

# REGIME



[billofrightsinstiute.org/  
activities/regime-card-game](https://billofrightsinstiute.org/activities/regime-card-game)

*A transactional card game where players try to position themselves appropriately for each regime. Its purpose is to spark conversation around features of government (both political and economic frameworks) and ways people can effect or restrict change. Systems of power may be simplified, but the implications are wide ranging and applicable.*

# GAME POSITIONING

- Duration of Round | Game: 10 min | 30 min
- # of Players: 3-10
- Player Interaction: 1 vs 1
- Complexity to Play | Facilitate: Medium | Medium
- Notable Mechanics (game elements): Asymmetry, Collection, Negotiation, Presentation, Voting
- Notable Dynamics (skills required): Application, Communication, Credibility, Decision Making, Delegation, Leadership, Persuasion, Strategy Development

# PLAY COMPONENTS

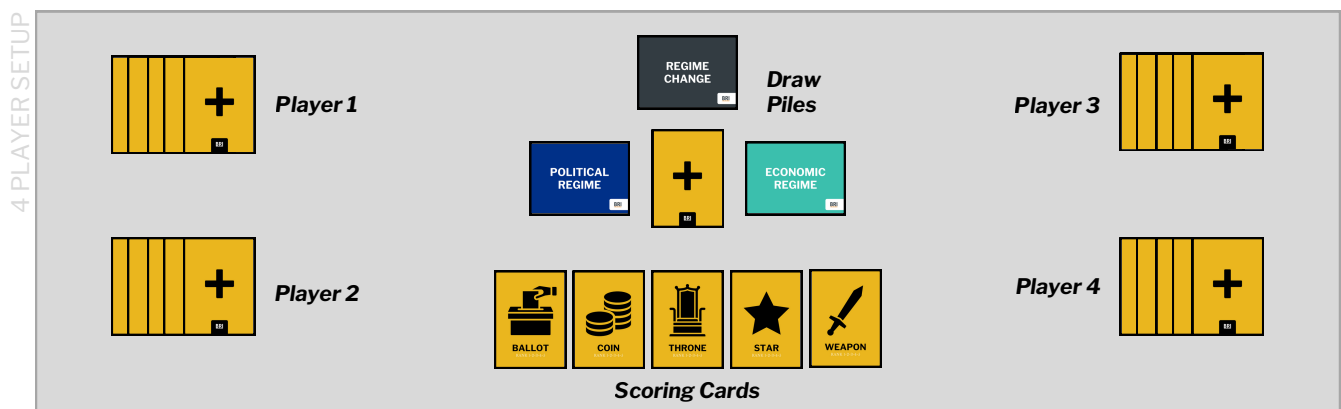
- 80 Resource cards (5 types; 16 each)
- 5 Scoring cards (1 of each currency)
- 6 Political Regimes
- 4 Economic Regimes
- 3 Regime Change cards

# SET UP

Set aside the Scoring cards; they look like Resource cards but are all yellow and will be used after the last round concludes. Shuffle the Political, Economic, and Regime Change decks separately and put them face-down in the center of play.

- For a simpler first play, remove the Economic deck.

Finally, shuffle and deal each player 5 Resource cards. Place the remaining cards face-down in the center of play.

