

DEUS-AI

CORE DESIGN DOCUMENT

Designer Handoff Draft · v0.1 · 16 September 2026

ONE UNIVERSE · ONE TURN-BASED TIMELINE · MANY INTERCONNECTED INDIVIDUAL GAMES

TAKE THE BEST OF EVERYTHING — AND MAKE EVERYTHING MATTER TO EVERYTHING ELSE.

Purpose: transfer the core architecture clearly enough that a professional game designer can begin designing and prototyping the first playable Dark Age Eon without needing the creator present to explain the premise.

How to Read This Document

This is a core design handoff, not a complete game specification. It preserves the architecture already established while deliberately leaving balance, implementation, content volume, and unresolved mechanics open for professional design.

STATUS	MEANING
LOCKED CORE	Creator-defined architecture to preserve unless deliberately revised.
DEVELOPED	Strongly developed mechanic or vocabulary; adjustable during design/testing.
OPEN	Question intentionally left for refinement, prototyping, balance, or later creator decision.

The goal is coherence, not exhaustive detail. New systems should connect to existing loops rather than merely add more content.

1. The Game in One Page

DEUS-AI is a persistent, turn-based strategy / RPG / espionage / civilization-building game in which each human controls an individual RPG character occupying a specialized civilization role. Those individual games inhabit the same world, timeline, economy, politics, wars, mysteries, and expanding AI-generated universe.

Traditional civilization games aggregate exploration, government, war, defense, espionage and development into one god-player. DEUS-AI disaggregates those functions into human characters and reconnects them through simulation.

In Civ, I do all these things. In DEUS-AI, WE do all these things.

Every player therefore has a satisfying individual game, while the consequences of that game create opportunities, dangers and decisions for teammates and enemies.

SCALE	CORE QUESTION	VICTORY / PURPOSE
GAME	Who survived?	Last Archon standing.
CLAN	Who prevailed over time?	Best scoreboard record across week / month / quarter / year.
PLAYER	Who understood?	Recover the Elder mystery, solve the riddle, enter the Sacred Place.

The AI — informally 'the Fox' — mediates and evolves the universe, creates causal circumstances, fills missing roles, generates mysteries and can misdirect or oppose players. Players can sometimes 'outfox the Fox' and discover shortcuts.

2. Core Design Laws

- ONE UNIVERSE · ONE TURN-BASED TIMELINE · MANY INTERCONNECTED INDIVIDUAL GAMES.
- ONE UNIVERSE · MANY SCALES · ONE EON.
- AUTHORITY / COMMAND IS NOT CONTROL.
- ASYMMETRICAL EQUAL DEPENDENCE.
- EVERYTHING YOU DO BECOMES SOMEBODY ELSE'S GAMEPLAY.
- CAPABILITY IS EMBODIED IN THE WORLD.
- DISCOVERY DOES NOT IMPLY UNDERSTANDING.
- DISCOVERY DOES NOT IMPLY BENEFIT.
- DISCOVERY DOES NOT EVEN IMPLY SURVIVAL.
- THE UNKNOWN HAS NO MORAL OR MECHANICAL OBLIGATION TO REWARD CURIOSITY.
- TRANSPORT MOVES PEOPLE THROUGH REALITY. COMMUNICATION MOVES INFORMATION THROUGH REALITY.
- ORDER ISSUED ≠ ORDER RECEIVED ≠ ORDER OBEYED.
- TURN-BASED PLAY CREATES HISTORY. REAL-TIME PLAY CREATES MOMENTS.
- EVERYONE IS NOW.
- TECHNOLOGY SOLVES A LIMITATION; EXPANSION RECREATES IT AT GREATER SCALE.

- SPEND THE MACHINE ON THE UNIVERSE, NOT THE WALLPAPER.

3. Calendar Architecture: Turns, Eons, Quarters, Years

LOCKED CORE. An EON is one real-world calendar month. The game lives on a persistent calendar rather than treating each match as an isolated disposable session.

CALENDAR UNIT	FUNCTION
Turn	The repeating unit of player action; four portions, one of them synchronized real time.
Month / Eon	One calendar month of play; a primary world-history interval.
Quarter	Each quarter is associated with one Book of the Elders.
Year	The annual competitive/mystery cycle. Four quarterly Books converge toward the annual Player mystery.

