

VERIDIAN CONTRAPTION

A World-Simulator of Considerable Density and Dubious Intent

ENCYCLOPEDIA & MANUAL

Compiled by the Bureau of Documentation, v0.8

KALLISTI — For the fairest.

This document is generated from the in-game encyclopedia.
All systems described herein are implemented and operational.

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How to Play

You are not in command here.

Veridian Contraption is an autonomous world simulation. It runs whether you attend to it or not. Agents are born, pursue ambitions, form institutions, wage wars, create art, and die without your intervention. You are a witness, an archivist, and on occasion a meddler. The Bureau prepared this reference for the curious. It reassigned the obligated some time ago.

WAYS TO ENGAGE:

Follow an agent and piece together their life over time. Start a war and watch the consequences cascade. Patronize a faction and see how far you can push it. Commission quests and watch agents succeed or fail. Trigger an Eschaton and see what survives. Do nothing at all. The world does not need you, and that is the point.

Watch off-map forces arrive and decide whether to invade, trade, or settle. Open the Atlas (Shift+B) to see what lies beyond the borders. Track agents who leave on expeditions via the Bureau of Absent Persons. Encourage defenses, launch expeditions, or let the world sort itself out.

CONTROLS AT A GLANCE:

SPACE	Pause / unpause the simulation
.	Advance one tick while paused
0-3	Set simulation speed (0.25x to 5x)
?	This help / encyclopedia
i	Search for any entity by name
Tab	Browse all living agents
L	Look mode: move cursor on map, Enter to inspect
e	Export menu (logs, reports, documents)
Shift+B	Atlas: off-map entities, cross-world, Bureau
Shift+A	Auto-pause alert settings
~	Volume and sound settings
Esc	Close any overlay (or return to look mode)

For a full keybinding reference, press Esc to return to the help screen.

World Parameters

Each world is generated with a unique set of governing parameters. These are not difficulty settings. They are the fundamental regulations of the place: its physics, its temperament, its institutional metabolism. Per Bureau policy, no parameter changes once assigned.

TEMPORAL RATE

The rate at which events accumulate and seasons turn. A world with geological temporal rate passes decades before a single war. A frenetic world burns through eras like firewood. Range: 0.1 (geological) to 3.0 (frenetic).

POLITICAL CHURN

The rate at which institutions fracture, reform, and replace their leadership. High churn produces short-lived factions and perpetual coups. Low churn produces ancient bureaucracies that outlast the memory of their founders. The Bureau prefers the latter but does not intervene.

COSMOLOGICAL DENSITY

The frequency of metaphysical disturbance. When this value exceeds 0.65 and tension is high, the world autonomously immanentizes an eschaton. No player input required. Low density produces a world of mundane concerns. High density produces one that vibrates.

ECOLOGICAL VOLATILITY

How quickly animal populations swing, environments shift, and the natural world asserts itself. High volatility means species boom and crash. Low volatility means the deer were here before you and will remain after.

NARRATIVE REGISTER

The prose voice of the world's log entries. Five registers exist: Clinical (detached, observational), Lyrical (ornate, metaphor-laden), Bureaucratic (procedural, form-filing), Ominous (foreboding, portentous), and Conspiratorial (suspicious, implying hidden connections). The Bureau endorses the Bureaucratic register. This preference is not enforceable.

WEIRDNESS COEFFICIENT

The global absurdity dial. Affects naming conventions, event flavor, epithet generation, and eschaton cooldown periods. High weirdness produces oxymoronic epithets and shorter intervals between catastrophes. Low weirdness produces a drier, more orderly world, and one no less strange for it.

MARITIME AFFINITY

How much the world leans toward water. High affinity produces rich fishing industries, thriving ports, and aquatic populations. Low affinity produces a landlocked world where the sea is a rumor and the Bureau's Maritime Division files quarterly reports on nothing.

FLAVOR PRESETS

At world creation you select a preset that biases these values: The Long Bureaucracy (low churn, bureaucratic register), The Burning Provinces (high churn, ominous), The Deep Taxonomy (high ecology, clinical), The Conspiratorial Age (high cosmological density, conspiratorial), or Unguided (fully random).

View your world's parameters at any time by pressing **W**.

Agents & Dispositions

Agents are the individuals of the world. They are born, wander, join institutions, fight, debate, create art, and die. None of them require your attention to do so. The Bureau tracks them regardless.

DISPOSITION

Each agent is governed by four dispositional weights, assigned at birth and fixed thereafter. Per regulation, these cannot be modified by patron action or eschaton event.

Risk Tolerance: willingness to engage danger. Low-risk agents avoid lair patrol zones and contested territory. High-risk agents seek them out, particularly when driven by purpose or restlessness.

Ambition: drive to advance and lead. High-ambition agents pursue institutional rank, found new factions, or seek artifacts of power. Low-ambition agents are content to exist.

Institutional Loyalty: cohesion within organizations. High loyalty means the agent endures doctrinal shifts and remains faithful. Low loyalty means they defect the moment something better presents itself, or because it is Tuesday.

Paranoia: suspicion and wariness. Affects willingness to form relationships, sensitivity to rival factions, and likelihood of perceiving threats that may or may not exist.

GOALS

At any moment an agent pursues a single goal: Wander, Seek a Settlement, Rest, Join or Advance in an Institution, Explore a Site, Acquire an Artifact, Pursue a Quest, or Seek Healing. Goals shift based on circumstances, injuries, institutional obligations, and whatever the world demands of them.

EPITHETS

Agents earn epithets through significant deeds: surviving multiple wars, winning notable debates, completing difficult quests, or holding institutional office. These are permanent honorifics appended to the agent's name (e.g., 'the Unyielding'). Worlds with high weirdness produce oxymoronic and surreal epithets. A cooldown between acquisitions prevents an agent from becoming a walking title page.

VIEWING AGENTS

Press **i** to search for any agent by name, or **Tab** to browse all living agents. Press **f** to follow an agent on the map. The view tracks their position and the log highlights their actions.

Institutions

Institutions are the factions, guilds, governments, and cults that give shape to collective life. Ambitious agents found them. They accumulate power and treasury, adopt doctrines, and then schism, collapse, or outlast the world that produced them. The Bureau maintains files on all of them, including the ones that no longer exist.

KINDS

Guild: artisan cooperatives and trade associations. Government: administrative and civic bodies. Cult: belief-centered organizations, some secret, some less so. Mercenary Company: military contractors, loyal to payment. Regulatory Body: standards enforcers, licensing authorities, and other instruments of procedural suffocation. Secret Society: hidden organizations with concealed agendas.

CHARTER vs. ACTUAL FUNCTION Every institution is founded with a stated purpose. Over time, its actual function diverges. A guild chartered to regulate masonry becomes a de facto intelligence network. The simulation tracks both; inspect a faction to see the gap.

DOCTRINES

Each institution holds 2-4 doctrinal positions: ideological commitments that shape behavior, recruitment, and relationships. Doctrines shift through eschaton events (particularly the Doctrinal Cascade), leadership changes, or patron influence.

RELATIONSHIPS

Institutions relate to one another as Allied, Mutual Defense, Treaty, Neutral, Rival, or Disputed (with a specific grievance). Affinity is computed from shared enemies, territorial proximity, doctrinal alignment, and diplomatic stance. Press Shift+D for the diplomacy overview.