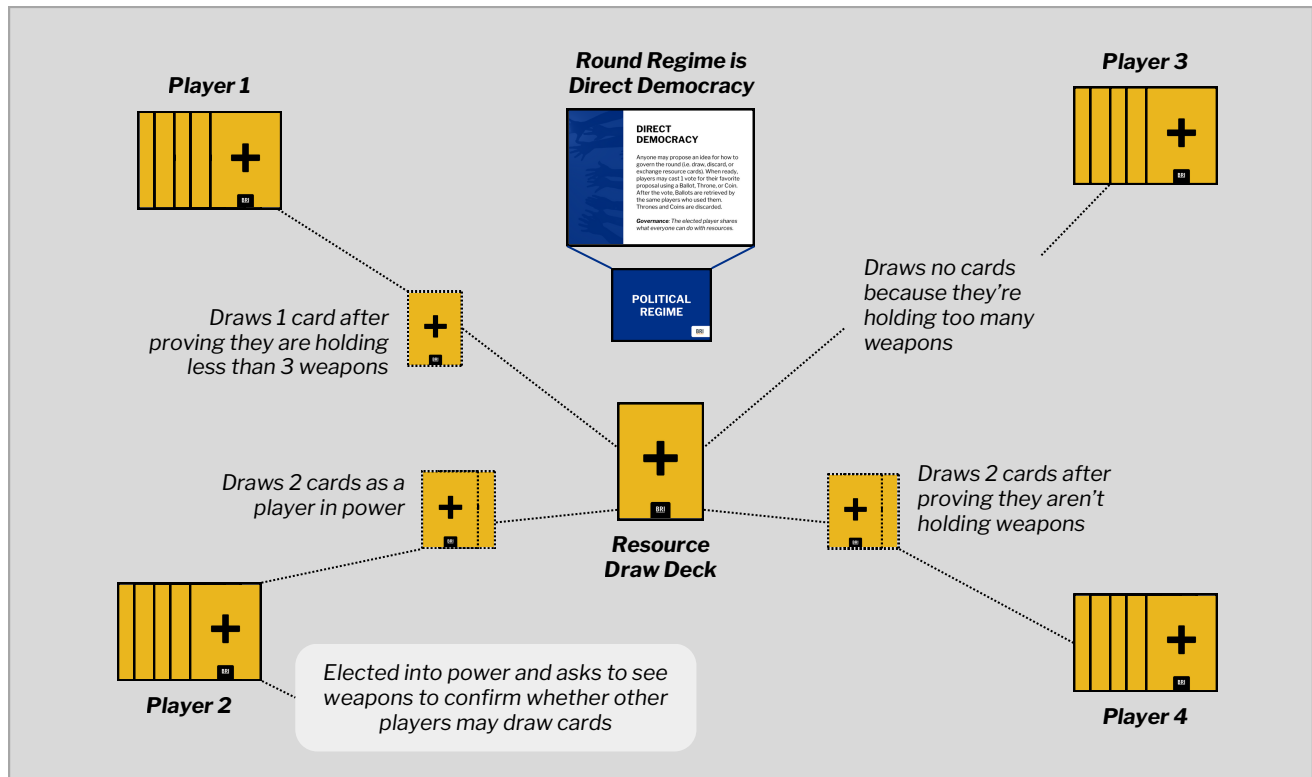


# GAMEPLAY & OBJECTIVE

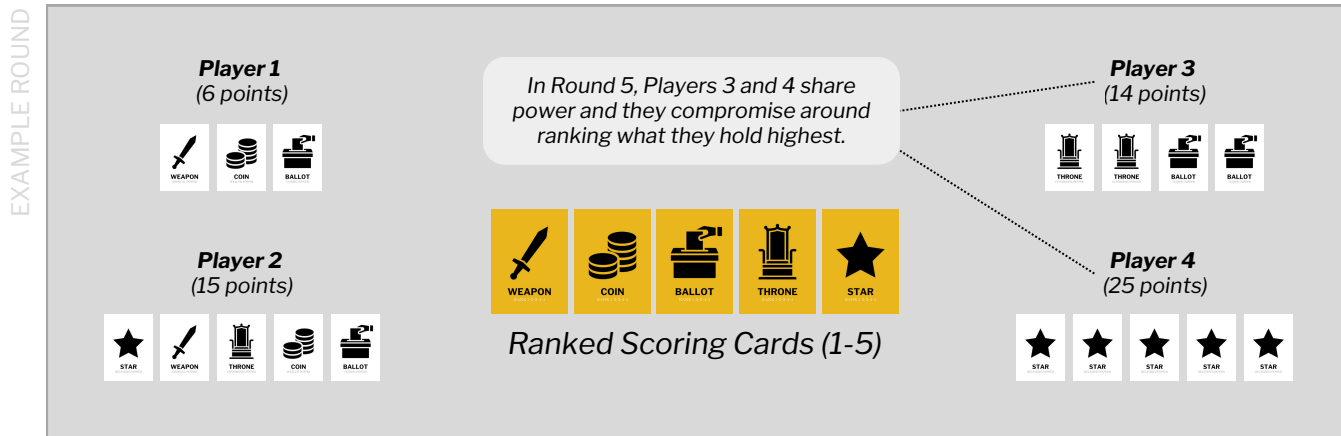
Over the course of 5 rounds, the player who scores the most points based on the Resource cards they are holding in their hand at the end of the game wins. The governing player(s) at that time will have the power to determine the fate of each resource type.