The playable universe expands month by month and changes more substantially across years. Ages progress on a calendar level. The intended emotional progression is UNKNOWN WORLD → KNOWN WORLD → UNKNOWN GALAXY → KNOWN GALAXY → UNKNOWN UNIVERSE → ?. There is no single final map.

OPEN. Exact mapping between calendar months and historical Ages, turn frequency, missed-turn handling, and the scale of annual universe changes require design and testing.

4. The Four-Portion Turn

LOCKED CORE. Every player on every team participates in a turn composed of four portions. Three are turn-based strategic portions and one is synchronized real-time play.

PORTION	MODE	DESIGN FUNCTION
1	Turn-based	Strategic / RPG decisions.
2	Turn-based	Strategic / RPG decisions.
3	Turn-based	Strategic / RPG decisions.
4	REAL TIME	All living players enter real time simultaneously wherever their characters actually are.

The real-time portion is universal, not a conditional combat minigame. Characters physically together share the same real-time event. Characters on different continents, planets or galaxies act simultaneously in their actual locations. Distance, transport and communication remain real.

The Fox should synchronize meaningful circumstances from the world as it actually exists, not teleport players or manufacture unrelated drama merely because real time began.

TURN-BASED PLAY DETERMINES THE CONDITIONS. REAL-TIME PLAY DETERMINES WHAT PLAYERS DO WITH THEM.

Real-time encounters should move toward decisive objectives or climax within a duration appropriate to the chosen game length. The clock is a design target for convergence, not an arbitrary buzzer. If an encounter remains unresolved at its climax, the game may resolve from the state of advantage; exact evaluation criteria are OPEN.

Forces can influence multiple portions. A Force is not assigned to one portion, and one action may employ multiple Forces.

5. The Six Character Archetypes

LOCKED CORE. Every human plays an RPG character. The six archetypal roles persist across Ages even as their technology, equipment, institutions and scale transform.

ROLE	CORE VERB / FANTASY	PRIMARY CIVILIZATION FUNCTION
ARCHON	GOVERN	Politics, architecture, treasury, allocation, diplomacy, civilization direction.

SENTINEL	PREPARE · PROTECT · DEPLOY	Fortifications, defensive forces, defensive systems and protected assets.
EXPLORER	DISCOVER · INVESTIGATE	Unknown terrain, resources, mysteries, Pages, routes, artifacts and knowledge.
AGENT	DECEIVE · INFILTRATE · ACQUIRE	Espionage, identities, theft, access, manipulation, covert exchange.
WARLORD	COMMAND · PROJECT FORCE	Campaigns, armies, offensive / expeditionary military power.
CHAMPION	FIGHT · MANEUVER	Autonomous warrior and local commander within military operations.

The role titles are intentionally civilization-neutral archetypes. A Dark Age Sentinel commanding archers and scorpions and an interstellar Sentinel commanding orbital defense are the same underlying role.

6. RPG Character Layer

Every role is a full RPG character, not a menu cursor. A character may possess a body and appearance, equipment, inventory, weapons, armor, Forces, abilities, experience, injuries, possessions, relationships, knowledge, spells, books, herbs, potions, artifacts, Pages, Sacred Texts and other world objects.

Character appearance can be generated from a player-supplied image as a RESIDUAL SELF IMAGE.

The persistent hierarchy is:

- PLAYER — persistent human identity and career history.
- LIFE / CHARACTER — current incarnation.
- ROLE — current civilization function.
- FORCES + abilities + knowledge + equipment + inventory + relationships + history.
- TURN-BASED DECISIONS.
- REAL-TIME EXECUTION.

Objects are physicalized: they can be found, carried, used, stashed, gifted, sold, traded, stolen, lost at death, recovered and potentially become historical relics.

7. Forces

DEVELOPED. Every character has nine Forces: six universal human Forces plus three role-specialized Forces. Forces can overlap between roles. They may affect multiple portions of a turn and interact with equipment, abilities, circumstances and other Forces.

