**Cover Page**

**Elevator Pitch:**

Take on the role of one of four Archaeologists of the Expedition as they delve to a strange ruin previously unknown to mankind, or be one of the derelict Ancient Guardians brought to life by the wanton looting of your domain.

Play cards, use Abilities, expose Relics, and roll dice to earn Trinkets or prevent losing them. With a massive deck for both the Expedition and the Ancient, as well as multiple Abilities and Relics to choose from every game, each expedition allows for a varied playstyle where you have to constantly adapt and strategize.

Will the Expedition live to tell the tale of a bygone era, or will the Ancient prevent further destruction of the Crumbling Expanse?

**Components:**

Boards

* Ancient Board
* Expedition Board
* Player Boxes (optional)

Cards:

* Starter Cards
  + Expedition (5 each, for 20)
  + Ancient (5)
* Ancient Cards (60)
* Expedition Cards (100)
* Influence Cards (16)
* Relic Cards (6)
* Ability Cards (6)

Dice:

* 16 Green Dice
* 16 Gold Dice
* 16 White Dice
* 48 Pip Dice

Tokens:

* 100 Trinket Tokens
* 15 Alert Tokens
* 16 Risk Tokens
* 24 Cooldown Tokens
* 82 Dice Tokens
  + 10 +3/-3 Dice Tokens
  + 24 +4/-4 Dice Tokens
  + 24 +5/-5 Dice Tokens
  + 24 +6/-5 Dice Tokens
* 4 Relic Tokens**Preparation & Setup:**

Each Archaeologist takes an Expedition Board, as well as the following:

* a 4-card deck containing Trowel, Scrolls, Precautions, and Cutter
* 4 Green Dice
* 2 White Dice
* 8 Pip Dice
* 4 +6/-6 Dice Token
* 4 +5/-5 Dice Token
* 4 +4/-4 Dice Token
* 4 Risk Tokens
* 4 Cooldown Tokens

The Ancient takes the Ancient Board as well as the following:

* a 5-card deck containing 2 Guardians, 2 Loose Gravels, and 1 Surveillances
* a 12-card deck containing 4 of each: Ruin, Snare, Stumble
* 16 Gold Dice
* 16 Pip Dice
* 8 +6/-6 Dice Token
* 8 +5/-5 Dice Token
* 8 +4/-4 Dice Token
* 10 +3/-3 Dice Token
* 15 Alert Tokens
* 8 Cooldown Tokens
* 1 Bowl containing 100 Trinkets, 25 of a different shade each

Set up the board as follows:

* Board Layout

image + details !!

Shuffle the Expedition Deck thoroughly and place it face down on the corresponding place. Likewise, shuffle the Ancient Deck AND the Influence Deck together, thoroughly, and place it on the Ancient Draw Pile. The Influence Pile is intentionally left empty.

The Archaeologists then choose an Ability from the 6 Ability Cards present within the game. Likewise, the Ancient chooses from the 6 Relic Cards present within the game. All players may decide whether to select which cards they like, or draw randomly from a shuffled deck.

It is recommended for new players to simply select an Ability or Relics to reduce the luck factor involved.

The rest of the Abilities and Relics can be stored somewhere safe; it will not be used for the rest of the game.

The Relic Cards are placed face-down on the Card Slots of the Ancient Board. The order in which they are placed does not matter. The Relic Tokens are placed directly in front of the Relic Cards, Exposed side facing down. *As an optional rule, a White Die may be placed on top of the Relic Tokens, although this is not suggested due to the nature of the game.*

The Ability Cards are placed on the corresponding Ability Slot of the Expedition Board face up.

The Green Dice of the Archaeologists are placed in front of the Danger Meter (not on top) while 4 Gold Dice are placed on top of each of the face-down Relic Cards, for a total of 16 Gold Dice each.

The Trinket Bowl is then filled with 100 Trinkets, and placed on the center of the long edge of the Ancient Board, half of its bottom sitting on the Board, and half resting on the table.