- Community Phase:** To begin the first round, flip over a Political Regime card and read the text, which explains the rules of engagement for that round. Players may look at and activate Resource cards in their hand, with the objective to obtain the best resources for use or scoring later. Each Political Regime requires unique skills and strategies to build power.
  - Example: Direct Democracy is drawn. 3 of the 4 players propose an idea for governance and each player votes for their favorite. Player 2's proposal wins, so they assume power.*
- Governance Phase:** The player(s) in power must follow the governance section of the regime card. There is no mandate to follow their original proposal or promise, but expect any decision to affect future gameplay.
  - Example: Player 2 stays true to their proposal and shares that all players who hold fewer than 3 Weapons may draw 1 Resource card. And if a player holds no Weapons, 1 additional Resource card.*

EXAMPLE GOVERNANCE



- **Change Phase:** When those in power are done governing, they randomly select a Regime Change card and read the text. There are 3 possible prompts and each will determine whether the current regime continues or ends. Whatever the result, that marks the end of the round.
  - *Example: Player 2 selects a Power Rules card. They decide to remain in the Direct Democracy regime for the next round.*
- **Rounds 2-4:** Return to the Community Phase to begin a new round. If the regime changed in the previous round, flip a new Political card and review the new rules of engagement. If the regime remained the same, players engage with the same rules as the previous round.
- **Round 5:** Return to the Community Phase and play through the Governance Phase, where the player(s) in power will rank the Scoring cards from 1 to 5. This decision determines how many points each Resource is worth in a player's hand.



## ENDGAME & SCORING

Players calculate their scores based on the Round 5 rankings. The highest score is deemed the winner of the game. Ties share the title.

- *Example: The ranking was Weapon 1, Coin 2, Ballot 3, Throne 4, Star 5. Player 1's hand contained a weapon, a coin, and a ballot, which scored 6 points. Player 2 had each resource once, which scored 15 points. Player 3 had a couple Thrones and Ballots, scoring 14 points. Player 4 was holding 5 Stars for 25 points. Player 4 won.*

## POSSIBLE GAME VARIANTS

- **Economic Deck:** In addition to the Political Regimes, the Economic Regimes are mandates that players in power must follow in the Governing Phase. These cards are introduced at the beginning of a round and they may be swapped during a Change Phase as a separate decision from the Political Regime. Unlike the Political deck, which sets aside past Regime cards, the Economic deck reshuffles all inactive cards for random selection.
- **Running Tally:** Instead of scoring points at the end of the game, players get to score each round. Before the Change Phase, players in power rank the Scoring cards and scores are announced. No cards are shown in the process to preserve the strategy of future rounds. When ready to continue, the game moves forward with a Change Phase.

## FACILITATING THE GAME

The core intent of this game is to juxtapose different regimes and how they affect those associated with them. Lean into players seeking to gain advantage wherever they can; navigating a constantly shifting governance structure is a disorienting balance of ambition and risk. A list of guiding questions are organized using the following categories:

- **Self and Social Awareness:** Reflecting on personal emotions and values, as well as how they relate to others.
- **Human Connection & Relationships:** Building trust and understanding between people for better communication and norms.
- **Problem Solving & Decision Making:** Developing shared goals and processes to achieve collaborative solutions.
- **Wider & Future Application:** Integrating lessons from the activity to real-world and historical contexts.

## **ESSENTIAL QUESTION**

- What is the point of democracy? Why believe in it?

## **GUIDING QUESTIONS**

### **Self and Social Awareness**

- What moments stood out to you during the game?
- Were you ever in power during a round? Did you enjoy it? How did you choose to wield it?
- What's a strength you demonstrated during this activity, and what's one area you'd like to develop?
  - What did you notice about another player's leadership approach or style and how it affected you?