GOVERNANCE

Each faction has a diplomatic stance (Cooperative, Isolationist, Expansionist, or Aggressive) and a succession rule (Meritocratic, Hereditary, Electoral, or By Force). These shape behavior and leadership transitions. See the Politics & Espionage section for details.

FOUNDING

Ambitious agents found new institutions on their own. You can also found factions via the Patron Actions menu (Shift+P), choosing kind, location, name, and initial doctrines.

INSTITUTIONAL DECAY

Institutions older than 500 ticks accumulate a chaos_deficit: a measure of how far the organization has drifted from its founding purpose toward procedural self-preservation. The Bureau recognizes this tendency without irony.

The `greyface_index` tracks the ratio of bureaucratic overhead to productive activity. As the index climbs, the institution generates less meaningful output and more internal memoranda. Purpose drift log entries appear when the gap between charter and function grows acute.

Institutions with high chaos deficit grow rigid, respond to change with additional memoranda, and fracture under pressure from schism or revolt. Eschaton events can reset or accelerate the process.

VIEWING FACTIONS

Press F for the faction list. Select any faction for a full dossier: membership, treasury, doctrines, relationships, and a history of significant events.

Politics & Espionage

Diplomacy, espionage, leadership, and ideology are active systems that shape the world's power structures. Some of this is visible. Much of it is not.

DIPLOMATIC STANCE

Every faction adopts a stance that shapes its behavior: Cooperative: favors alliances and summits. Isolationist: avoids entanglements, slow to ally or rival. Expansionist: seeks territory and influence. Aggressive: prone to war, coups, and purges. Inspect any faction (F) to see its stance in the Governance section.

MOTIVATED RELATIONSHIPS

Affinity is computed from shared enemies, territorial proximity, doctrinal alignment, and diplomatic stance. High affinity trends toward alliance; low affinity trends toward rivalry. The Bureau notes that these calculations are deterministic, not sentimental.

SUCCESSION & LEADERSHIP

When a faction leader dies or is deposed, succession follows the faction's rule: Meritocratic (highest influence), Hereditary (longest tenure), Electoral (most popular), or By Force (best fighter). Succession crises occur when the rule fails: no valid heir, a contested claim, or a leadership vacuum. These trigger schisms.

Leader personality shapes faction behavior. Paranoid leaders increase purge and espionage rates. Ambitious leaders provoke wars and coups. Loyal leaders stabilize but resist change.

ESPIONAGE

Secret Societies and Cults favor Infiltrate quests: agents embed in rival factions to steal intelligence, sabotage operations, or sow dissent. Governments and Regulatory Bodies favor Counter-Intelligence: rooting out infiltrators before they act.

Detection runs on paranoia-vs-paranoia. The target faction's collective paranoia is weighed against the infiltrator's. High paranoia on both sides produces a tense, recursive surveillance loop.

ALLIANCE MILITARY COORDINATION

Allied and Mutual Defense factions muster levies when their ally declares or is targeted by war. Up to 2 allies join per side, creating multi-faction conflicts.

POLITICAL EVENTS

Coups: ambitious leaders with military backing attempt to seize power. Success depends on disposition scores, not random chance. Purges: paranoid leaders expel members (1 + paranoia x2, cap 3). Show Trials: public spectacles

that damage reputations and consolidate power through theatrical accusation. Diplomatic Summits: rival factions de-escalate through Rival to Disputed to Neutral. Cooperative stances favor summits.

DEMAGOGUES & IDEOLOGICAL SPREAD

Formidable debaters (6+ wins) with high ambition and theological certainty rise as demagogues. They spread their faction's doctrine to neighboring non-rival factions. Over time, this creates ideological blocs and homogenizes belief across allied institutions.

VIEWING POLITICS

The Governance section in each faction's detail view (F) shows the leader, diplomatic stance, succession rule, and spending priorities. Press Shift+D for the diplomacy overview.

Combat & Debate

Agents resolve physical conflicts through combat and ideological conflicts through debate. Both systems use weighted dice. The outcome is probabilistic, shaped by experience, age, and context.

COMBAT

Combat weight is calculated from risk tolerance, age (peaks at 30-45, declines past 70), experience tier, current injuries, and site-specific danger multipliers.

Experience Tiers: Untested: has never fought. Blooded: has survived 1-2 combats. Seasoned: has survived 3-5 combats. Dangerous: has survived 6 or more combats.

Injuries: Bruised: recovers in ~30 ticks. Wounded: recovers in ~120 ticks. Gravely Wounded: recovers in ~300 ticks. Agent seeks healing.

Outcomes are Win, Loss, or Draw. The margin determines injury severity and the quality of the log narration.

DEBATE

Rhetorical weight draws on ambition, institutional loyalty, age (peaks at 35-55; rhetoric favors experience over youth), and debate experience tier.

Experience Tiers: Unproven: has never debated. Conversant: has won 1-2 debates. Practiced: has won 3-5 debates. Formidable: has won 6 or more debates.

Context matters. Debates within shared institutions, between rivals, or as ambition challenges each produce different effects on influence, reputation, and factional standing.

Winning debates accumulates influence. At 3.0 influence points, an agent can challenge for institutional leadership.

DEMAGOGUES

Formidable debaters (6+ wins) with high ambition and theological certainty rise as demagogues, spreading their faction's doctrine to neighboring factions. See Politics & Espionage.

MILITARY & WAR

Factions raise levies from allied settlements and wage wars. Levies consist of militia, cavalry (requires nearby horse farms), and artillery (requires 200+ sp treasury).

Levy Lifecycle: Mustering (100-200 ticks) -> Marching -> Engaged -> Returning

Battles resolve via a Combat Results Table (CRT): a d100 roll across 7 odds columns (-2 to +4). Outcomes: Attacker Eliminated, Attacker Retreat, Exchange, Defender Retreat, Defender Eliminated.

Column Shift Modifiers: Terrain (defenders in mountains/hills +1), Commander present, Artillery bonus, Cavalry on plains, Famine penalty, Dread penalty.

Commanders volunteer based on disposition. Surviving 2+ wars earns military epithets. The simulation generates war memorials at conclusion.

Logistics (Engels Model): Levies carry supplies with 15% overhead. Terrain foraging helps. Low supplies reduce combat effectiveness and speed. Exhausted levies auto-retreat. Campaigns fizzle rather than deadlock.

War Goals: Raid (quick strike, steal resources), Occupation (sustained campaign, institutional control changes), or Tower Assault (siege a wizard's tower).

TOWER ASSAULTS

Factions declare war on wizard towers when provoked by rogue wizards, necromantic activity, or territorial disputes.

Tower defense strength depends on the wizard's power and tradition:

Elementalist	Elemental fury, direct combat magic
Necromancer	Undead garrison supplements defenders
Geomancer	Living stonework; the tower itself fights
Bureaucromancer	Contractual entanglements slow attackers
Cleric	Divine wardens bolster defense
Illusionist	Phantom defenders, numerically impressive, structurally unreliable

Outcomes: TowerFallen (wizard defeated or fled), TowerDefended (assault repelled). A fallen tower can be reoccupied.

LEVY MORALE

Each levy carries a morale value from 0.0 to 1.0. Fresh levies muster at 0.9. Morale drains from low supplies, distance from home, extended campaigns, and battle losses.

Morale Tiers: Excellent (0.8+): full combat strength. Good (0.6-0.8): minor strain, no penalty. Fair (0.4-0.6): reduced effectiveness. Poor (0.2-0.4): significant combat penalty. Panic (below 0.2): the panic cliff. Levy routs and retreats immediately regardless of orders.