In the event that there are less than 4 Archaeologists during the start of the game, the Ancient removes 4 Gold Dice, 1 Relic Card, 1 Relic Token, and 25 Trinkets for each Archaeologist missing. Do note that the game is currently balanced (and being balanced) for 4 players; fewer Archaeologists may produce unfavorable results and may lead to an unsatisfying game.

* Card Layout

image + details !!

Objective:

This is an elimination game, and there are two teams: the Ancient, and the Expedition. As it is unequal, it should be clear that the Ancient being removed from play means the Expedition wins, while the Ancient must eliminate each Archaeologist in order to achieve victory.

Ancient Victory: All Archaeologists are eliminated from play via increasing their Danger to 4. *(Yes, with white Dice they can still roll, but then what’s the point of dice colors?)*

Expedition Victory: No Relics remain in play, and the Ancient can no longer award Trinkets to the Archaeologists.

There are no ties and partial victories.

Lore/Story:

A groundbreaking discovery has been revealed to the Expedition: a sprawling city underneath the very feet of humanity. Four Archaeologists have been tasked to explore this hidden civilization full of novelties and secrets of humanity. Along the way, however, the Archaeologists realize that they are being watched, not by who, but what.

The city has been bestowed with unknown power during the height of its civilization, giving rise to Sentinels whose very body is the ruins itself. Their unchanging task from inception was to protect the city at all costs, and if not the city, the history that remains within its crumbling buildings.

The Archaeologists now has to take risks and manage it well to take as much historical artifacts as possible, including rare relics that mimic those of what humanity up above knows. The Ancient’s duty is the same as ever: protect the city, and protect its history.

**GAMEPLAY:**

**TURN FLOW**

**ENTRY STAGE (ROUND ZERO)**

Card Phase [Expedition]

* Instants
* Cards

Action Phase

* Effect Cards
* Action Cards

Roll Phase

* Rally
* Roll
* Reward

**DELVE STAGE (ROUNDS 1+)**

Pre-Round

* Draw/Discard Cards
* Influence Cards
* Status Change

Card Phase

* Relics
* Abilities
* Instants
* Cards

Action Phase

* Ancient’s Turn
* Expedition Turn

Roll Phase

* Rally
* Roll
* Reward

Danger Phase

* Comparison

**Pre-Round**

The Pre-Round is the setup phase of every round.

All players must draw or discard cards until they hold exactly 5 cards in their hand.

The Ancient MUST play any drawn Influence Cards, placing each Influence Card face-up on the Influence Deck. All players must follow the effect written on the Influence Card.

The Ancient’s Alert increases by 1, unless other cards from the previous round prevented its increase.

**Card Phase**

Synonymous to preparation, the Card Phase is where about half of the game spends its time in, with the Archaeologists strategizing, and the Ancient silently planning the Expedition’s demise.

Most cards are played during only during this phase. Players may prepare for the Action Phase by placing the Trinket Cost of the played card on top of it, as well as its various additive effects. Negative effects such as dice disabling, alert decrease, or others, must not be prepared for, to reduce confusion.

**Action Phase**

This is where most of the cards’ effects are performed. Aside from the Entry Stage, the Ancient’s cards and Relics are always used first, then the Expedition’s cards. Cards are used clockwise, starting from the Ancient’s leftmost active card.

EFFECTS occur immediately unless affecting other phases, while other effects (i.e. RALLY, ROLL, PRE-ROUND) will occur during their respective phase.

The Rally partially shares the Action Phase simply to facilitate faster play, thus, any cards whose description mentions the RALLY may be performed during the Action Phase.

**Roll Phase**

Where strategy meets an immense amount of luck (based on the number of dice), the Roll Phase determines how much Trinkets each player gains or loses, as well as other effects determined by the Action Phase.

* **The Rally**

For the Expedition, all gained dice, as well as dice on hand, must be placed forward ahead of the Danger Meter, while disabled dice are placed behind the Danger Meter.

For the Ancient, gained dice enters the Ancient Dice Pool (unless stated otherwise) and may be distributed in any way among the four Ancient Rolls on the Board, (e.g. the Ancient has 10 Pip Dice in their dice pool. They may decide to place all 10 against Archaeologist 3, pitting a total of 14 dice against said player, while other players will only face 4 Gold Dice unless changed by other cards.)