### **Human Connection & Relationships**

- How did you build trust or alliances with other players to achieve your goals? How was it different between regimes?
- When did conflicts arise, and how were they resolved?
- When did you feel best represented? Why?
- What strategies helped you influence others during the game?
  - How did power affect player relationships and communication?

### **Problem Solving & Decision Making**

- What challenges did you face when adapting to a new regime?
- How did you balance short-term benefits with long-term strategies?
- How did players address injustice throughout the game?
- When did collaboration lead to better outcomes? What about competition?
  - How did the governing rules impact decision-making processes?

### **Wider & Future Application**

- Why might democracy be valued even when its processes feel imperfect?
- How does this game mirror the strengths and weaknesses of democracy?
  - How can lessons from this activity apply to real-world scenarios involving leadership and power?

*If you're looking for more resources for this game, visit [billofrightsinstitute.org/activities/regime-card-game](http://billofrightsinstitute.org/activities/regime-card-game)*

# GRAYSCALE MATERIALS

*Print the color version in black and white.  
Where necessary, write text to differentiate  
types of cards. Reach out to BRI for more  
ink-efficient designs.*

# **COLOR MATERIALS**

*Pages 9 - 32*



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### PRINTING INSTRUCTIONS

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For all cards, print double-sided (flip long edge) or print single sided and glue front/back.

The result in either case should be a well defined front and a back face. Use thicker cardstock for best experience.



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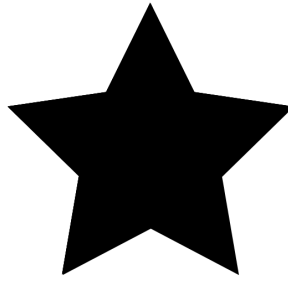
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RELIGIOUS POWER



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**PRINTING  
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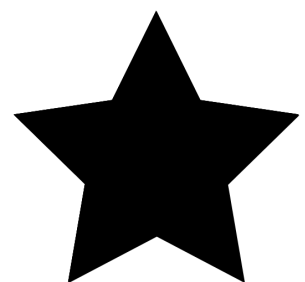
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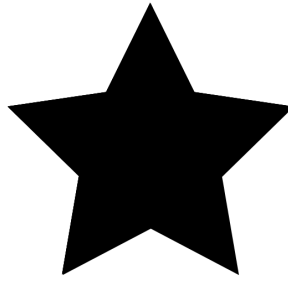
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**COIN**  
WEALTH POWER