Morale recovers slowly when resupplied or resting near friendly settlements. Victories restore a portion.

TERRAIN STRENGTH MULTIPLIERS

Terrain modifies effective strength in battle: Mountains: defenders x1.5, attackers x0.7

Hills:	defenders x1.3, attackers x0.9
Forest:	defenders x1.2, attackers x0.85
Desert:	both sides x0.8 (heat exhaustion)
Plains:	no modifier

Mountains also grant a +1 CRT column shift to defenders, the sole terrain-based CRT exception. Cavalry is nullified in forest and mountain terrain.

COMBAT EFFECTIVENESS VALUE (CEV)

Each faction accumulates a CEV rating from 0.0 to 1.0. CEV grows with each battle survived. A faction that has fought four wars fields more capable soldiers than one that has fought none, even at equal numbers.

SURPRISE

The first engagement of a war grants the aggressor a surprise bonus: +1 CRT shift and a defender morale penalty. Ambush conditions (forest terrain, high CEV disparity) amplify the effect. Surprise applies once per war.

WAR STAKES & POLITICAL EXHAUSTION

Each war carries a stake_value from 1 to 5 representing how much the belligerents care about the outcome: 1: border skirmish, low commitment 3: territorial dispute, moderate investment 5: survival war, fight to collapse

As casualties mount relative to stakes, political exhaustion accumulates. When exhaustion exceeds the stake_value, both sides withdraw. The war ends in fatigue, the treasury spent, the casus belli forgotten.

CAMPAIGN STRAIN

Levies on extended marches accumulate campaign_strain. Strain grows with distance, poor supply, and adverse terrain. High strain accelerates morale drain and increases friction event frequency. An overstretched army reaches its culminating point and must withdraw.

FRICTION EVENTS

Marching armies generate friction: misrouted supply trains, desertions at river crossings, contradictory orders from distant patrons, and other complications that erode strength before any battle occurs. These appear as log entries during movement phases.

Trade & Economy

Settlements produce and consume goods. Caravans carry them between towns. Prices fluctuate with supply and demand. Off-map traders arrive from places that do not appear on your map but presumably exist. The economy tracks 27 distinct trade goods moving through real space.

TRADE GOODS

Raw materials: Timber, Stone, Iron Ore, Copper, Tin. Agricultural: Grain, Fish, Livestock. Crafted: Tools, Cloth, Weapons, Books, Furniture. Animal-derived: Pelts, Bone, Tallow, Feathers. Specialty: Desert Glass, Mountain Herbs, River Pearls, Amber. Luxury: Spices, Ambergris, Gems, Rare Materials. Institutional: Relics, Seals, Contraband.

PRICES

Base prices range from 3 silver (Grain) to 60 (Ambergris). Supply and demand shift prices between 0.33x (glut) and 3.0x (scarcity). Each settlement tracks a 10-point price history per good.

CARAVANS

2-4 agents form a caravan and pathfind to a destination. Naval caravans move at double speed with double capacity but require water routes. Raiders strike once per trip at most. Secret societies operate contraband smuggling variants with smaller, stealthier caravans.

BRIDGES

Constructed between settlements to improve land trade routes. Bridge integrity degrades over time, especially during geological eschatons. Some bridges are pre-placed during world generation.

NAVAL TRADE & SEA ROUTES

Port settlements (coastal, Town+ size) form naval caravans that travel by sea. Two ports discover a sea route when they attempt trade and an ocean path exists between them.

Naval caravans carry 2x cargo at 2x speed vs land caravans. They use composite pathfinding: land to port, sea route, port to destination.

PIRACY

Naval caravans face piracy risk each tick in transit. Short voyages face ~15% total piracy chance; long voyages ~48%. Piracy scales with maritime_affinity. Factions form piracy pacts (cooperative defense) or suppression agreements.

FISHING

Port settlements operate fishing fleets (2-6 crew each) that deplete local ecology zones over time. Maritime affinity governs how prominent fishing is in your world. Overfishing triggers warning events.

VIEWING TRADE

Press e for the Export menu, then Economic Report for trade flows, price histories, caravan logs, and off-map trade. The Maritime Report shows sea routes, naval history, piracy, and port status.

Ecology

The world is inhabited by more than agents. Animal populations occupy biomes, migrate, breed, hunt each other, and are hunted in turn. Ecological volatility governs how dramatic the swings. The Bureau's Naturalist Division monitors all of it.

SPECIES BY BIOME

Plains: Deer, Aurochs, Wolf. Forest: Boar, Bear, Fox. Mountains: Mountain Goat, Eagle, Cave Bear. Coastal: Heron, Otter, Seal. Desert: Scorpion, Sand Fox, Vulture. Aquatic: River Fish, Sea Fish, Salmon, Eel, Crab. Marine: Whale, Shark, Dolphin, Sea Turtle. Rare: Giant Squid, White Stag, Phoenix Hawk.

SIZES

Small (2 food per hunt), Medium (8 food), Large (20 food). Size affects danger: a Bear is Aggressive, a Deer is Passive, a Fox is Cautious.

PREDATOR-PREY DYNAMICS

Carnivores suppress herbivore populations. Herbivores consume vegetation capacity. Overhunting by settlements depletes local stocks. Fishing fleets target aquatic zones.

ECOLOGICAL DISRUPTION

Monster lairs suppress food production in their blight radius. Eschatons (especially The Arrival of Something Owed and The Geological Argument) disrupt ecology. Wildlife reclaims abandoned settlements.

VIEWING ECOLOGY

Press e for Export menu, then Ecology Report for population trends, species overviews, predator/prey data, and notable ecological events.

Quests

Quests are tasks assigned to agents. Some arise from the simulation itself: factions commissioning patrols, settlements requesting defense. Others you commission via the Quest Board (Shift+Q). The Bureau files all quest outcomes regardless of patron involvement.

QUEST TYPES

Slay Beast: eliminate a monster in a target zone. Hunt Rare Beast: track a White Stag or Phoenix Hawk. Retrieve Artifact: recover a specific artifact from a site. Escort Caravan: guard a caravan to its destination. Deliver Item: transport a described item to a settlement. Investigate Site: explore and report on a dungeon or ruin. Investigate Mine: assess a mine's condition and resources. Sabotage Rival: undermine a faction via theft, defection, or prestige damage. Found Settlement: establish a new settlement at a location. Found Site: build a new site (farm, fortification, mine). Patrol Route: maintain a presence in a region for a duration. Defend Settlement: protect a settlement for a set period. Reopen Mine / Clear Mine: restore a depleted or blocked mine. Infiltrate: embed an agent in a rival faction (espionage). Counter-Intelligence: root out infiltrators in your ranks.

STATUS

Available, Negotiating, Active, then Succeeded, Failed, or Expired. Eschatons suspend active quests.

REWARDS

Quests pay silver, reputation (Minor/Notable/Major), faction standing, artifacts, food, or relationship improvements. During negotiation, agents counter-offer on payment. The Bureau advises accepting reasonable terms.

COMMISSIONING

On the Quest Board (Shift+Q), tab to Player Quests and press C to commission a new quest. Select a type, target, and bounty. The simulation assigns an available agent.

Eschatons

An eschaton is a world-altering catastrophe. It does not end the simulation. Nothing ends the simulation. It will reshape geography, institutions, population, and the general mood. The Bureau classifies these events under Form 7-Omega and recommends advance preparation. The nature of that preparation is left unspecified.