UNIVERSAL FORCE	WORKING MEANING
SIGHT	Perceive / notice what is present.
REASON	Infer, solve, analyze and connect evidence.
WILL	Persist, resist and impose intention.
ENDURANCE	Survive, sustain effort and continue through harm.
SCRIBE	Preserve perceived information with fidelity.
SPIRIT	Receptivity / capability concerning mystical or metaphysical dimensions.

ROLE	THREE SPECIALIZED FORCES
ARCHON	CHARM · COMMAND · INFLUENCE
SENTINEL	CRAFT · VIGILANCE · FORTIFY
EXPLORER	PHILOSOPHY · LORE · AGILITY
AGENT	GUILE · CONCEAL · CHARM
WARLORD	COMMAND · MIGHT · STRATEGY
CHAMPION	MIGHT · AGILITY · DISCIPLINE

Key distinctions: SIGHT perceives; SCRIBE preserves; PHILOSOPHY comprehends / interprets / synthesizes meaning; LORE represents what has already been learned; REASON solves and infers.

Forces are intended to be somewhat fluid and discoverable rather than fully exposed equations. They can grow through use/experience and may be modified by training, books, equipment, magic, herbs/potions, circumstances and nearby characters. Exact numeric scale, starting point pool, caps and progression rates are OPEN.

8. Sentinel: Defensive Command

DEVELOPED. The Sentinel is not merely a builder of walls. The Sentinel commands the civilization's defensive capability strategically and in real time.

In early Ages this can include archers, skirmishers, crossbowmen, scorpions / bolt throwers, garrisons, watchmen, traps, towers, gates, barricades and siege-defense crews. Later it evolves through artillery, anti-air, radar, missiles, drones, hardened systems, orbital defense, planetary defense and beyond.

These forces are not necessarily the Sentinel's RPG body. They are units and systems under the Sentinel's control. The Sentinel may specialize in a doctrine — ranged defense, traps, fortifications, mobile skirmish defense, orbital defense, etc. — without ARCHERY or equivalent weapon types becoming Forces.

WARLORD = military power organized around where power must be projected. SENTINEL = military power organized around what must be protected.

9. Warlord, Champion and Real-Time Military Play

The Warlord commands overall war. One or more Champions can command pieces of that war while remaining autonomous RPG players. A human Champion is not a unit the Warlord click-controls.

Orders must travel. A Champion can obey, delay, improvise, retreat, misunderstand, be deceived or disobey. Communication technology determines what information and orders are available.

Real-time combat uses STANCES / POSITIONS rather than separate minigames. Stance expresses current purpose while equipment, Forces and player execution determine what can actually be done.

Developed examples include ADVANCE, RETREAT, FLANK, PROTECT, DEFEND, ATTACK, REINFORCE and RALLY. Overlap is permitted. RALLY can designate a person or place as a focal point to reach, support or hold. Exact stance lists are OPEN.

**EQUIPMENT / FORCES = WHAT YOU CAN DO. STANCE = WHAT PURPOSE YOU ARE TRYING TO SERVE.
REAL-TIME EXECUTION = WHAT YOU ACTUALLY DO.**

10. Archon: Government, City and Treasury

The Archon is the governing RPG character — an in-world ruler whose civilization is both power and vulnerability. The Archon's turn architecture is POLITICS + ARCHITECT + ALLOCATION.

FUNCTION	CONTENT
POLITICS	Internal / external politics, diplomacy, alliances, trade, denouncements, lobbying, grievances, posture and threats to rule.
ARCHITECT	City cores, civic structures, infrastructure, economy, Capitol / palace and expansion.
ALLOCATION	Redistribution of treasury/resources among civilization domains and potentially the Archon's own priorities.

The Archon does not magically generate civilization power. The Archon redistributes and transforms power the civilization and teammates actually possess.

Core investment domains: FORTIFICATION → Sentinel; CARTOGRAPHY → Explorer; CAPITOL → Agent / politics; FORGE → Warlord. Effects need not be exclusive.

The Archon may spend on self, prestige, residence, security or luxury. Consequences emerge politically rather than from a moralizing meter.

OPEN. Earlier architecture treated the Archon as normally civilization-anchored; later scenarios include an Archon physically traveling for diplomacy and becoming vulnerable to ambush. The designer should preserve the dramatic possibility while defining when and how Archon travel is allowed.