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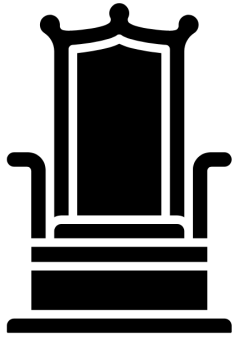
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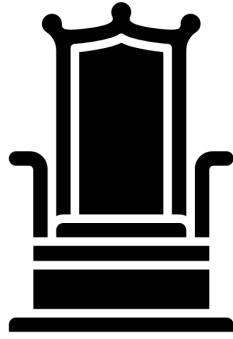
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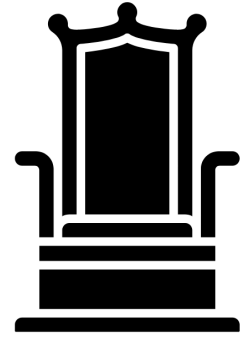
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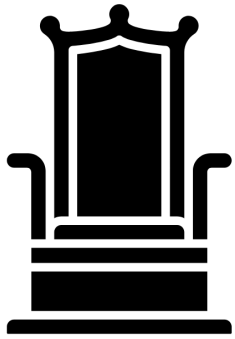
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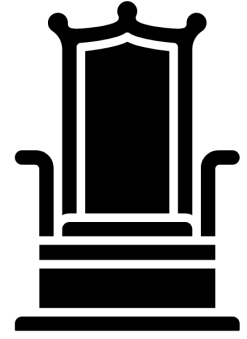
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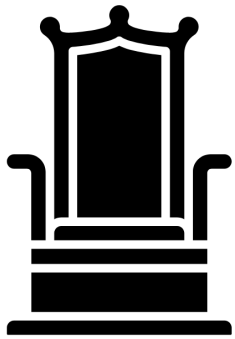
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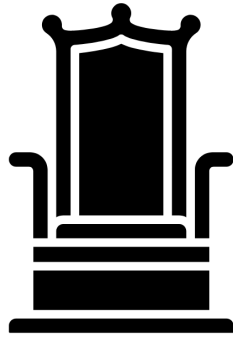
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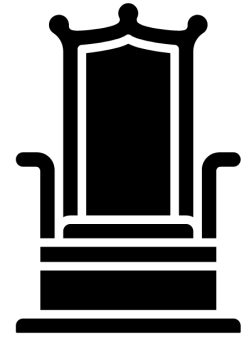
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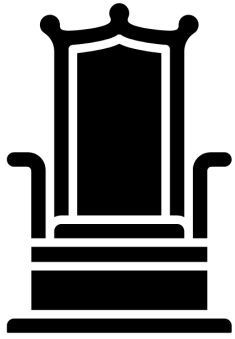
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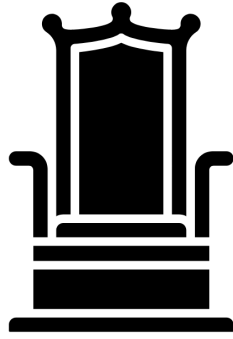
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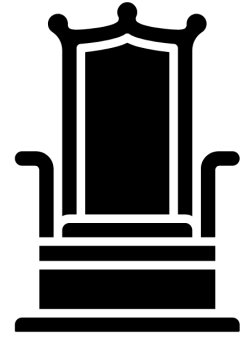
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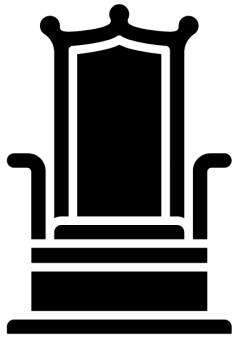
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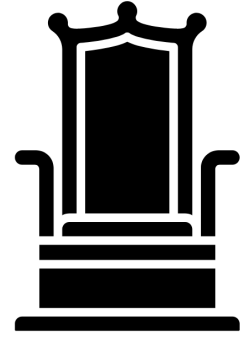
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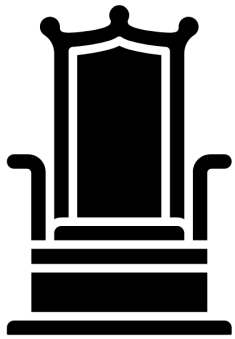
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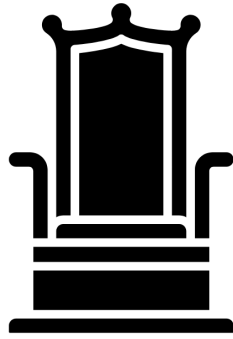
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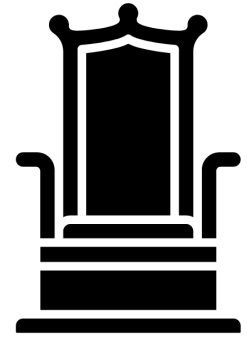
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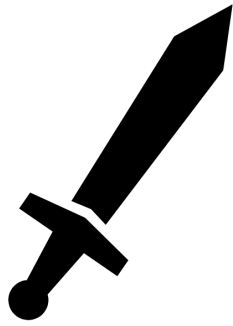
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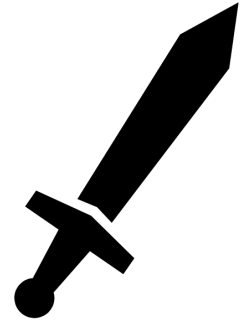
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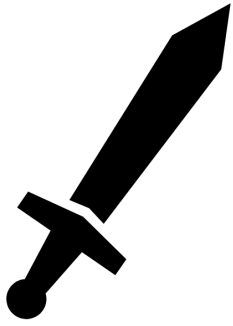
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PHYSICAL POWER