TRIGGERING

Press Shift+E to immanentize the eschaton (confirmation required; you select a type, then confirm). The world triggers one on its own when cosmological density exceeds 0.65 and tension exceeds 0.7. Cooldown: 300-700 ticks between eschatons (shorter in high-weirdness worlds). Foreshadowing log entries appear roughly 200 ticks before autonomous fire.

TYPES

The Reckoning of Debts 60-70% of all factions dissolve. Treasuries vanish. Trade ceases. The resulting power vacuum drives rapid reformation. The Bureau's accounting division filed a formal objection.

The Taxonomic Correction Epithets stripped and reassigned. Faction names rewritten. Reputations reset. Administratively disruptive but physically harmless. The Bureau considers this the worst kind of apocalypse.

The Administrative Singularity New institutions proliferate and drain settlement treasuries. Active quests suspended during processing. Doctrines reassigned between factions without consultation.

The Geological Argument Terrain shifts without warning. Sites collapse. Bridges fall. Rivers reroute. Caravans in transit do not arrive. New sites and artifacts surface from the disruption.

The Doctrinal Cascade Factions with sufficient membership schism into splinter bodies. Splinters auto-rival their parents. Alliances dissolve. Agents defect. Faction-issued quests fail.

The Arrival of Something Owed Mass migration displaces 20-30% of the population. Hamlets abandoned. New settlements founded. Trade routes voided. Ecology reclaims vacated territories.

The Return of the Undying (rare) A dormant historical figure manifests. A restoration cult surges. A forgotten beast spawns as avatar. An opposition coalition forms over 400 ticks. If world tension drops below 0.4, the coalition repels the Undying. If tension holds, the Undying establishes a permanent presence. The Bureau has no official position on the theological implications.

AFTERMATH

Every eschaton resets tension to 0.0, drops cosmological density, and begins a new era in the World Annals. The status bar flashes the eschaton type. The world continues. It always continues.

Each eschaton generates a cosmic indifference observation: a supplementary Bureau entry acknowledging that the event did not require the participation or awareness of those it affected. The universe did not consult any of the Bureau's departments before making the adjustment.

Patron Actions

You are the patron. You do not control the world, but you have a budget and a menu. Patron actions spend from your reserves (shown as \square in the status bar). Access them via Shift+P. The Bureau records your interventions without comment.

AVAILABLE ACTIONS

Sponsor Artist Select a living artist to receive patronage. Increases their creation frequency. Results vary. Patronage is not a contract.

Introduce Rumor Target an agent, faction, or settlement with a rumor in one of several tones. Rumors affect reputation and relationships. Per standing policy, the Bureau does not originate rumors. It catalogs them.

Trade Embargo Block trade between two settlements. Disrupts caravan routes and local economies.

Seed Rivalry Incite tension between two factions. Consequences include war, defection, and doctrinal disputes. Responsibility lies with the patron.

Grant Title Bestow an epithet on a chosen agent. Purely honorific but permanently recorded.

Commission a Craft Order a specific weapon or armor from a named smith. Cost varies by item type (25-50 sp).

Fund Shipyard Upgrade Accelerate a harbor's expansion to full shipyard (100 sp).

Commission Blockade Pay a faction with a shipyard to blockade a rival port (150 sp).

Sponsor Piracy Suppression Fund naval patrols near a port settlement (50 sp).

Encourage Defenses Accelerate fortification growth at the most vulnerable town or city (20 sp). Boosts wall-building rate for several cycles.

FACTION-LEVEL PATRONAGE

From the Faction Detail view (F, then select faction), additional patronage actions are available: **Fund**: inject silver into a faction's treasury. **Suggest Doctrine**: propose a new doctrinal position. **Encourage Alliance/Rivalry**: push a faction toward a specific relationship with another faction.

BUDGET

Your patron budget replenishes gradually. Costs vary by action. The budget is displayed in the status bar. The Bureau notes that fiscal restraint, while admirable, is not required.

Sites & Dungeons

Sites are the places of the world beyond settlements: dungeons, ruins, shrines, mines, and stranger locations. They contain rooms across multiple floors, each with a purpose and inhabitants. The Bureau surveys them all, though not all surveyors return.

SITE KINDS

Dungeon: dangerous, multi-floor, high combat multiplier. Ruin: collapsed remnant of a former structure. Shrine: mildly sacred, lower danger. Bureaucratic Annex: administrative, low danger, many filing rooms. Controversial Tombsite: contested burial ground. Taxonomically Ambiguous Region: high danger, organic walls. Abandoned Institution: former headquarters, still haunted by purpose. Waystation / Outpost / Market: settlement-adjacent sites that grow, decline, or are abandoned based on occupancy. Bandit Camp: dangerous, settlement-adjacent. Hermitage: solitary. Often empty. Farm: produces food, linked to a settlement. Fortification: defensive outpost. Mine: terrain-gated to mountains/hills, has depletion system. Wizard Tower: constructed by wizards (power > 0.4, 200+ sp). R'lyeh: the sunken city. Surfaces mid-to-late game.

MINES

Mines produce specific ore types based on terrain: mountains favor iron, hills favor copper, tin is rarer on both. Ore depletes over time. Exhausted mines decline toward abandonment.

Earthquakes (anomalies) collapse active mines within their radius (40% chance). Collapsed mines become ruins marked 'dug too deep.' ReopenMine quests restore them.

High-value mines also produce Gems (30% bonus) and Coal (50%).

ROOM TYPES

Storage, Ritual, Administrative, Habitation, Trophy, Tavern, Market, Temple, Garrison, Filing Room, Archive Vault, Tomb Chamber, Mine Shaft, Ore Vein, and many others.

SITE LIFECYCLE

Settlement-adjacent sites grow or decline based on occupancy. Below minimum thresholds they decline; at zero they are abandoned and become ruins. Mines deplete over time.

VIEWING SITES

Press s for the site list. Select a site to view its interior map floor by floor. Agents inside sites appear by glyph.

Artifacts

Artifacts are named objects of significance. They are generated during world creation, discovered in sites, created through institutional processes, or unearthed by geological eschatons. The Bureau maintains a registry. The registry is incomplete.

KINDS

Weapon: instruments of violence, often claimed by factions. Document: written records, treaties, or correspondence. Vessel: containers of various capacities and purposes. Instrument: tools of measurement, music, or divination. Relic: objects of veneration or historical import. Formal Writ: bureaucratic instruments with legal force. Taxonomic Specimen: preserved samples of disputed classification. Key to Something: it unlocks something. What, exactly, is a matter of ongoing institutional debate.

PROPERTIES

Each artifact has a material, 1-3 descriptive properties, and an ownership history tracking every agent and institution that has possessed it.

LOCATION

Artifacts can be in a site, held by an agent, stored in a settlement, or lost (location unknown). Quests target artifact retrieval. Factions claim institutional ownership regardless of physical possession.

VIEWING ARTIFACTS

Artifacts appear in agent inspect views (when held), site views (when stored), and in the Campaign Dossier export.

Lairs & Monsters

Lairs appear on the map when something unpleasant takes up residence. They suppress food production, spread blight across nearby tiles, and generate dread in neighboring settlements. The Bureau classifies them by tier and advises caution.

MONSTER TIERS

Minor: patrol radius 3, modest combat weight. A nuisance. Major: patrol radius 5, significant combat weight. A problem. Forgotten: patrol radius 7, formidable combat weight. The kind of thing that earns its own entry in the annals.