Pip Dice are disabled (and discarded) first, then White Dice, and lastly Colored Dice.

* **The Roll**

The Roll is where all dice are rolled. All rolls are done simultaneously; no player has to wait for another to finish.

If the Archaeologists have a box on hand, they may roll their dice in the box. Any effects targeting the Roll subphase occurs after all the initial rolls, so that all players may witness any rerolls or value changes.

The scores are tallied after all effects affecting the Roll subphase are completed.

* **The Reward**

An Archaeologist has a Successful Roll if their score is above the opposing Ancient’s opposing roll score, and they receive 4 Trinkets as a reward.

A Failed Roll is the opposite; a tie or lower only nets an Archaeologist 1 Trinket as consolation.

**Danger Phase**

If the sum of the Risk Values of an Archaeologist is equal or greater than the current Alert Value, they are safe. Otherwise, a Green Die is used to increase their Danger by 1. The Archaeologist will then start with 1 less die unless other effects gave them additional dice.

**Out of Phase**

* **Instant** – Some cards may be played outside of the Card Phase, depending on the description. These cards still cost Trinkets to play, and are not placed down on the Card Slot. Instead, they are placed ahead of the Danger Meter to indicate its immediateness.
* **Relics** – The Ancient may Activate Relics during the Card Phase. Unless stated otherwise, the Activated Relic’s effects will only occur during the Action Phase, and by the end of the round, the Activated Relic becomes permanently Exposed. An Activated Relic takes up a Card Slot, represented by the Relic Card being turned face-up.
* **Abilities** - The Archaeologists may use their abilities to improve their odds of taking Trinkets from the Crumbling Expanse. Some Abilities can only be used on certain turns.

Player Actions:

* Common
  + Play Cards

All players may place various cards on available Card Slots on their boards. Archaeologists may place 2 each, while the Ancient may play up to 4, or 3 when a Relic is Activated.

* + Roll Dice

All players must roll whatever dice they have on hand during the Roll Phase. The Ancient makes 4 Rolls, one against each Archaeologist.

* Ancient
  + Reveal Influence Cards

The Ancient must reveal any Influence Cards they have drawn during the Pre-Round.

* + Activate Relics

The Ancient may Activate Relics during the Card Phase, unless the Relic states that it can be Activated at other phases.

* Expedition/Archaeologists
  + Use Abilities

The Archaeologists may use any Abilities they have as long as it follows three conditions:

1. The Ability is an Active one
2. The Ability is used during the proper Phase as described in the card
3. The Ability is off cooldown, represented by no Cooldown tokens on top.
   * Initiate Heists

An Archaeologist may initiate a Heist on an Exposed Relic to take it from the Crumbling Expanse. They must pay 5 Trinkets in order to do so.

* + Strategize

Archaeologists may strategize with each other, and even look at other cards to make suggestions. However, they may not play cards for other Archaeologists, nor forcefully play a card of another Archaeologist for them.

Game Systems and Other Terms

**Dice** – is the main way of scoring as well as earning (or losing) Trinkets. *DICE* has four kinds of dice:

Green Dice are the Expedition’s Dice and Life;

Gold Dice are the Ancient’s Dice and inherent traps;

White Dice are permanent dice that can be gained by the Expedition; and

Pip Dice are temporary dice that is gained or disabled throughout play.

It must be noted that whenever a card says that a number of dice must be disabled or given to another player, unless specified, the Pip Dice are the first affected, then the White Dice, and lastly, the Colored Dice.

**Flat** – is the term used when adding or subtracting from the ROLL Score of any player (e.g. -5 flat, +3 flat). These numbers are represented by the Dice Tokens, which represent set values of the dice ranging from -6 to +6, skipping 2s and 1s.

**Reroll** –allows a player to reroll specific dice according to a card effect. Rerolls must be done after the initial Roll Phase.