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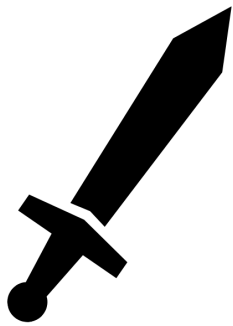
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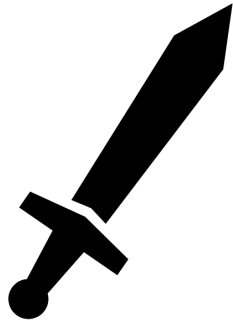
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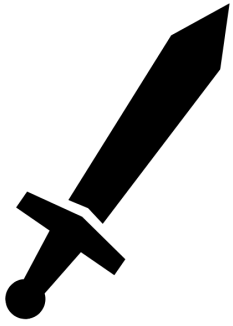
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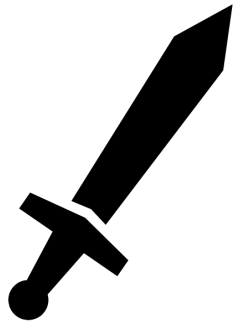
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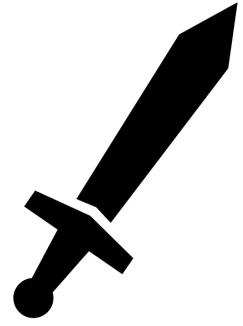
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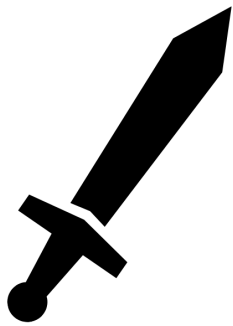
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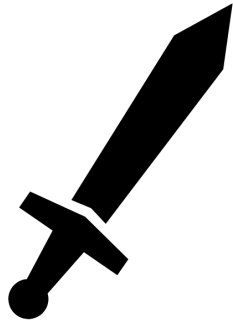
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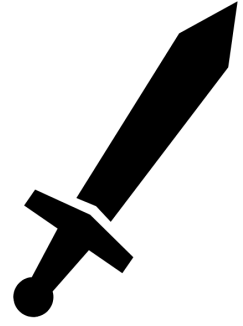
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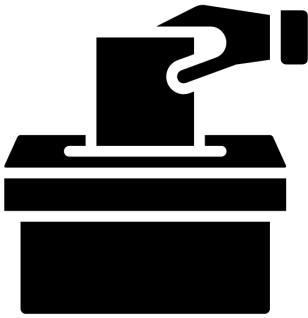
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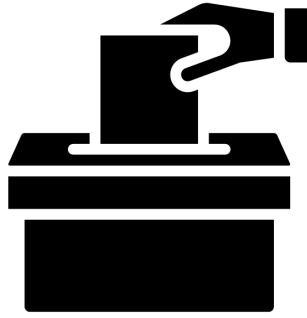
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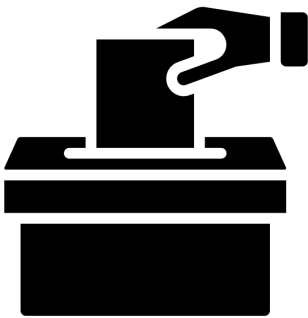
**BALLOT**  
VOTING POWER