CREATURE TYPES

Beast: terrain advantage in plains and forests. Fast patrol. Aberration: spreads additional dread and paranoia. Remnant: damage reduction. Difficult to kill cleanly. Elemental: strong in home terrain, weakened elsewhere.

FORGOTTEN BEASTS

Forgotten-tier monsters possess unique traits: Massive Size (extended patrol, harder to fight), Apparent Intelligence (disturbing), Resistance to Injury (damage reduction), Unnatural Stillness (extreme dread), or the ability to Draw Lesser Creatures (spawns minions in the lair).

BLIGHT

Each lair spreads blight in a radius proportional to its tier. Blighted tiles appear dimmed on the map. Food production in the blight zone drops 10-30% depending on tier. Aberration lairs produce a distinct purple-magenta tint.

SLAYING

Agents receive Slay Beast quests targeting a lair zone. Combat with lair inhabitants uses the standard combat system with site-specific danger multipliers.

Art & Poetry

Some agents are artists. They create poems, paintings, sculptures, and performances that circulate through the world, accumulate reputation, and on occasion outlast the civilizations that produced them. The Bureau catalogs all works regardless of quality.

ARTIST TYPES

Poet: writes verse in structured forms. Bard: performs for audiences. Reception varies. Visual Artist: creates paintings and sculptures.

PRODUCTIVITY

Each artist has a productivity profile: Driven (creates under negative emotion: grief, anger, loss), Contemplative (creates when stable or content), or Mercurial (creates unpredictably).

POEM FORMS

Elegy: for deaths and losses. Three stanzas, four lines. Observational: quiet reflection. Two stanzas, four lines. Lament: for collapses and betrayals. Four stanzas, three lines. Satirical: sharp commentary. One or two stanzas. Ode: for victories and alliances. Two stanzas, four lines. Abstract: freeform meditation. Six to ten lines.

REPUTATION

Local (fewer than 4 works), Regional (4+ works, moderate skill), Renowned (8+ works or a great work, high skill), Legendary (great work with exceptional skill).

GREAT WORKS

On occasion an artist produces a work of exceptional quality. Great works spread faster, boost reputation, and are noted in the World Annals.

PATRONAGE

Sponsor an artist via Patron Actions (Shift+P). This increases their creation frequency. Use P/N in the agent inspect view to browse an artist's portfolio.

Anomalies

Anomalies are localized world events with multi-phase lifecycles. They occur autonomously throughout the simulation. The Bureau tracks 16 distinct types.

TYPES (16)

Harmful (~40%): Earthquake, Wildfire, Flood, Plague, Drought. Beneficial (~30%): Bumper Harvest, Vein Discovery, The Calm, Migration Wave, Cultural Flowering, Trade Wind. Weird (~30%): Cartographic Disagreement, Rain of Objects, The Silence, The Misfile, The Census Error.

LIFECYCLE

Each anomaly progresses through three phases: Onset: initial detection, prose entry, early effects. Peak: strongest effects, terrain/population changes. Recovery: effects fade, world adapts. Total durations range from 150-500 ticks depending on type. Most anomalies have a localized radius of effect (0-6 tiles).

NOTABLE INTERACTIONS

Earthquake + Mine: 40% chance to collapse active mines within the epicenter. Collapsed mines become ruins, generate ReopenMine quests. Earthquake + Lair: 20% chance to spawn a new Minor lair (the quake revealed it). Cartographic Disagreement: alters terrain types temporarily, saving and restoring original state. Coastal anomalies disrupt fishing yields and squid populations.

ANOMALY EVENTS

AnomalyOnset, AnomalyPeak, and AnomalyRecovery are logged with full bureaucratic prose. They appear under the Anomalies log filter category.

COSMIC OBSERVATIONS

During anomaly peaks, particularly those of the Weird category, supplementary reports may appear in which the Bureau's instruments and taxonomy fail to describe what they are observing. The log records the inadequacy of the measurement, since the measurement is all that survived the attempt.

Crafting & Equipment

Settlements contain workshops staffed by craftspeople who produce equipment and trade goods from raw materials.

WORKSHOPS

Three crafter types: Blacksmith (metal weapons/armor), Bowyer (ranged weapons), Leatherworker (leather armor). Crafters are seeded among guild members based on local terrain resources.

Production runs every 50 ticks, consuming raw materials and producing items with quality scaled by the crafter's skill. Skill advances with each item crafted.

WEAPONS

Four types with distinct combat interactions: Blade: effective against leather armor. Polearm: effective against shields. Blunt: effective against metal/plate armor. Ranged: grants a first-strike advantage in combat.

ARMOR

Three types with distinct resistances: Leather: light, moderate protection. Metal: heavy, strong protection, weak to blunt. Shield: blocks polearms, general defense bonus.

QUALITY

Items range from Poor to Masterwork. Higher quality means stronger combat modifiers. Masterwork items are logged as notable events.

EQUIPMENT ACQUISITION

Settlement stockpiles store crafted gear. Agents equip the best available weapons and armor; adventurers and quest-pursuers take priority. Equipment from fallen agents returns to the nearest settlement stockpile.

ENCHANTMENT & CURSES

Equipment acquires magical properties through proximity to anomalies, artifacts, or eschaton aftereffects.

Enchantments (beneficial):

- Warding: increases wielder's combat defense
- Bolstering: boosts wielder's combat strength
- Dread: penalizes opponents in combat
- Mending: accelerates injury recovery
- Swiftiness: reduces movement cost across terrain

Curses (detrimental, decay over time):

- Weakness: reduces combat effectiveness
- Binding: agent cannot discard the item

Beacon: attracts hostile attention and targeting
Siphon: drains the wielder's health over time
Discord: disrupts the wielder's relationships

Curses can be cleansed. Intelligent weapons develop desires and influence their wielders. Equipment of sufficient distinction is promoted to full artifact status.

CRAFT COMMISSIONS

Commission specific items via Patron Actions. Pick a crafter and item type (25-50 sp). Factions controlling workshops bias output toward weapons for their levies.

Magic

Magic is rare, consequential, and entangled with every other system. A typical world sustains 2-5 active wizards at any given time. Each one reshapes factional politics by existing.

AWAKENING PATHS

Grimoire Discovery: an agent exploring a site finds a magical text. Self-taught, experimental, unpredictable. **Mentor Apprenticeship:** an existing wizard takes on a nearby high-ambition agent. The apprentice inherits the mentor's tradition. **Innate Awakening:** spontaneous manifestation. Wild, instinctive, feared by institutions. Very rare.

MAGICAL TRADITIONS

Necromancer: raises named dead agents from the world's history. After battles, raises fallen soldiers as undead levy units (0.7x militia strength, no food upkeep). Also raises dead wildlife as undead fauna that terrorize nearby agents and suppress ecology. **Faction-polarizing.** **Elementalist:** offensive magical power. Force multiplier in combat. Valued by military-minded factions. **Geomancer:** terrain manipulation. Reshapes tiles: desert to plains, hills to plains, mountains to hills. Alters trade routes. **Bureaucromancer:** institutional magic. Binding oaths that strengthen factions. Files paperwork in triplicate and it works. **Cleric:** healing and recovery. Desired by all factions, which makes them the most politically contested tradition. **Illusionist:** deception magic. Plants false rumors that spread faster than real ones, creates phantom census entries, and confuses espionage detection. In combat, debuffs opponents rather than dealing damage. Thrives in Conspiratorial Age worlds.

