

Religion Guide

Flluaguan University

Religions

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While a large portion of the population of Maith is, in modern day, Agnostic or Atheist, many religions are still practiced around the world. While some are decentralized, others are centralized and some are even cults. Some are peaceful, others are violent. Just like our world, the religions of Maith are highly varied, and listed here are some of the religions still practiced, in some capacity, in the modern day.

The United Clergy of Eldurwick

❖ The United Clergy of Eldurwick ❖

The United Clergy of Eldurwick has more influence on the Western Continents, but some influence is felt in Blaluzaic. It used to be much larger and is now more of a collection of cults that, while united, operate independently due to being so spread out from each other. They have united under one ideal; magic must go. They believe that magic was the cause of the Ancient War, and that continued use and reliance on magic will cause another apocalyptic war to occur. It is a unifying belief, though the exact nature of how the end time will come about depends on the specific sect. Hate and violence against magic users in the name of justice, purposefully acquiring curses to assail magic schools and ritual cleansing of those who use magic via fire are common amongst these cults, as well as human supremacist and totalitarian ideals and further believing magic fire is “stolen”. Practice of this religion is banned in most countries, which just fuels the believers by having “evidence” that the world is out to get rid of non-magic users.

◆ The Mancion Account and The Elturmein ◆

While the United Clergy of Eldurwick has many texts there is some variation between sects. However two texts that all sects have in common are **The Mancion Account** and **The Elturmein**.

- **The Mancion Account** is a supposed account or retelling of the events that lead to the Ancient War by a so-called individual named only ‘Mancion’. This account is the first text of the Unity Clergy of Eldurwick and forms the *factual* basis for their most core belief, magic caused the Ancient War.
- **The Elturmein** is where the works become to take on a more religious tone. It details many ‘functions’ of reality. Particularly into the inherent evil of magic, and its users. Also mentioning the possibility of another apocalyptic event being caused by magic. Moreover it explains many rituals and practices of the UCE.

A few excerpts from both of these texts follows to give understanding of specific beliefs and practices of Unity Clergy of Eldurwick:

- Magic was the cause of the Ancient War:
“By virtue of their magicks did this come. It is true, and they knew it was so. Yet they could not steel themselves to live without it. This I knew would lead to only more calamity, and so it did.”
-The Mancion Account
- Continued use of magic will cause another apocalyptic war:
“For magic itself it a lure, a sinful lighthouse that draws upon itself only greater evil. As this dark light stains the shore of our reality ever more, it is only a matter of time ‘til something in the dark spot is.”
-The Elturmein
- Violence against magic users is holy justice:
“They are stained by it. If a being has magic, it is a cancer in them. So ingrained that it cannot be removed. It evils them. We are right to hate them for their evil. In our kindness we must mercy them through the relief of purifying fire.”
-The Elturmein
- Human supremacist ideals:
“They were cruel to me. Not only because I spoke the truth, but because I was human; because I was better than them.” -The Mancion Account
“Humanity is less decayed by magic than the others. The others are too far gone. So only the faithful of mankind can be saved. If we purge those of us who are tainted.”
-The Elturmein
- Magic fire is stolen:
“Yes I saw it, I saw it before my very eyes. The greedy hands of mages taking the purifying flame for themselves. Corrupting it, making it slave to them. Though they can never take it all.”
-The Mancion Account
- Matches and match boxes:
“So the simplest of tools can create purifying fire. We must not only cleanse the world, but also our own kind. Should they sin too greatly, fire will save them.”
-The Elturmein

Do note that some sects of the United Clergy of Eldurwick have other texts. From holy ones to others that serve more as operation manuals. This is mainly due to the independent operation that different cells have been forced into as a result of the religion becoming illegal in many countries worldwide. Of course this is plainly justified by their violent actions and hateful beliefs.

◆ Other Notes ◆

- Religious Clothing

The United Clergy of Eldurwick doesn't have any required religious garbs to be worn by those who practice the religion, but members do carry a specific brand and type of match. The match always lights blue or white depending on the sect or denomination. The match box they carry is always carried with them, and the number of matches in the box denote how many times you've sinned, and when the box no longer has any matches, you are excommunicated. Those who have unopened boxes are usually religious leaders who have been "forgiven" for all sins that they may commit.