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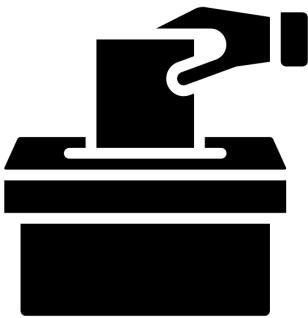
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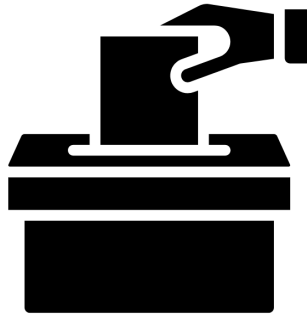
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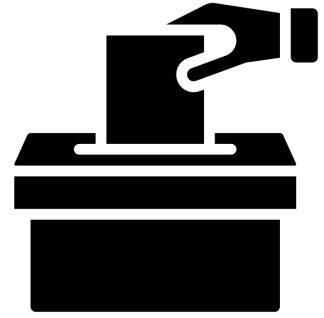
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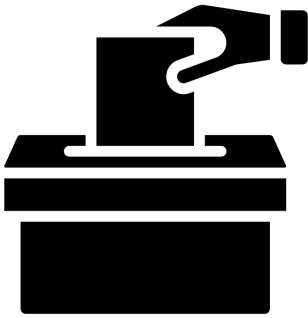
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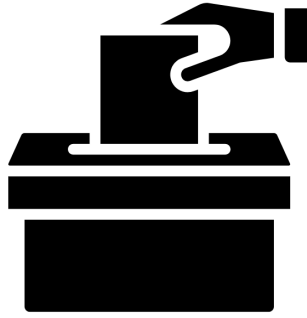
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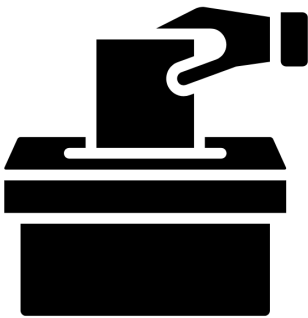
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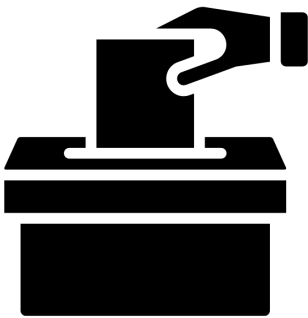
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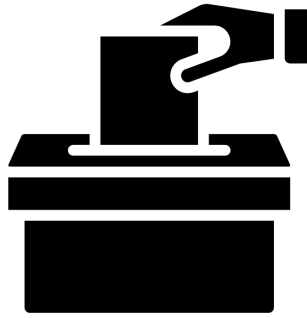
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**ECONOMIC  
REGIME**

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**ECONOMIC  
REGIME**

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**ECONOMIC  
REGIME**

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**ECONOMIC  
REGIME**

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## CAPITALISM

Players may actively trade resource cards with people until everyone is done or 2 minutes has elapsed.

**Governance:** The person or group in power must enforce the time. The time begins whenever they announce it, which could happen before or after an active Political Regime.



## WEAPON

RANK 1-2-3-4-5



## FASCISM

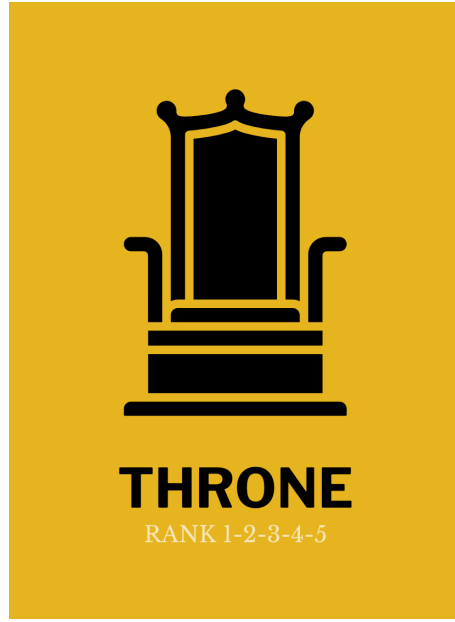
Each player may draw 1 resource card for every prime resource they hold in their hand (i.e. Thrones). Each player must also discard 1 card of the penalty resource if they hold it. The prime and penalty resource can be the same type.

**Governance:** The person or group in power announces the prime resource first and overrules the adding of new cards, then announces the penalty resource that players must discard.