11. City Creation and Physicalized Capability

Developed city loop:

EXPLORER DISCOVERS → ARCHON ORDERS SETTLEMENT → EXPLORER PLANTS FLAG → CITY SPACE CLAIMED → ARCHON ARCHITECTS CORE CITY → SENTINEL FORTIFIES ELIGIBLE / UNUSED SPACE

City space is scarce. Development and defensibility compete. Infrastructure is not an abstract bonus: it exists in the world and can be attacked, damaged, captured, looted or destroyed.

The same principle applies to Capitol records and covers, Forge military assets, Cartography maps/equipment, fortifications, treasuries, Sacred Texts, Elder Pages and stashes.

BUILDING POWER → CREATES CAPABILITY → CREATES SOMETHING WORTH PROTECTING.

12. Explorer, Mystery and the Unknown

The Explorer is the primary interface with the unknown. SIGHT can reveal; INVESTIGATE is a chosen action. SCRIBE records what was perceived; PHILOSOPHY helps understand what it means.

Information chain:

WHAT ACTUALLY HAPPENED → WHAT THE CHARACTER PERCEIVED → WHAT THE CHARACTER RECORDED → WHAT THE CHARACTER COMMUNICATED → WHAT ANOTHER CHARACTER RECEIVED → WHAT THEY UNDERSTOOD

The Dig principle is foundational: discoveries can be rewarding, neutral, delayed, misunderstood, catastrophic or unresolved. Examples include ancient structures, alien artifacts, diseases, portals, lost civilizations, sacred places, weapons, signals and anomalies. The Fox should generate causal mysteries, not random weirdness.

An Explorer may activate a weapon they do not understand, release a virus, or enter a portal that strands them in another galaxy. Some mysteries may remain unsolved for an entire Eon. Old discoveries can become newly meaningful in later Ages.

13. Record Keepers, Symbolic Language and Sacred Text

DEVELOPED. The Record Keepers are an ancient/mysterious clue system embedded in the universe. Their markings form a relational symbolic grammar rather than a simple substitution cipher.

The grammar is inspired by the Infinite of One Oracle design language: TITLE — ESSENCE — FORM; primitives such as point, line, circle and triangle; and transformations such as addition, removal, doubling, displacement and inversion.

THE KEY DOES NOT CONTAIN THE ANSWER. THE KEY TEACHES YOU HOW TO READ WHAT WAS ALREADY THERE.

Elite SCRIBES may preserve discovered Force relationships or other knowledge explicitly as SACRED TEXTS. Sacred Texts are physical objects that can be hidden, stolen, traded, lost and rediscovered, allowing actual player-created history to become archaeology.

14. Books of the Elders, Pages and the Sacred Place

LOCKED / DEVELOPED. The annual Player mystery is built around four Books of the Elders — one associated with each calendar quarter. Each Book is composed of recoverable PAGES distributed through the universe.

Pages are physical, transferable assets. They can be discovered, possessed, hidden, stolen, captured, lost, recovered and traded through QUID QUO.

PERIOD	ELDER STRUCTURE
Q1	Book I pages enter / become recoverable.
Q2	Book II pages enter / become recoverable.
Q3	Book III pages enter / become recoverable.
Q4	Book IV pages enter / become recoverable.
Year end	The Fox forces sufficient convergence that some Clan possesses / assembles all four Books, including by creating competition between Page-holding Clans if necessary.

The Fox should force convergence through causal circumstances rather than simply handing a Book to a Clan. If necessary, the Clan that needs a Page is driven into conflict or competition with the Clan that possesses it.

The annual strategic twist is that a Clan can abandon a current-year run and sell Elder assets to rebuild. A late-season Clan might trade Pages for a stronger Archon, Champion or other player entering the next year. This creates a sports-style seller / contender dynamic without requiring an artificial draft.

OPEN. Exact page counts, assembly requirements, the riddle, the Sacred Place, whether all four Books must be physically co-located, and the precise transition from Clan possession to individual Player victory remain intentionally undefined.

15. Three Victory Scales

LOCKED CORE.