The Breath Doctrine

❖ The Breath Doctrine ❖

The Breath Doctrine is a group of religious denominations that believe magic itself is alive, their main evidence of this being how there are points in the world where mana physically manifests and performs miracles. They believe that magic must be studied and understood, and that there is a cycle of mana in which intelligent species absorb mana and magical essence through breathing, eating and drinking, and that one must regularly return that magic to the greater whole via casting spells. They have created a unique spell that specifically is to fulfill this belief called “Breathing Out”. The spell does nothing, yet costs massive amounts of mana and magical essence to cast, and it is very easy to overcast the spell and leave yourself exhausted and out of breath.

Their main Holy Site is the Mana Oasis, the capital of a country simply named the Magitocracy and run by the head of the Breath Doctrine. It has been infused with magical energies, making the surrounding areas extremely fertile and plentiful in resources, especially high-quality herbs commonly used for potions. They believe in an ideology of “True Peace”, in which one must know how to fight, but they should never be the one to initiate the fight and should instead try to communicate and understand first. Their holy texts, known as the Doctrine, are written in stone, and it is said that the original copy, kept under heavy guard, was written by a man named Arahum who had drank from the Mana Oasis and been granted knowledge by an entity simply known as “The Mouth of Mana”. They encourage debate over what a passage's true meaning is, holding a mass discussion and debate between all priests every decade. In The Breath Doctrine, marriages are made using Binding Contracts.

Their religion is mainly practiced on the continent it was founded on, but it is not uncommon to find those who practice the Doctrine around the world. It is tradition to make a trip to the Oasis once in a worshiper's life and take a sip of the seemingly endless supply of magical water, to empower their magic. Due to the empowering nature of the water, there is a black market smuggling the water out and selling it, and those caught doing so are punished severely.

“Only through communication and understanding can we enlighten ourselves. If those are different than you wish for your extermination, it is your duty to protect yourself, however, it is also your duty to understand them and come closer to an enlightened state.”

–Arahum, “13-2: Path of Enlightenment” of the Doctrine.

◆ Doctrine ◆

The Doctrine, the holy scripture that those of the Breath Doctrine follow, is incredibly long, all of it being written on some of the earliest recorded pieces of paper ever made. There is plenty of extra information related to the religion, including philosophies and sins that fall within the category. There are also numerous versions of the Breath Doctrine due to how old it is, some of them being the “Artan Doctrine” and the “Enlightened Doctrine”. The Doctrine is rather long at around 500,000 words. These are a few key concepts from the Doctrine, although it isn't entirely extensive and there are obviously more.

- A corpse is to be returned to the earth via a green burial, and in doing so, the minor sins of a person will be lifted:
“The bodies below, absorbed by It, breathes life back into the world, and says ‘May those, who yearn for Its blessings, be relinquished of all sins.’”
–Arahum, “16-4: Path of Remembrance” of the Doctrine.
- Aptitudes are considered to be miraculous and blessings that are given by magic/mana. The more aptitudes a person has, the more in tune with magic they are:
“Oh, how I yearned to be with It, as It was everything and nothing. By breathing in Its work, we become closer to It, and are loved by It. Of Its breath and soul, we become Its body; Its holy diviners to Its work.”
–Arahum, “1-5: Path of Knowledge” of the Doctrine.
- Elementals are manifestations of Mana and are thus regarded highly.
“They knew more; the sprites of knowledge that held Its love so closely. They listened, spoke, and truly became one. They would not reveal Its secrets as Its loyal followers, borne from their very soul.”
–Arahum, “1-2: Path of Knowledge” of the Doctrine.
- Murder is permissible under certain circumstances
 - Raising your hand to those loved by you (domestic abuse)
 - Sexual abuse
 - Spurning the blessings of Mana (refusing to use magic)
 - There is an ongoing theological debate on if refusing modern medical treatment counts as spurning Mana's blessings.

- Some argue that modern medicine could not exist without Mana thus it is one of her blessings.

Others argue that modern medicine works to disrupt her cycle and is an affront to Mana.

“The demons of wrath; sin that does unto Its work. To harm one of Its beloved is a sacrilege to a sacred art. It does not return to the cycle, harming those who give everything to It. With this, a hand shall be raised: one shall suffer through death.”