CORRUPTION

Magic has no mana pool. Each working exacts a cost: corruption accumulates, aging accelerates, health degrades. At 25% corruption, visible changes. At 50%, physical decline. At 75%, alarming deterioration.

WIZARD TOWERS

Wizards with sufficient power and wealth construct a personal tower (site type). Multi-room: Arcane Library, Laboratory, Sanctum. Towers appear on the map as a violet spire glyph.

ROGUE WIZARDS

High-ambition, low-loyalty wizards with significant corruption go rogue, severing all institutional ties and becoming world-level threats. Quests are generated against them.

SYSTEM INTEGRATION

Politics: factions compete to recruit wizards. **Bureaucromancers** strengthen institutional power through binding oaths. **War:** wizards provide combat bonuses. **Elementalists** are battlefield assets. **Espionage:** factions with wizard members detect infiltrators more effectively (magical surveillance). **Eschatons:** wizard research raises cosmological density. More wizards means faster eschaton triggers. **Ecology:** necromancer presence suppresses nearby wildlife.

VIEWING WIZARDS

The agent inspect overlay (i or Enter in look mode) shows a MAGIC section for wizards: tradition, power, awakening path, corruption, mentor, apprentices trained, tower, and rogue status.

R'lyeh & Deep Ones

R'lyeh is the sunken city, an ancient structure beneath the sea. Over time, driven by maritime affinity, cosmological density, and coastal cult activity, R'lyeh draws closer to the surface. The Bureau monitors its proximity with concern it declines to specify.

PROXIMITY & FORESHADOWING

R'lyeh proximity (0-100%) is visible in World Parameters (W key). As proximity rises, foreshadowing events fire at three thresholds:

25%: Coastal Unease. Squid sightings double. Settlements grow uneasy. The sea seems attentive. 50%: Fisherman Disappearances. Fishing yields drop, crews go missing. Nets return half-empty or containing strange things. 75%: R'lyeh Stirs. The sea floor rises. Coastlines shift. Tension spikes. The cartographers are distressed.

SURFACING (100%)

When proximity reaches 100%, R'lyeh surfaces on a deep water tile near a coastal settlement. This creates: - The R'lyeh site (on the map, eldritch teal) - A Deep One monster lair with lesser inhabitants - A Deep One Cult institution (auto-rivals governments) This is a mid-to-late game event (typically 5,000-15,000 ticks).

FACTORS THAT ACCELERATE SURFACING

- High maritime_affinity: more water, more proximity growth - High cosmological_density: metaphysical energy feeds the deep - Coastal cults: each cult near water adds +50% to growth - Deep One Cults: each adds +150% (much faster) - Conspiratorial Age narrative register: +50% multiplier

DEEP ONE BEHAVIOR (POST-SURFACING)

Every 200 ticks the Deep Ones act: - Recruitment: nearby agents with low loyalty or high ambition join the Deep One Cult. - Dark Bargains: coastal settlements receive mysterious silver deposits from subaquatic investors. - Encounters: agents near R'lyeh experience unsettling meetings that raise their paranoia. - Ongoing tension: R'lyeh's presence raises world tension.

COUNTER-MEASURES

- Cleric wizards perform warding rites that push proximity back and weaken the Deep One Cult's power. - Governments and Regulatory Bodies auto-rival the cult. - Levy forces assault R'lyeh's lair like any monster lair. - High-paranoia agents resist recruitment more effectively.

DEEP ONES AS MONSTERS

Deep Ones are a unique creature type with aquatic specialization: - +20% combat bonus in water tiles - Slight penalty on land (-5%) - 5% damage reduction (tough aquatic hide) - Patrol interval: 75 ticks (faster than standard monsters)
The R'lyeh lair spawns as discovered and Major tier.

COSMIC INDIFFERENCE

When R'lyeh surfaces, the Bureau appends a secondary observation noting the event's indifference to human awareness or consent. These entries reflect phenomena that occur at scales where agency is not a relevant concept. The Bureau classifies them but does not pretend to understand them.

Beyond the Map

The world is not alone. Beyond the borders of the mapped territory, civilizations rise, migrate, and on occasion direct their attention toward you. Off-map entities are generated based on world parameters and arrive with varying intentions. The Bureau keeps a ledger.

DISPOSITIONS

- Conqueror: seeks territory by force. Likely to invade.
- Mercantile: seeks profit. Likely to parley and trade.
- Refugee: displaced people seeking a new home.
- Expeditionary: explorers and scouts. Unpredictable.
- Religious: zealous missionaries. Invade or parley.

FORESHADOWING

Off-map entities do not appear without warning. Three tiers of foreshadowing precede each arrival: 1. Rumors: vague merchant reports (in log) 2. Sightings: confirmed border presence 3. Imminent: forces visible, arrival within 100-200 ticks

ARRIVAL & DECISIONS

Forces arrive by land (map edge) or by sea (coast). On arrival, the force evaluates local conditions and chooses: - Invade: lays siege to the nearest settlement - Parley: trade, alliance, tribute demand, or failed talks - Settle: founds a new hamlet in unclaimed territory - Fragment: force dissolves, members scatter into local life

Decision weights depend on disposition, force strength relative to local defenses, target wealth, and distance.

FORCE COMPOSITION

Levy: disorganized group with a single leader. Refugees, raids. Structured: leader + lieutenants + specialists. Empires, missions. Structured forces establish supply caches during siege approach.

WORLD PARAMETERS & FREQUENCY

maritime_affinity: more naval arrivals, mercantile visitors cosmological_density: stranger, more exotic entities political_churn: more conqueror/refugee types Arrival frequency ramps: rare before tick 5000, steady after 15000.

Sieges & Fortifications

When an off-map force chooses to invade, it lays siege to the nearest settlement. Sieges are prolonged engagements driven by supply logistics, morale, and equipment.

FORTIFICATION

Towns and cities build fortifications over time (0-100%). Growth depends on: - Settlement wealth (wealthier = faster) - Settlement size (cities > towns, hamlets cannot fortify) - Nearby threats (hostile entities, monster lairs) - Prior attacks (attacked settlements build faster) - Player nudge: Encourage Defenses patron action (20 sp)

On the map, fortified settlements change glyph: o, then circle-dot (30%+), then filled (70%+) for towns O, then diamond (30%+), then filled (70%+) for cities

SIEGE PHASES

1. APPROACH (150 ticks approx.) The attacker establishes positions and supply caches. Naval forces begin a port blockade. Last chance for diplomatic resolution.
2. BLOCKADE (variable, 200-1500+ ticks) Trade routes severed. Both sides burn supplies per tick. Attacker forages with diminishing returns. Siege equipment built on-site (rams, catapults, towers). Catapults degrade fortification level over time. Defenders sally out (3% chance/cycle, 40% success). Naval blockade cuts port resupply and fishing income. Duration: who runs out of supplies or morale first.

3. ASSAULT

Triggered by: attacker morale high + defender morale low, fortifications degraded, or attacker supplies desperate. Resolved via CRT with modifiers: - Attacker: ram (+1), siege tower (+1) - Defender: ballista (+1), pitch (+1), murder holes (+1) - Supply ratio affects column shift - Fortification level boosts defender strength

SIEGE EQUIPMENT

ATTACKER (built during blockade): Battering Ram: breach bonus during assault

Catapult: degrades fortification per tick

Siege Tower: assault bonus, reduces wall advantage

DEFENDER (scales with fortification level):

Ballista (60%+): damages attacker morale

Boiling Pitch (40%+): massive assault penalty

Murder Holes (50%+): passive garrison effectiveness

RESOLUTION

Conquest: attacker takes settlement. Loot, rename, cultural shift, institution overhaul, demographic displacement.