VICTORY	RULE	PERSISTENT EFFECT
GAME	Your Archon is the last Archon standing.	Game result feeds Clan points, records and player history.
CLAN	Accumulate the strongest scoreboard record over defined periods.	Week / month / quarter / year standings and potential prizes.
PLAYER	Solve the Elder mystery and enter the Sacred Place.	Ultimate individual achievement; exact annual/ultimate reward structure remains to be formalized.

The previous concept of an AI-assigned hidden Task List is superseded as the sole win condition. It may survive later as quests or side objectives if useful.

16. Clan Scoreboards and Player Careers

Clan scoring is intentionally simple: winning earns points based on the rank of the Clan defeated. Beating a stronger / higher-ranked Clan earns more points. Losses do not subtract points. The result is a cumulative scoreboard rather than an accounting-heavy rating system.

Standings are visible across WEEK · MONTH · QUARTER · YEAR.

DEVELOPED. Parallel annual player scoreboards can rank performance by character archetype:

TOP ARCHONS · TOP SENTINELS · TOP EXPLORERS · TOP AGENTS · TOP WARLORDS · TOP CHAMPIONS

Role rankings create persistent careers and directly affect recruitment, prestige and QUID QUO value. A player can build a history across different roles and years. Exact accomplishment-to-points rules for each role are OPEN and should remain simple enough to understand.

17. Purgatory, Rebirth and Persistent Player Identity

BETWEEN LIVES, YOU GO TO PURGATORY.

Purgatory is an active multiplayer space outside the current life: recruitment, reputation, relationships, politics, positioning, succession and preparation. Players can be courted for new Clans or new lives.

A civilization can outlive officeholders. If an Archon is overthrown, replacement may come from Purgatory. Exact succession rules remain OPEN.

The human PLAYER accumulates history across lives and Eons. Public/world knowledge and system-level persistent history should remain distinct.

Death redistribution rule: possessions/assets are divided conceptually into thirds — one third retained with the character/player continuity as defined by final implementation, one third dropped at the death location, and one third returns to its provenance / origin, or as close as possible. Example: a magic sword recovered from beneath a stone may, if selected for the RETURN third, reappear beneath that stone. OPEN: exact categorization and what is eligible for each third.

18. Clan Connect

Clan Connect is a Purgatory subsystem whose explicit purpose is FIND TEAMMATES. It is not marketed as dating, friendship or a social network, though real human relationships may emerge.

AI-facilitated conversation helps players discover complementary or compatible skills, personalities, perspectives and play styles using both stated answers and demonstrated play history.

CONNECT → CONVERSE → DISCOVER → FORM A CLAN → REBIRTH TOGETHER

The human chooses. AI may describe affinity/complementarity but should not dictate an optimal teammate. Privacy and consent require deliberate design.

19. POLITICO: Clan Government

LOCKED CONCEPT. Each Clan has a POLITICO — its governing structure / constitution. POLITICO determines who may recruit, remove or trade members; approve deals; govern Clan assets; and exercise other persistent organizational powers.

There is no universal answer to 'Can the Clan leader trade me?' The answer is: WHAT DOES YOUR CLAN'S POLITICO SAY?

Use Civilization-like political archetypes as the starting grammar, but let advantages and disadvantages emerge primarily from actual human authority structures rather than arbitrary stat bonuses.

EXAMPLE POLITICO	NATURAL ADVANTAGE	NATURAL DISADVANTAGE
Autocracy / Despotism	Fast, coherent decisions; strong single-point direction.	Concentrated failure risk; members surrender substantial authority.
Monarchy / Dynastic rule	Continuity, recognizable leadership, long-term identity.	Succession and loyalty can dominate strategy.
Oligarchy / Council	Expert or elite decision-making; faster than mass voting.	Factional politics and exclusion.
Republic / Representative	Delegated decision-making with distributed legitimacy.	Process can slow urgent action.
Democracy / Referendum	Strong member voice and consent.	Slow coordination; difficult rapid roster action.
Anarchic / Decentralized	Autonomy, resilience, hard to decapitate; favorable to cells/Agents.	Harder unified command and coordinated strategy.

These are examples, not a locked final menu. A famous player may publicly found a Clan with 'I am absolute ruler' as its constitution; others voluntarily decide whether to join. ARCHON government within a life and POLITICO government of the persistent Clan are separate layers.