–Arahum, “3-5: Path of the Soul” of the Doctrine

- Murder, specifically, is one of the most hotly debated passages of the Doctrine. Numerous people believe that it is a mistranslation, and that it is actually “One shall suffer in death” and not “One shall suffer through death.”

◆ General Sins ◆

These are sins that are to be avoided, although some sins are not as bad as others. In general, those who follow the Breath Doctrine try to stay away from anything that could potentially be an affront to Mana or disturb the natural cycle.

- Cannibalism is an affront to Mana.
- Failing to use “Breathing Out”.
- Working on Maiday.
 - “Failing to honor the day of rest.”
- Working during Plaith Week.
 - “Failing to honor the week of rest.”
- Failing to appreciate the blessings of Mana.
- Wearing and/or using Mana-infused items.
 - Mana is alive. Thus, infusing items with it is the equivalent to trapping a living being in a cage.
- Resorting to violence before all other options have been exhausted.
- Refusing to defend oneself from an attack.
- Trying to artificially replicate the blessings of Mana or misusing it.
 - Creating artificial creatures, replicating holy grounds, etc.
 - Cursing people is also within this.
- Endless life and the pursuit of it are affronts to Mana.
 - Necromancy is an affront to Mana. Immortal beings are considered affronts to Mana.
- Wasting material (throwing things out instead of reusing them, refusing to eat edible parts of animals, etc) is an affront to Mana.
 - Practicing minimalism is important as living in excess often means wasting materials.

◆ Holidays/Important Days ◆

The Doctrine also gives days of rest for those who dedicate themselves to Mana and recharging it.

“It, who bathes us in Its glory, shall gift us the sun and moons for our hearts.”

–Arahum, “Passage 3-4: Path of Insight” of the Doctrine.

- Ver 1: Dedication to Mana [work-restricted]
 - All followers are expected to forfeit most of their Mana via “Breathing Out”.
 - Doctrine-wise, Plaith Week is set aside so everyone can let go of stress and regenerate before giving as much Mana as possible.
- Any day when both moons are new [Special Worship]
- Any day when both moons are full [Special Worship]
- Any day when the moons are of opposing phases [Meaningful]
- Aestas 33-Sumor 14: Festival of Mana [Work-restricted/Special Worship]
 - Every 9 days the focus of the festival switches to a different element. (Order is: fire, water, wind, earth, light, dark)
 - The 9th day is one of rest (—technically. Many of the festival organizers have to bend this rule)
 - The final day ends with a celebration of all Mana, involving an extravagant fireworks display. (It is the only Maiday of the year when “work” is allowed, and is a day of grand display and often one of gluttony and feasting. However, as this is a day to proclaim one’s love for the blessings of Mana - it is permissible)
 - This could be classed as its own day: “Feast of Mana”

◆ Other Notes ◆

- Religious Clothing

The clothing from the Breath Doctrine usually varies by sects and denominations, where they all have different ceremonial or religious garb. The only consistent factor for every doctrine is that they wear a sash that denotes their aptitude or the magic

that they majorly focus on studying. The sash is worn daily by those who practice the religion. The clothing is generally, for most sects, very breathable and easy to wear.

(Updated by @lizardrain and @d0kkaebim00n)

There is a subsector of **The Breath Doctrine** called [Angelicism](#).

The Higher Reasoning Guild

❖ *The Higher Reasoning Guild* ❖

A subsector of **The Breath Doctrine**. Much like the Clergy of Eldurwick, this group is moreso a collection of cults than an organized religion, and they are best described as the opposite of the Clergy of Eldurwick. They believe that non-magic users must be killed and/or bred out of existence, and the cults often clash against each other and disrupt normal life for everyone else. They are a corrupt and much more violent spinoff of the Breath Doctrine, essentially hiding behind a religion while believing in human supremacy, violence and much more.

The Higher Reasoning Guild believes that magic was gifted to them as a blessing that proves one's connection and humanity with the world. Those who are non-magic users throw off that connection and anger the world, which causes natural disasters. They prophesied that the end of the world will occur due to non-magic users taking up space in the world.