**Alert** – is a mechanic designed to force the Expedition to play high risk, high reward cards, as well as for the Ancient to be able to play stronger cards. Alert passively increases by 1 after the Entry Stage, unless prevented by specific cards. It may also increase or decrease immediately, oftentimes with a corresponding effect.

Alert is divided into three Hazard Levels, the first 3 corresponds to Hazard One, the next 4 corresponds to Hazard Two, and the last 3 makes Hazard Three. The Ancient can only play cards whose Hazard Value is equal or lower than the highest Hazard Level this round, that is, if the round started with Alert 7 (and thus Hazard Three) and is subsequently decreased to Alert 5 (Hazard Two), the Ancient is still able to play Hazard Three cards.

**Risk** – shorthand for Risk Mitigation, as well as “high risk, high reward,” is the way the Expedition makes sure they survive the exploration of the Crumbling Expanse. Risk is represented by the sum of the Risk Values present in most Expedition cards as well as additional Risk Tokens from other Archaeologists’ actions. As long as the total Risk of an Archaeologist is not lower than the current Alert Value (not the initial Alert Value of the round), they will be safe. Otherwise, they will gain Danger.

**Danger** – represents a dwindling energy, injury, or mental incapacity of an Archaeologist. Danger represents an Archaeologist’s life, in reverse: a higher Danger means more peril. Each Danger Point is marked with a Green Dice of the corresponding Archaeologist, which means the more Danger they are in, the less dice they can roll. 4 Danger removes an Archaeologist from play, unable to participate directly in the game (however they may elect to communicate with the surviving Archaeologists…).

It must be noted that a removed Archaeologist does not distribute their Trinkets between the remaining Expedition members, nor placed on the Trinket Discard. This is a **permanent removal** of Trinkets during the current game. Their cards follow the same logic: these are not discarded nor returned to the Expedition Deck.

**Trinket** – is the main resource of the game, one of the two goals of the Expedition, and one of the two lifeforce of the Ancients. There is an absolute number of 100 Trinkets in standard play; this number cannot be increased or decreased except only when there are less than 4 Archaeologists in play.

When Trinkets are spent during play, whether via playing cards, Heists, or some unexpected scenario during modified play, the spent Trinkets enter the Trinket Discard, a shared pool of primarily unusable Trinkets for all players. The Ancient is able to retrieve Trinkets from the Trinket Discard through playing cards or exposing/activating relics.

**Relic** – is the other goal of the Expedition as well as the other lifeforce of the Ancient. Relics are powerful items left behind by the civilization who once resided in the Crumbling Expanse, and the Expedition’s objective is to retrieve 4 of these Relics without them being incapacitated due to Danger. The Ancient, on the other hand, is able to Activate these Relics, revealing their power for but a brief moment, but at the same time Expose its location to the Expedition, allowing them to Heist it away.

**Heist** – is an Expedition-initiated mechanic where an Archaeologist challenges the Ancient for an Exposed Relic. The mechanisms for the Heist and normal play are the same, except for these changes:

The Archaeologist must spend 5 Trinkets to Initiate a Heist.

The Initiating Archaeologist ignores Risk and Alert during the round they initiated a Heist.

The Initiating Archaeologist can only play 1 card during the round they initiated a Heist; it is implied that the other card is the Heist itself.

Other Archaeologists may aid the Initiating Archaeologist if their cards or abilities allow them to; otherwise, they still have to manage their Risk and Dice.

The Heist ends after the Roll Phase; the ROLL determines the success or failure of the Heist.

A Successful Heist means the Initiating Archaeologist takes the Relic Token and the corresponding Relic Card (which they cannot use; it is merely for bragging rights). They also gain 1 White Die for their achievement. However, this dice must be rolled to determine whether the Ancient notices the loss of the Relic: a 1 means the Ancient does not notice (or chooses to ignore), while any other value increases Alert by 1, making future rounds harder for the Archaeologists.

A Failed Heist increases the Initiating Archaeologist’s Danger by 1. This is a consequence of falling prey to the Ancient’s machinations and traps.