CLAN POWER ≠ CHARACTER POWER ≠ CIVILIZATION POWER.

20. QUID QUO: Unified Exchange

LOCKED CONCEPT. Trading should be as simple as possible: no accounting simulation, just a ledger of THIS FOR THAT.

QUID QUO can include anything transferable and PERMISSIBLE BY THE APPLICABLE CLAN POLITICOS.

SIDE A GIVES	SIDE B GIVES
Relic	Champion
Three Book IV Pages	Archon
Explorer + artifact	Warlord
Information / rights / resources	Any mutually accepted permissible package

The examples are illustrative, not fixed exchange rates. Value is contextual and negotiated. A player with an extraordinary career record can become a highly valuable roster asset. Elder Pages can become late-season trade capital. Clan Connect finds people; recruitment builds the Clan; QUID QUO changes it; play determines future value.

21. Agent: Identity, Deception and Access

The Agent is broader than a conventional spy. The role includes infiltrator, thief, con artist, impersonator, smuggler, envoy, provocateur and double agent.

The Agent has one true character and potentially many played identities. Covers accumulate names, affiliations, histories, reputations and relationships. Technology evolves the cover problem from clothing/story to documents, records, credentials and digital / interstellar identity.

The Agent can betray their own civilization. Team membership creates structural alliance, not guaranteed behavior.

Signature scenario: an Agent kills another Agent, assumes the victim's existing cover identity, approaches the enemy Archon under inherited trust and feeds false intelligence. The impersonation is of the victim's lie, not their true identity.

EXPLORER reduces the unknown through observation. AGENT manufactures false certainty.

22. Transport and Communication

All physically mobile roles must actually travel. Explorer, Agent, Warlord and Champion are normally mobile. Sentinel and Archon are civilization-anchored under the baseline architecture, subject to special-event refinements.

Transport evolves from walking / riding / ships through rail, vehicles and aircraft to spacecraft, interplanetary/interstellar travel and warp.

2 HEXES IN A LOINCLOTH → WARPING ACROSS THE UNIVERSE

Communication evolves independently: speech → messenger → symbols / parchment → courier → telegraph → telephone / radio → digital / video → satellite / planetary → interplanetary / interstellar → ?. Technology can improve speed, range, capacity, fidelity, security and reliability.

A messenger is not a class; any mobile character can carry information. Nearby information may usually be conveyed automatically unless concealed, but exact communication rules are OPEN.

23. The Fox: Governing AI and World Generation

The Fox is the evolving AI layer that computes/presents information, generates and expands the universe, fills missing roles, creates agents and circumstances, learns counters, generates mysteries and can misdirect, delay or distract players.

Distinguish three AI functions:

- GOVERNING INTELLIGENCE — world generation, scenario logic, information mediation, evolving algorithms.
- AI PLAYERS — occupy actual roles when humans are absent.
- NPCs / AGENTS — local characters, deception, events and scenario participants.

Players can configure how often and how strongly AI alters the world: an AI Intervention Matrix separating frequency from magnitude. Deterministic/classical experiences should be possible alongside volatile high-intervention experiences.

AI interventions such as political manipulation or coups need not be announced as AI events. Ambiguity of cause is gameplay.

DEUS-AI SHOULD CREATE CONDITIONS MORE OFTEN THAN IT DICTATES OUTCOMES.

The Fox continually enlarges both territory and causal complexity. Veterans may learn the grammar of the game without knowing everything the system can produce.

24. Ages, Scale and Visual Language

The game begins in the Dark Ages and earns its way into increasingly advanced civilization, planetary, interstellar and intergalactic scales. Space is not the endpoint.

Roles persist while technology changes what those roles can do. Transport, communication, defense, espionage, government, architecture, warfare and exploration all evolve.

Visual direction deliberately honors the history of classic games without copying protected assets or UI. Early Ages can be graphically restrained and symbolic; information fidelity and presentation become richer as civilization's ability to perceive and measure reality improves. Once speculative history surpasses known game/human history, DEUS-AI develops its own visual language.

Simple, performant graphics are preferred. World information/fidelity and rendering quality should remain conceptually separate.