◆ **Other Notes** ◆

- Religious Clothing

When a member discovers their aptitude(s), they dye all of their clothing the color of their aptitude and exclusively wear that color. Other than that, they mostly wear The Breath Doctrine's listed clothing.

❖ The Technomag ❖

The Technomag is a decentralized religion that believes “Godhood is an attainable state of being rather than a preordained facet of any being.” In short, The Technomag believe that any gods that have truly existed, existed purely as “Mortal beings who have learned to manipulate magic at a level beyond what most others could.”

The Technomag is considered by the less learned to be merely a group philosophy. However, the specificity of both their beliefs and practices go beyond merely thought. Moving into a way of life for many believers. Though, due to the decentralized nature of the religion, the seriousness of the practices varies greatly.

That said, for a member of The Technomag the Great Goal in life is to find a way to attain ‘godhood’ for oneself. For The Technomag the means of this ‘Godhood’ is magical and technological in nature. Ideally, for they are generally egalitarian, this goal should be achieved in such a way that, “The common person, and indeed every person, might become the god of their own life.”

These quotes in the above are from Ismun, founder of The Technomag. Who also has a powerful thought on what the ‘Holy Text’ of the Technomag is, “Our holy text is science, and our means of worship are invention. The ones we worship are ourselves, for only by empowering ourselves can we become gods.”

◆ Mantras ◆

Technomags are generally not a very superstitious group. They utilize mantras in a much more scientific way than many other religions. Acknowledging the psychological power of such practices as shown by rigorous study. So Mantras are generally used to reaffirm beliefs and grant serenity, often in the face of difficult technological or magical quandaries.

2 common Technomag mantras follow:

- “My very being is made divine through my unending devotion to make it so.”
- “I shall rule over myself as a god, as in so doing further the great goal of ruling over my whole life as a god.”

These 2 mantras are very common as daily affirmations for many members of The Technomag. More ‘pious’ members might even take time out of their day to meditate on these or other Technomag mantras. To be clear though, there are Technomags who do not use such mantras or who decide not to meditate at all. These 2 Mantras are written in, “The Process”.

◆ The Process ◆

Those outside the religion might misinterpret this set of texts as some sort of Holy Scripture. Technomags themselves though see it as a helpful aid for both understanding their beliefs and living them out through practice. Written by various Technomag Scholars during the earlier days of the religion. Generally it contains a variety of ways to, “Continually face toward the Great Goal.” Which, as a reminder, is to “become [a] god.”

These texts were originally, and have since, been reinforced by numerous individual studies and meta data research projects. In fact The Process is not a static set of texts. Rather it has been modified over time as new findings have overturned previous understandings. Some Technomag scholars have compared it to any scientific theory. In fact the founder Ismun himself described it thusly,

“The Process is our best current understanding of the practices most likely to lead to the common person being able to complete the Great Goal.”

The Process is kept by a council of Technomag Scholars with input given and taken via various means, including conventions and by mail.

◆ More on Belief ◆

Before going into the various practices of The Technomag we shall use the two previously stated mantras to go over some key points of their beliefs.

“My very being is made divine through my unending devotion to make it so.”

This shows greatly the Technomag belief that divinity or godhood is something achievable by any being. Or more precisely something that could be for any being. However, actual achievement requires ‘unending devotion’ in short, great effort.

This mantra also illustrates that to The Technomag the very act of attempting the Great Goal, is divine in a sense. As the Technomag do not believe that a being either is or isn't a god. Rather that godhood is a scale and not something to be finished as though crossing a finish line. So someone continually acting toward godhood is inherently further along that scale.

Some might find this confusing as it seems to mean that the Great Goal is unattainable. A more recent Technomag scholar named Talien explained it like this. "The Great Goal is a waystone in one's outstretched hand, it points the way toward itself. The Technomag must always hold themselves toward it, for a god is never finished being. As we know, perfection is an impossibility of a subjective nature. So to be a perfect god is impossible, but to be better today than yesterday is always possible. And if one is a god, should not they not wish to be the noble sort of god? That is, a true god shall also always seek to be more godly."

The second Mantra leans more unto the belief that forms much of the active practices of The Technomag.

"I shall rule over myself as a god, as in doing so I further the great goal of ruling over my whole life as a god."