**Draw** – simply means that a player must draw a set number of cards.

**Discard** – simply means that a player must discard a set number of cards.

**Hand Limit** – represents the number of cards that any player must hold during the Pre-Round. This number is 5, i.e. all players must have 5 cards on hand during the Pre-Round. If the number of cards that a player holds is above or below the Hand Limit, they must discard or draw cards until they hold 5 cards.

Abilities and Relics, whether stolen or not, do not count towards the Hand Limit.

**Banish** – means that a card cannot be reshuffled into the deck on the occasion that the deck becomes empty. This prevents Starter Cards, which are normally only useful during the game’s beginning, from being drawn, as well as powerful Expedition cards. Otherwise, this word has no purpose.

**Card Types** – There are 8 card types in *DICE*:

**Starter** cards are what every player holds during the beginning of the game. These are low-no cost, low value cards that allow players to still participate without much worry of thinking very early on.

**Action** cards are any card that primarily affects the Rally or Roll Phase. Action cards may have Effects in its description.

**Effect** cards are any card that primarily affects any other phase or subphase than the Rally or Roll. Event cards may add or disable dice during the Rally.

Functionally, the only distinction between Action and Effect cards is its primary target: the Roll, or any other mechanic?

**Instant** cards are cards that can be played immediately. Some of these cards can only be played on a specific phase; the card’s description will clearly tell this.

**Ability** cards are permanent cards of the Expedition, allowing them to act without using any cards, or giving bonuses to other Archaeologists, or giving a permanent bonus to themselves.

**Relic** cards are analogous to Ability cards of the Archaeologists, except way more powerful, but also vulnerable to being stolen when Exposed.

**Influence** cards are the actions of the Crumbling Expanse outside of the Ancient’s control. These are shuffled randomly within the Ancient’s Deck, and is played immediately when drawn.

The Ancient cannot draw an additional card to replace the played Influence Card.

Influence Cards are Banished when played; that is, they do not return to the Ancient’s Deck in event of a reshuffle.

**Negative** cards are detrimental cards for the Expedition, which are only shuffled to their deck via Influence Cards. These have a corresponding Risk Value, allowing it to be used to prevent Danger, but carries undesirable effects.

**Unexpected Scenarios:**

**Empty Deck:** If the Archaeologists no longer have any cards to draw from the Expedition Deck, or the Ancient can no longer draw from the Ancient Deck, the respective decks are shuffled, with this exception: any card marked with the Banish Icon is not included in the shuffle. This includes, but is not limited to, Starter, Influence, and Negative Cards.

**No Dice to Roll:** If, by a combination of Danger and cards played, an Archaeologist has no dice that they can roll (or the Ancient has no dice allocated for a specific Archaeologist due to cards and neglect), then they roll no dice. If they have Flat Value Tokens on play, these are added to the roll score.

**Archaeologist has no Trinkets:** An Archaeologist can no longer play a card due to insufficient Trinkets, or refuses to play a card, reasoning strategy and/or chaos. Said Archaeologist can still roll whatever dice they have, whether on hand or received from others, but their Danger will increase by 1 by the Danger Phase. This fits nicely with the Comparison Sub-phase: the Archaeologist is treated as if they played cards with 0 Risk Value.

**No Trinkets, but Reilcs in Play:** If at the later parts of the game, the Ancient can no longer award Trinkets, but still has Relics in play, game continues, but the Ancient does not reward Trinkets anymore. If, through cards or Relics, the Ancient gains Trinkets, then normal game resumes. Trinkets that should have been gained in previous rounds are voided.

**No Trinkets, Unexposed Relics:** If it turns out that the Ancient has not Exposed all their Relics when this scenario occurs, then all Relics are immediately Exposed, Relic Cooldowns are triggered, and the Ancient loses half of their Gold Dice. This is a punishment for being too passive.

**Down to the Wire:** If both teams are expected to win this round because of these conditions:

1. The Ancient will lose all Trinkets/Relics this round
2. The remaining Archaeologist(s) will be removed due to insufficient Risk

then the Expedition will win due to the nature of the Game Flow, which forces the Ancient to award Trinkets before the Archaeologists lose their last Green Die to Danger.