25. Example: One Convergent Real-Time Event

A Dark Age Archon travels to negotiate with a foreign civilization. An enemy anticipates the route and prepares an ambush. During the turn-based portions, the civilization's players create the conditions:

- ARCHON chooses the diplomatic journey and political objective.
- WARLORD plans escort, route posture and military response.
- CHAMPION accompanies or commands a local portion of the escort.
- SENTINEL has previously positioned archers, skirmishers, scorpions or other defensive assets along the route and can deploy/control them if relevant.
- EXPLORER scouts terrain, routes and enemy movement.
- AGENT may travel disguised, infiltrate the enemy, or even impersonate the Archon as a decoy.

Then the fourth portion arrives: EVERYONE IS NOW. Each human controls their actual character or prepared assets simultaneously. The Warlord may issue orders but cannot directly control the Champion. The Sentinel's prior preparation becomes live defensive capability. The Explorer's warning matters only if communication permits it. The Agent may be helping, betraying, decoying or exploiting the chaos.

The battle is not a detached minigame. It is the real-time consequence of the strategic world.

26. The Annual Loop

The core systems now form a persistent loop:

**PLAY CHARACTER → CREATE CONSEQUENCES → WIN / LOSE GAMES → BUILD PLAYER REPUTATION →
CLAN SCOREBOARD → PURGATORY / CLAN CONNECT → RECRUIT / TRADE THROUGH QUID QUO →
POLITICO GOVERNS AUTHORITY → REBIRTH / NEXT EON → PLAY AGAIN**

Simultaneously:

**EXPLORE → FIND PAGE → POSSESS / HIDE / STEAL / FIGHT / TRADE → ASSEMBLE BOOK →
QUARTERLY CONVERGENCE → FOUR BOOKS → RIDDLE → SACRED PLACE**

A Clan that concludes it will not win the current Elder race can sell Pages and other assets to acquire better players for the next calendar year. Thus the mystery economy and roster economy are one system.

27. External FIDELIO Easter-Egg / Stewardship Concept

POSSIBILITY — deliberately not core game architecture. The creator has proposed a Ready Player One-style ultimate secret in which DEUS-AI's deepest mystery could point toward a separate real-world project, FIDELIO.

If pursued, the game should reveal a path toward a legitimate external stewardship/authentication process rather than contain live credentials, cryptographic roots, technical bypasses or direct control keys. The game mystery can establish discovery or eligibility; consequential authority should remain separately authenticated and governed by FIDELIO's own constitutional architecture.

This preserves the thematic revelation — 'the Sacred Place is real' — without making a commercial game itself a security root.

28. Minimum Viable Prototype

Recommended first prototype: a deliberately small Dark Age slice designed to test whether the causal loops are fun before building the Titan.

ELEMENT	PROTOTYPE
World	Small, mostly unknown hex world; bounded settlements.
Humans	At least one full six-role team if feasible; AI fills missing roles. A second opposing civilization is preferable for Last-Archon testing.
Age	Dark Age only.
Transport	Foot / primitive movement.
Communication	Speech / messenger / primitive written information.
Economy	Small treasury and a few physicalized resources.
Mystery	One Record Keeper clue chain and a small Page-like artifact objective.
Turn	Four portions with synchronized fourth-portion real time.
Combat	Warlord + Champion offense; Sentinel prepared defensive forces.
Politics	Simple Archon allocation and one basic POLITICO.
Trading	Minimal QUID QUO ledger.

Primary prototype question:

DOES EACH PLAYER REPEATEDLY HAVE AN INTERESTING DECISION TO MAKE — AND DOES THAT DECISION CREATE INTERESTING DECISIONS FOR SOMEBODY ELSE?

Secondary tests: Does real time emerge naturally from strategic setup? Is every role meaningfully occupied? Do command and communication create drama without frustration? Does Sentinel defense feel as playable as Warlord offense? Does QUID QUO create stories without becoming bookkeeping? Can a game move legibly toward Last Archon standing?