To rule over oneself as a god, in the Technomag view, is to have an authority over oneself. They believe that that which is needed to achieve the Great Goal will necessitate great effort and therefore great discipline. This belief of discipline of the self as divine is all over Technomag Practices.

◆ Practices ◆

As has been stated, practice varies greatly across the religion. However there are a few key things that one must do in some manner to generally be considered a Technomag.

- Practice Self Discipline through:
 - Mantras and Meditation
 - Excellent Habit Formation and Retention

Typically Technomag self discipline is highly informed by psychological studies. These two are key points that have remained practiced throughout time by the Technomag.

- Actively pursue godhood through:
 - Scientific Study
 - Magical Study
 - Other scholarly pursuits

Any seeking of knowledge can be considered such a pursuit. Though those at the forefront of discovery are considered to be 'further along'.

- Continually act divinely by:
 - Seeking to be in good health
 - Seeking to be principled

Technomags try to be the best person they can be, to be the best god they could be. Both physically and morally.

- Act as your own worshiper by:
 - Cherishing your own life
 - Practicing devotions to your own strengths

Treating themselves with value and worth as an act of worship. Practicing devotions to strength is often a simple acknowledgment of one's skills. Though it could be something more physical like rewarding one's efforts by having fun or simply relaxing.

To be clear, Technomag practice can vary greatly. A huge variety has been written by Technomag Scholars both in The Process and various other texts such as Talien's, "Envisioning a World of Gods" and Ismun's, "Discipline as Divine".

◆ Other Notes ◆

- Religious Garb

Some Technomag do have religious garb. Particularly the more ascetic sects, who might forgo many possessions in exchange for a "Greater focus on the Great Goal". Though this represents a minority of The Technomag. In general your average

Technomag either wears no particular religious clothing or a simple pin denoting the religion via their official symbol (Seen on the cover of “The Process”).

Worshippers of Maith

❖ **Worshippers of Maith** ❖

An ancient religion that was started in the country of Golden Fields, the very religion that the planet's name comes from. In this religion, Maith, also called "Mother Creator", was a being that formed the first soul by directly manipulating and influencing magical energy. The first soul died out in the void, so she created vessels to hold the soul, however, the vessels, too, could not survive in the void. That is when she used the only material she knew could hold a being, her flesh, and created many vessels from it. Some of these vessels inherited the godly power of her body and ascended to become gods with her, while others inherited it to a lesser extent and others were only given life. Despite the differences, she loved her creations equally and created an entire universe for her creations to inhabit before, finally, sacrificing herself and becoming the very ground her creations walked on. Despite the religion's ancient age, its influence can still be felt in the Golden Fields to this day via the nation's culture. The religion's holy texts are The Ancient Writings, and they are chronicled by "Bark", as the religion predates paper and papyrus and was originally chiseled into bark that was then petrified.

"And have it be known that I love you all equally, flaws and all, for you all are both a part of me and not, for you all have a unique aspect."

-Maith, upon finding out her creations are different from each other, "The Ancient Writings: Passage 15 Bark 1"

◆ **The Ancient Writings** ◆

The Ancient Writings, the religion's holy text, is by far one of the longest religions. It details how the world was made, every god that was spawned from Maith, along with each individual god's own stories. There are numerous gods, with an estimation of around three hundred deities or personifications, perhaps even more. Each Bark is rather long, spanning around ten feet of writing chiseled into each one. The Ancient Writings are also somewhat organized even in the face of how long the scripture is, separated by each individual god, focusing purely on them. The first of the Barks focus on Maith before moving on to a different god. Once paper was able to be mass produced, knowledge and worship of the religion expanded further. It enabled it to be made into a more organized book form. In total, there are around thirty books, with each book being around 1,500 pages.

- Give love and understanding to everyone. Everyone has the ability to give and receive love:

"She raised Her hand and poured the essence of love. Varmosa, the child of wonder, held a goblet to catch it, gulping it down like nectar. Varmosa then became what her mother sought: love to all beings, no matter their disposition. Her body, like her mother, dissipated and became the very air that Her creations breathed."