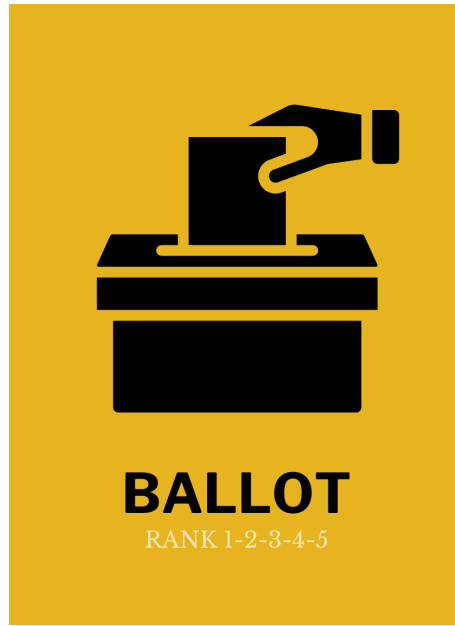
## COIN

RANK 1-2-3-4-5



## THRONE

RANK 1-2-3-4-5



## BALLOT

RANK 1-2-3-4-5



## COMMUNISM

Everyone must have the same number of resource cards at the end of a round, with the exception of the person or group in power, who may hold more.

**Governance:** If this condition is not true, the person or group in power must decide how to rectify it.



## STAR

RANK 1-2-3-4-5



## SOCIALISM

All players must get the same round outcome with respect to gaining or losing resource cards.

**Governance:** If this condition is not true, the person or group in power must decide how to rectify it.

**REGIME  
CHANGE**

**BRI**

**POLITICAL  
REGIME**

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**POLITICAL  
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CHANGE**

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**POLITICAL  
REGIME**

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## POWER RULES

The person or group in power decides whether or not to change the Political and/or Economic Regime.

**Governance:** *If a single person, they announce their decision. If a group, they decide by majority. Ties are broken by rock-paper-scissors.*



## OLIGARCHY

Players may take turns bidding Coins (worth 2) and Thrones (worth 1) to announce their societal status. Anyone within 2 of the highest bidder wins power and keeps their resource card bids. Other player bids are discarded once a winner(s) is decided.

**Governance:** *The winning players work together to determine what everyone must do with resources.*



## DIRECT DEMOCRACY

Anyone may propose an idea for how to govern the round (i.e. draw, discard, or exchange resource cards). When ready, players may cast 1 vote for their favorite proposal using a Ballot, Throne, or Coin. After the vote, Ballots are retrieved by the same players who used them. Thrones and Coins are discarded.

**Governance:** *The elected player shares what everyone can do with resources.*



## OUTSIDE FORCES

Another actor meddles in the nation's affairs, which leads to an automatic Political and Economic Regime change.

**Governance:** *Those not in power are given 1 additional resource card for every Weapon or Throne they hold. New Regime cards are drawn at random.*



## REPRESENTATIVE DEMOCRACY

The 2 players holding the most Ballots may propose an idea for how to govern the round (i.e. draw, discard, or change resource cards). When ready, players may cast 1 vote using a Ballot, Throne, or Coin. After the vote, Ballots and Thrones are retrieved by the same players who used them. Coins are discarded.

**Governance:** *The elected player shares what everyone can do with resources.*

## ANARCHY

In no particular order, players may show a sword to steal up to 2 cards from another player. Swords can also be used to block attacks. All swords are discarded immediately when used.

**Governance:** *The round ends when players stop attacking each other.*



## PEOPLE RISE

Non-ruling citizens close eyes and vote for change by show of hands. First for the Political Regime, then for the Economic Regime (if using them).

**Governance:** *If the group is unanimous for either vote, then a new Regime (drawn at random) begins. If it's not, the Regime remains the same.*



## THEOCRACY

For every Star in a player's hand, they may raise the same number of fingers. Each finger represents an opportunity to request (Go Fish style: "Player, do you have any ----") from anyone's hand.

**Governance:** *Starting with whomever has the highest finger count and rotating clockwise, players make a request and lower 1 finger. Acquired cards are placed on the table and cannot be requested.*



## AUTOCRACY

Players claim the number of Thrones in their hand by placing them face down on the table. Highest claim wins power for the round. If a player believes a claim is false, they may discard 1 resource card to expose a player's down cards. Exposed cards only count if they are Thrones. Non-Thrones are discarded.

**Governance:** *The winning player directs what each player does with resources.*