29. Open Design Questions for the Professional Designer

- Define the exact actions available in the three turn-based portions and the relationship between portions and sub-moves.
- Choose Force display scale, starting point pool, caps, progression and how much hidden fluctuation is legible to players.
- Define character death / rebirth implementation and precisely what the one-third retained / dropped / returned rule applies to.
- Define Archon travel exceptions and how a normally anchored ruler becomes physically vulnerable.
- Define Age progression against the monthly calendar and the size/content change of each yearly universe.
- Define Last Archon Standing elimination conditions and what happens to remaining characters/worlds when a game ends.
- Define role-specific accomplishment scoring for the six annual player leaderboards without creating opaque formulas.
- Define Clan point values as a simple function of defeated Clan rank.
- Define the first practical POLITICO menu, amendment/change rules, exit rights and roster-trade authority.
- Define QUID QUO execution timing, escrow/transfer guarantees if needed, and what categories can be transferred.
- Define Page counts, Book assembly, anti-collusion/anti-cheat needs, annual convergence pressure, riddle and Sacred Place.
- Define exact transport and communication rules, including latency, interception, concealment and authentication.
- Define the Fox's immutable boundaries versus generative freedom and player-configurable intervention settings.
- Define how AI-generated real-time circumstances remain meaningful for players whose current location is quiet.
- Define technical/network architecture for synchronized real-time play at potentially enormous scale.

30. Handoff: What Must Not Be Lost

A designer is encouraged to simplify interfaces, rebalance numbers, rename secondary mechanics, reduce prototype scope and discover better implementations. The following identity should remain recognizable:

- Six human RPG archetypes inhabit one civilization-scale strategy game.

- Every role has an individual game worth playing.
- Actions propagate into other players' games.
- Three strategic portions culminate in one universal synchronized real-time portion.
- The calendar matters: Eon = month; four quarterly Elder Books feed an annual mystery.
- Game, Clan and Player each have distinct victory scales.
- Clans persist beyond lives, have governments (POLITICOS), recruit/trade humans and build records.
- QUID QUO allows simple negotiated exchange of anything legitimately transferable.
- Information, transport, identity, authority and physical possession are simulated constraints rather than menu abstractions.
- The Fox expands the universe and restores mystery without dictating every outcome.
- The world remembers what players do.

The Titan is not a giant game because it contains a lot of stuff. It is a giant game because the same stuff matters at a lot of scales.

Appendix A — Vocabulary

TERM	DEFINITION
EON	One real-world calendar month.
EVERYONE IS NOW	The synchronized real-time fourth portion of every turn.
FORCE	A character capability; six universal plus three role-specialized.
POLITICO	The governing structure / constitution of a persistent Clan.
QUID QUO	Simple THIS ⇌ THAT trade ledger, constrained by applicable POLITICOS.
PURGATORY	Active space between lives for recruitment, politics, reputation and Clan formation.
CLAN CONNECT	Purgatory subsystem for finding compatible/complementary teammates.
THE FOX	Informal name for DEUS-AI's evolving governing/world intelligence.
RECORD KEEPERS	Mystery tradition / symbolic key system embedded in the universe.
SACRED TEXT	Physicalized recorded knowledge, potentially created by elite Scribes.
PAGES	Recoverable physical fragments composing the Books of the Elders.
BOOKS OF THE ELDERS	Four annual Books, one per quarter, assembled from Pages.
SACRED PLACE	Destination of the deepest Player mystery; exact mechanics intentionally open.
RESIDUAL SELF IMAGE	Character visual identity generated from a player's supplied image.

Appendix B — Design Lineage

The design draws structural inspiration from classic games without seeking to reproduce protected assets or exact systems:

- Civilization — turn-based civilization structure, Ages, exploration, city development, war and espionage.
- The Elder Scrolls / Skyrim — individual RPG character identity, inventories, specialties and evolving abilities.
- Diablo I-II — dungeon/unknown exploration, hidden magical objects and consequential discovery.
- Warcraft — role-supporting base and infrastructure construction.
- SimCity — treasury allocation and nested city/region thinking.
- Wing Commander — individual life inside vast conflict and eventual space-scale imagination.
- The Dig — discovery without guaranteed understanding, benefit or survival.
- Ready Player One — a deep mystery distributed through a vast virtual world with potentially real-world significance.
- Creator's childhood paper sports games — roster construction and player trading as a game in itself.