-“The Ancient Writings: Passage 7 Bark 45”

- Every day is sacred and must be appreciated. It shall always get better:

"Maiw, the tears she had shed upon those who ignored her night, were wiped away by Zaihl. Their meetings, rare and short, he spoke softly. "Dear sister, Gaol has seen your tears rock Mother Creator. Her creations do not understand us. However, every step the three of us take in this endless dance shall lead to a brighter day."

-“The Ancient Writings: Passage 10 Bark 22”

◆ **Other Notes** ◆

- Religious Clothing

The religious clothing is so varied that it cannot be said what the commonalities are between them. The numerous subsectors and branches that worship individual gods outside of Maith herself or even avatars or fragments of a god reaches the hundreds of thousands. Thus, it is impossible to establish their religious clothing. Each god, however, usually has something associated with their being, which usually ties into their worshipper's clothing and religious practice.

Dacrion

❖ Dacrion ❖

The Dacrion believe in a creation myth and follow a way of life as detailed within the Etyorn. Firstly describing the first 'beings' the Sand and Hald. The Etyorn is a very large set of text, much of which is memorized by elder Dacrion. Though important physical copies do exist. They dance and sing often as a form of worship and prayer. This becomes a large part of their life. Living in religious communities of two types: the Shifting nomads and settled Sure. Who work in tandem to maintain copies of the Etyorn and aid in Postponement. Both groups live in an ascetic manner when it comes to material goods. Believing that all things of Form also have Mind. Not wanting to own anything 'alive' they instead befriend goods via Rutol, which can also be used to describe such goods (ie a pair of Rutol sandals). The Dacrions are very close knit, though do allow converts to their religion through an initiation process. This is a very old religion, with lots of custom and ritual. Though fairly egalitarian and very peaceful.

◆ Pre-Creation ◆

The Dacrion creation myth is rather long and somewhat convoluted. In part this is because translation of the truly ancient text is difficult. However in order to understand the Dacrion creation myth it's important to understand that they believe in a space before creation. In modern times they call it simply, pre-creation. A translated and significantly shortened description of pre-creation follows, from their holy book, the Etyorn.

"Before creation was Sand. Not the sort of sand we have felt in creation, but separate grains of potential¹ all sliding amongst one another.

In that time before time there was near nothing else aside from this Sand. No sky, and so no sun nor cloud. No ocean, and so no water nor fish. No land, and so no tree nor man².

However the sand was not alone, it was not only in its own company. For it was held in a vessel. So large and grand was this vessel it had a name, it was called Hald. Yes, it was called this by the Sand.

Though unlike the Sand, Hald could not speak. Yet unlike Hald, the sand could not act on its own. Only Hald could act, Hald would act upon the Sand and by this movement would the Sand slide amongst itself and so speak.

They were of two minds and of two bodies, Hald was sure³ and the Sand was shifting⁴. Though only together could they act and speak through one another. They were friends⁵, though in a way truer than the friends of men. For they, the two of them, were all that there was.

So it was in time before time. " -The Etyorn

A few key points to mention before moving on. Firstly some of the translation is inaccurate though left as it is for ease of reading. So to clarify a few parts and their deeper meaning within the text is the following:

1: In this context meaning having energy with yet unseen ability to put forth effort or change.

2: These words are substitutions of the real words. Modified for this excerpt, as the list of things that 'were not there' was, in the original text, several pages long. This kind of list is called a "Sienf".

As is typical of Sienf in the original language these pages turn almost lyrical. Having a certain rhythm when read aloud. This one lists much of what can be considered natural parts of creation. The list does not include things that were made by thinking beings, such as tools or clothing.

3: Meaning solid and made of a single piece in the physical meaning. Similarly in the mental meaning being certain of mind.

4: In the physical sense meaning almost like a liquid flowing. Yet also as in many parts. In the mental sense almost meaning scatter brained or simply quick to changing mind.

5: The exact translation here has changed somewhat over time. Always meaning that they were deeply involved in each other's existence. The thing is that the connotation of this relation has been rather different at times. Sometimes being more familiar, as in perhaps siblings. Others times more as though they might have a romantic affection for each other. Modern Dacrions differ in this somewhat as well. However, many also simply say that the nature of their relationship goes beyond anything we could understand. As is alluded to in the lines following this.