Credits:

Adriano, Jessica Raye – Sound Engineer

Hidalgo, Maika Jasmine – Artist

Jacinto, Alexis Rovic John – Programmer

Marcos, Dannah Lei – Game Designer

Variant Rules:

The players are expected to understand the base game first, and be able to play in a reasonable pace, before using the Official Variant Rules. These are merely suggestions, and you may as well create your own Variant Rule for your games.

Simultaneous Play:

Instant Cards and Influence Cards are removed from all decks.

The Ancient can continuously play cards to increase their dice pool, which can be allocated to any roll any time. Every 4 cards the Ancient plays, Alert increases by 1. Cards that prevent passive Alert increase instead reset the card played counter.

Archaeologists can play up to however many cards they want before initiating rolls. Each Archaeologist now has a dice pool, starting with 0 dice, with which they can keep the dice they earn from cards. Any number of dice, up to the total amount the dice pool has, can be added to the next roll.

Cards affecting dice disabling affects Colored Dice first, White Dice second, and Pip Dice next.

Archaeologists no longer need to wait for the Ancient or other Archaeologists to play cards, although any cards played before Initiated Rolls must trigger first.

Hidden Agenda:

Each Archaeologist decides on an Agenda based on the game. Suggested Agendas are:

* Conservationist: Do not let the Expedition win, at all costs.
* Capitalist: Have the most Trinkets by the end of the game.
* Traitor: Be the last Archaeologist in play when the Expedition wins.
* Hoarder: Have the most Relics acquired.
* Guardian: Do not let a specific Archaeologist, other than you, reach 4 Danger.
* Assassin: Make sure that a specific Archaeologist reaches 4 Danger first.

Expedition Victory is replaced by Archaeologist Victories, which only occur if the Expedition Victory Condition is met, and an Archaeologist’s Agenda is satisfied. Otherwise, the Archaeologist loses with the Ancient.

The Conservationist wins with the Ancient. If possible, develop your own rules regarding this Agenda: they may discreetly add/remove dice from other players, or their risk is increased by 1 passively. Another suggested rule is forcefully removing an Archaeologist from play, and if the Conservationist is removed, all other Archaeologists gain 1 White Die, and if the player removed is not the Conservationist, every Archaeologist still in play increases their Danger by 1.

Relics Only:

Trinkets Spent by the Archaeologists return to the Ancient’s Trinket Pool. Trinkets Spent by the Ancient enters an Expedition Trinket Pool, a shared Trinket resource for any Archaeologist to use.

The Expedition Victory Condition changes from exhausting both Trinkets and Relics to only needing to acquire all 4 Relics. In turn, Each Relic must be Heisted twice to be taken from the Ancient. The first Successful Heist disables a Relic’s Effect, and the second Successful Heist steals the Relic, and all rules regarding Stolen Relics apply.

Trinkets Only:

Abilities and Relics are removed from play. Expedition Victory changes to only needing to exhaust the Ancient’s Trinkets. All other rules apply.

Constant Influence:

The Influence Cards are taken out of the Ancient Deck, and placed into its own deck. After all players draw cards, a card is drawn from the Influence Deck, and its effects immediately apply.

All Hands On Deck:

The Expedition starts with no abilities. The Ancient starts with no set Relics.

Archaeologists must spend 3 Trinkets to acquire an Ability. If the Ability is Passive, the Archaeologist can discard it any time, losing its effects as they do so. If the Ability is Active, the Archaeologist can either trigger the Ability’s cooldown upon use, or discard the Ability upon use.

The Ancient Exposes a Relic Token when drawing a Relic. Upon activating a Relic’s Effect, the Relic Card is discarded, but the Relic Token remains Exposed. The Ancient can no longer draw Relics when all 4 Relic Tokens are taken via Heists.

Theft:

The Ancient can now draw once from the Expedition Deck per round, and play the card, halving its Trinket Cost (rounded up). Hazard Rules do not apply to Expedition Cards played by the Ancient, however, Risk Rules do. An Ancient-played Expedition Card adds the associated Risk Value to the Expedition.