Repulsion: defender wins. Attacker destroyed. Surrender: defender morale collapses. Conquest effects apply.

Stalemate: attacker supply/morale collapse. Withdraws.

CONQUEST EFFECTS

- 50% treasury looted - Fortification reduced to 30% - 50% chance settlement renamed - Cultural identity shifts to conqueror - Local institutions: 30% dissolved, rest get new leadership - 40% of doctrines amended to conqueror ideology - 40% of local agents displaced as refugees - World tension +0.15

Bureau of Absent Persons

The Bureau maintains records of all agents who have departed the mapped world, whether by expedition, flight, or administrative reassignment. Access the registry via the Atlas screen (Shift+B, then Tab to the Bureau tab). The Bureau does not lose track of anyone. That is its purpose.

DEPARTURE REASONS

Agents leave the map for the following reasons: - Crusade, Retaliatory, Conquest, or other expedition types - Trade Colony establishment - Wizard Expedition (arcane survey) - Administrative Expedition (Bureaucromancer audit) - Displaced Settlement (lost home to conquest) - Fled Conquest (demographic displacement) - Joined Off-Map Faction - Emigration (voluntary departure)

STATUS CATEGORIES

On Expedition: currently beyond the border

In Transit: en route to destination
 Settled Abroad: permanent presence beyond the map
 Returned: came back (victory or stalemate)
 Presumed Lost: extended silence, status unknown
 Confirmed Dead: expedition defeated, no survivors

RETURNING AGENTS

Agents who return from expeditions or stalemates: - Are placed at a random settlement - Gain an epithet referencing their expedition - Resume normal behavior (wandering, joining institutions) - Their Bureau record is updated to Returned

Agents who settled abroad or were confirmed dead do not return. Their records remain as permanent archive.

EXPEDITION TYPES (7)

Crusade: religious institution vs. hostile entity
 Retaliatory: revenge for prior raids
 Conquest: ambitious leader seeks territory
 Displaced: homeless faction seeks new land
 Trade Colony: mercantile venture abroad
 Wizard: arcane phenomena investigation
 Administrative: Bureaucromancer audit/records recovery

All expedition types trigger organically from the simulation. You can also launch expeditions from the Atlas (X key).

Logistics & Supply

The world's armies do not fight on willpower alone. The supply system, modeled on Donald Engels' analysis of Alexander's campaigns, governs how levies move, fight, and die on the march.

SUPPLY CAPACITY

Each levy carries food based on its composition: Militia: 5 per unit, Cavalry: 8, Artillery: 15. The supply train itself consumes supplies (10% overhead).

TERRAIN BURN RATES

Different terrain multiplies supply consumption: Plains/Forest: 1.0x, Hills: 1.2x, Mountains: 1.5x, Desert: 2.0x (2.5x in summer). Desert spoils 2% of goods.

FORAGING

Levies forage from terrain automatically. Plains yield the most; mountains and deserts yield almost nothing. Winter halves foraging. Large armies exhaust local foraging faster (diminishing returns).

SUPPLY CACHES

Settlements at war build forward supply depots (150 sp). These appear as small sites on the map (brown square glyph). Levies within 3 tiles resupply automatically (up to 50% capacity). Enemy forces raid or destroy caches.

HARVEST-SYNCHRONIZED CAMPAIGNING

Wars declared in Spring/Summer benefit from 1.5x initial supply. Winter declarations suffer 0.7x supply and 50% longer mustering. Engels was clear on this point.

RIVER CROSSINGS

Rivers cost 2 movement (double plains cost). Agents and levies are delayed at river crossings. Bridges eliminate the penalty. Settlements and ambitious agents commission bridge construction.

TERRAIN MOVEMENT COSTS

All agents and levies pay movement costs based on terrain:

Plains:	1	(base rate)
Forest:	2	(dense cover slows travel)
Hills:	2	(elevation gain)
Desert:	3	(heat, sand, no water)
Mountains:	4	(extreme terrain)
River/Water:	2	(without bridge)
Bridge:	1	(reduces water crossing cost)

These costs apply to both pathfinding (route choice) and supply consumption. An army that marches through mountains burns supplies faster and arrives later than one that takes the plains route. This is precisely Engels' point.

FRIENDLY-SETTLEMENT RESUPPLY

Levies passing within 1 tile of an allied settlement replenish food from local reserves (up to 25% of the settlement's stored food). This occurs during march processing. Armies marching through allied lands eat; armies marching through hostile lands do not.

PRE-POSITIONED SUPPLY CACHES

Factions with treasury of 20+ silver place field supply dumps at roughly 40% of the march route between origin and target. Levies within range draw from the cache before it is exhausted. Enemy forces may raid caches they encounter.

PRE-EMPTIVE TRIBUTE

When a defender is outmatched at 2.5:1 or worse and the war goal is Raid, the settlement may pay roughly 30% of its treasury to the aggressor rather than fight. The war concludes without combat. The Bureau records this as a voluntary contribution.

Cults & Movements

When the world is under stress, people organize. The cult and mass movement systems, drawn from Norman Cohn's analysis of millenarian movements, model how crises birth radical factions. The Bureau has a dedicated filing cabinet.

CRISIS CULT FORMATION

When a settlement suffers 2+ concurrent crises (famine, eschaton, displacement, faction collapse), unaffiliated agents nearby form a millenarian cult. Cult type depends on the crisis: Famine produces Egalitarian, Eschaton produces Apocalyptic, Displacement produces Revivalist, Institutional collapse produces Reformist.

PERSECUTED-TURNED-PERSECUTOR

Factions that were once persecuted (Rival to a dominant faction), upon gaining power (60+), adopt their former oppressor's methods and turn on former allies.

MASS MOVEMENTS OF THE DISPOSSESSED

Agents displaced by conquest or eschaton coalesce into refugee factions. These seek new settlements and become aggressive if denied. Three or more displaced agents trigger formation.

POST-ESCHATON CULT BEHAVIOR

When an eschaton resolves and the world persists, existing cults face a choice: 60% reinterpret their prophecy (gain legitimacy), 30% radicalize further (declare new rivalries), 10% dissolve.

POPULAR CRUSADES

When tension is high, a mass movement forms beyond the map: religiously motivated, unsupplied, and doomed to attrition. These are the Peter the Hermit crusades. Enormous and logistically fatal.

REFUGEE CHAIN REACTIONS

Conquered settlements displace residents to neighboring towns. If those towns are already stressed, they generate their own displacement. One conquest destabilizes a whole region.

CRISIS TENSION CLUSTERING

Single crises do not trigger eschatons. When 3+ crises occur within 200 ticks, tension spikes by +0.15, a clustering bonus that can push the world over the eschatological threshold.

REVOLT LIFECYCLE

Persecuted crisis cults may escalate through a six-phase state machine modeled on Thomas Muntzer's Peasants' War:

Preaching: a charismatic figure draws crowds during active famine or population collapse. Entry requires persecution and crisis at the home settlement. Growth: the movement spreads to adjacent districts. Requires 5+ members and accumulated popular support. Radicalization: moderate voices are expelled. Militant rhetoric replaces spiritual exhortation. Continued persecution accelerates the transition. Militarization: farm implements are repurposed. The local blacksmith reports demand for pointed objects. The cult arms itself for confrontation. Confrontation: armed followers take to the streets. A rebel levy forms and declares war on the dominant faction. The defender musters in response. Aftermath: the revolt resolves. Defeated cults lose power and treasury but gain a martyrdom bonus that seeds future revolts at the same settlement.

