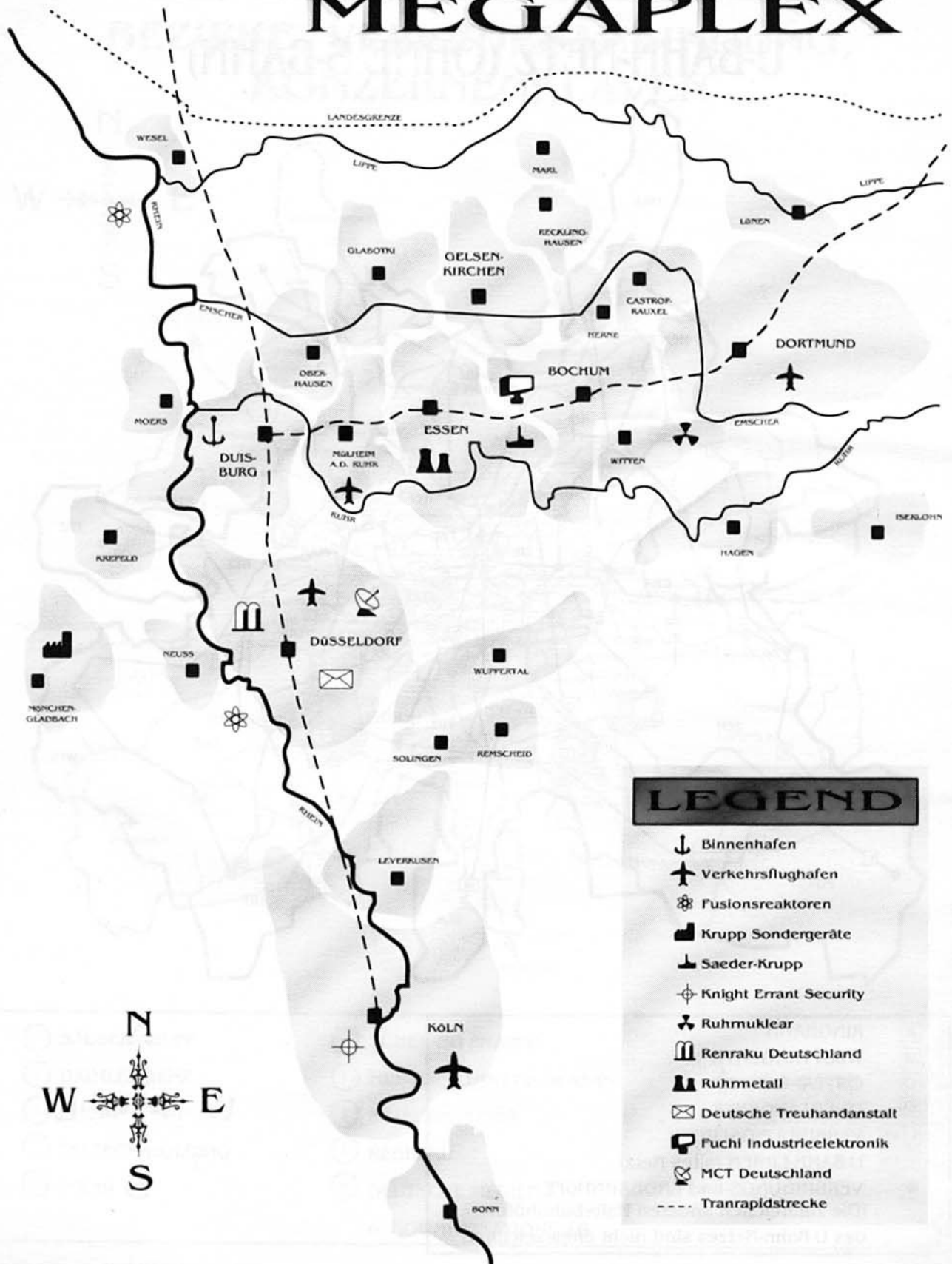
⑩ DEUTSCHE MEDIEN-

u. KOMMUNIKATIONS AG

✈ FLUGHAFEN

----- TRANSPRAPH

# RHEIN-RUHR MEGAPLEX



## LEGEND

- ⚓ Binnenhafen
- ✈ Verkehrsflughafen
- ☄ Fusionsreaktoren
- 🏭 Krupp Sondergeräte
- ⚙ Saeder-Krupp
- ⚔ Knight Errant Security
- ☢ Ruhmuklear
- 🏛 Renraku Deutschland
- ⚙ Ruhmetall
- ✉ Deutsche Treuhandanstalt
- 📺 Fuchl Industrieelektronik
- ⚙ MCT Deutschland
- Tranrapidstrecke

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in the  
chaos...

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