If no viable target exists when the cult reaches Militarization, the revolt fizzles. Armed followers disperse for want of an adversary.

Conspiracies & Secrets

Not all power is visible. The conspiracy layer adds hidden allegiances, information warfare, and institutional decay.

SHADOW MEMBERSHIP

Agents can belong to a visible faction and a hidden one. Secret Societies recruit agents with high paranoia who are near the society's home settlement. Shadow members serve two masters until exposed.

EXPOSURE

Shadow faction members risk detection. Agents with low paranoia are caught more easily. When exposed, the shadow allegiance is removed and a public event is generated.

INFORMATION OPERATIONS

Factions spend 20 sp to target a rival with disinformation. Success (50%) reduces the rival's power by 5. Failure is detected by a bureaucromancer attached to the target faction.

BUREAUCRATIC OVERHEAD

Government factions drain 1-3 sp per 100 ticks from their home settlement's treasury as administrative costs. This is not corruption. It is process. The distinction is philosophical.

INSTITUTIONAL MEMORY LOSS

Factions older than 5000 ticks begin to forget their founding purpose. Rivalries fade to neutral. Doctrines drift. Leaders forget why the organization was created.

BUREAUCRATIC ENTRAPMENT

Agents visiting settlements with active Government factions have a 2% chance per check of being detained for processing (20-50 ticks). During detention, the agent cannot move or act. The Bureau considers this an acceptable administrative delay.

THE UNRELIABLE NARRATOR

On occasion the simulation's own narrator contradicts itself. Marginal notes appear, suggesting the official record is not entirely accurate. Trust the ledger at your own risk.

Sound & Audio

The simulation produces contextual sound effects drawn from an 8-bit aesthetic. The audio system is optional. The game functions identically without sound hardware. The Bureau considers silence a valid operational state.

CONTROLS

~	Open volume settings overlay
Master	Overall volume (affects all audio)
Music	Music volume

MUSIC

The music system is implemented but awaiting composed tracks. When available, music plays contextually based on world state.

Bibliography

The mechanics and prose of Veridian Contraption draw from specific academic and literary sources. This is not decoration — the game's systems are modeled on observations from these works.

MILITARY & LOGISTICS

Donald W. Engels, *Alexander the Great and the Logistics of the Macedonian Army* (University of California Press, 1978). The supply system, terrain burn rates, foraging mechanics, and advance supply caches are derived from Engels' analysis of Macedonian campaign logistics. His central finding that the margin between a successful and failed campaign is almost always logistics, not combat, is the foundation of the military layer.

Col. T.N. Dupuy, *Numbers, Predictions and War: Using History to Evaluate Combat Factors and Predict the Outcome of Battles* (Bobbs-Merrill, 1979). Levy morale tiers, the panic cliff at 0.2, terrain strength multipliers, Combat Effectiveness Value (CEV), and surprise mechanics are adapted from Dupuy's Quantified Judgment Model of combat. His work treats combat as measurable output where morale, terrain, and leadership matter more than headcount.

Carl von Clausewitz, *On War* (1832; trans. Howard and Paret, Princeton University Press, 1976). War stakes, political exhaustion, campaign strain, the culminating point of attack, and friction events draw on Clausewitz's thesis that war is politics continued by other means. Wars in the simulation end from exhaustion because Clausewitz observed that most wars do.

MILLENARIAN MOVEMENTS & CULT DYNAMICS

Norman Cohn, *The Pursuit of the Millennium: Revolutionary Millenarians and Mystical Anarchists of the Middle Ages* (Oxford University Press, revised edition 1970). Crisis cult formation, the persecuted-turned-persecutor cycle, mass movements of the dispossessed, and post-eschaton cult reinterpretation are modeled on Cohn's thesis that millenarian movements arise from social crisis, not theological conviction alone. The popular crusade mechanic reflects his account of the People's Crusade of 1096.

Thomas Müntzer's Peasants' War (1524-1525) as documented in Cohn and in Ernst Bloch, *Thomas Müntzer als Theologe der Revolution* (1921). The six-phase revolt lifecycle (Preaching through Aftermath), the martyrdom bonus, and the pattern of persecution breeding radicalization are drawn from Müntzer's trajectory: preacher to revolutionary to executed martyr whose death seeded the next generation of revolt.

INSTITUTIONAL ABSURDITY & BUREAUCRATIC PATHOLOGY

Franz Kafka, *The Castle* (1926) and *The Trial* (1925). Self-sustaining bureaucracy, institutional memory loss, and bureaucratic entrapment are drawn from Kafka's depiction of institutions that are not hostile but simply occupied — processes that exist to validate other processes, permits that require permits, and individuals absorbed rather than opposed by the systems they encounter.

Franz Kafka, *Complete Stories* (Schocken Books, 1971). Additional institutional prose textures.

Malaclypse the Younger and Omar Khayyam Ravenhurst, Principia Discordia (Loompanics Unlimited, 1965/1979). The chaos deficit, greyface index, and institutional purpose drift are adapted from Discordian philosophy. The Principia observes that institutions suppress disorder until disorder reasserts itself in proportion to the suppression. The Bureau has filed this observation without comment.

LANGUAGE, AUTHORITARIANISM & PARANOID PROSE

Vladimir Nabokov, Bend Sinister (1947). Language distortion under institutional power, the unreliable narrator mechanic, and the bridge-permit scene's influence on bureaucratic entrapment. Nabokov's observation that language itself changes under authoritarianism — not deliberately but organically — informs the prose system.

Robert Shea and Robert Anton Wilson, The Illuminatus! Trilogy (Dell Publishing, 1975). Conspiracy-flavored prose, shadow faction membership, information operations, the fnord-like unreliable narrator, and the general sense that every institution has a hidden, ridiculous logic. The Eschaton naming convention ('Immanentize the Eschaton') is taken directly from this work.

COSMIC PROSE & FAILED CATEGORIZATION

H.P. Lovecraft, selected fiction (Arkham House, various). The cosmic observation and cosmic indifference templates use Lovecraft's stacked-inadequacy technique: descriptions that convey the alien by cataloguing the failure of familiar instruments to measure it. The Bureau's tone when confronting R'lyeh, Eschaton events, and anomaly peaks borrows this method while replacing Lovecraft's narrator with an institutional voice that files reports on phenomena it cannot classify.

SIMULATION & AESTHETIC LINEAGE

Dwarf Fortress (Bay 12 Games, 2006-present). Systemic depth, emergent narrative, ASCII display conventions, the tileset rendering approach, and the principle that the simulation should always have more going on than the player can fully attend to.

Caves of Qud (Freehold Games, 2015-present). Procedural language with genuine voice, naming conventions, and the demonstration that procedural prose can have literary quality.

Brogue (Brian Walker, 2009-present). Expressive use of ASCII and color as meaning, visual display philosophy, and the three-mode display toggle (ASCII/tiles/hybrid).

Early D&D adventure modules and Judges Guild supplements. Absurdist specificity — the kind of detail that names a dungeon something gloriously stupid and then plays it completely straight.