◆ Joyous Creation ◆

As stated previously, Dacrian creation myth is rather complex. Rather than another long excerpt this will be described in bullets, skipping much in between, to increase basic understanding. Alongside will be some shorter quotes from The Etyorn to add validity and greater context.

Dissatisfaction:

- The Sand and Hald both felt a need for others.

“Together, in the deepness of their own company, they learned music and dance. For Hald would dance and in turn the Sand would sing. The two of them then thought, ‘If there was another, would this other dance or sing, or perhaps both?’ ”

- So the desire for others was first born, the first lonely beings were Two hoping for a Third.

Separation:

- In their desire for another, born of music and dance, they only sang and danced more until:

“So vigorous and so eternal did their dance and song become that some small parts of the Sand left the hold of Hald. These pieces of Sand were so small that Hald did not notice within the fervor of dance. While the Sand knew they did not speak of it. The only being that could speak, that had that power, chose to only sing instead. Not as malice or as slight or as...*, instead because the Sand knew that Hald’s kindness would stop the dance and the singing if Hald knew.”

- So even as Sand lost some of themselves to the nothing around them. The dancing and singing did not stop.
- The Etyorn makes clear that while pre-creation did not have time in the traditional sense it did have activity. This ‘Song and Dance of Hald and Sand’ is made clear to take up what mortals would think of as a lot of time.

Forgiveness:

“Hald noticed how the Sand was lesser, almost more fledgling, and Hald cracked in the knowledge that it was the dance that had caused this. So Great was this fissure that the Sand all flowed out of Hald. So the Sand learned to cry as it flowed out to nothing.”

“After the Sand left Hald, Hald thought on the crying. So in shared pain, Hald forgave the dancing, Hald forgave Hald, and despite the loneliness would dance more and longer and...”

- So by knowing that the Sand was becoming less, Hald acted in a destructive manner. Though what was in pre-creation learned to cry, and Hald forgave both Hald and the dance.
- Hald continued to dance.

Longing:

- As Hald danced Hald began to become frail. Hald’s longing for Sand or any other being fueled the dance. Without any music the dance became somewhat discordant only making Hald weaker and weaker in form, though stronger and stronger in spirit. For the act of not giving up is a great divinity for the Dacrian as described in the Etyorn.

“Hald would dance until weakness would over take the sure form. Yet the sure mind was made all the more sure through Hald’s great effort. Hald though would collapse into the nothing of pre-creation. For the desperation of dance with no song, with no partner with no... * would destroy the form all the sooner. ”

Joyous Reunion:

- Now both the Sand and Hald had their forms go “into nothing” yet their minds were now free of form. So they did not have the restraint that form imposed.

“Now without form Sand and Hald met in mind. The nothing was full of their thought. The joy was great not only for their reunion but for the freedom of mind with no form. Now Hald could speak as minds could, and Sand had since their separation learned to dance through watching Hald.

Now Hald and Sand danced as one in mind. So then did this Song and Dance of Hald and Sand bring forth creation with sky, and so sun with cloud. Ocean, and so water with fish. Land, and so tree with man... *”

- That ends the story of creation as told in the Etyorn. This Dacrian story is only a part of the immense text of the Etyorn. Remember too that this description is far, far shorter than it is in the Etyorn.
- The whole Etyorn is so immense that while a ‘Holy book’ it is really many books. And very few whole copies exist. The oldest full copy takes up a fair sized building. So it is even more impressive that much of the Etyorn is memorized by Dacrions to varying degrees.

*All of these descriptions end up as pages long lists. There are numerous examples of this in the Etyorn. Dacrions call these ‘Never Stopping Truths’ or more traditionally ‘Sienf’ and often use them as mantra and song.

◆ Inevitable Destruction ◆

Dacrions believe that if the Song and Dance stop our creation will also cease. Yet also they feel that our forms in creation will one day crumble away under the stress of Song and Dance.

In the first case, nothing will consume all. In short, the death of creation. They call this “The End” or “Bortym”.

In the second case though, only death of form. With the Mind of creation all becoming one with Hald and Sand. This is called many things like “The Fall” or “The Cry” or traditionally “Aerimyl”. This is also the case for any form that does die in creation in the meantime. As told in the Etyorn,

“This means that should the Song and Dance cease so too will the creation we all share, both form and mind. Though if we can exhaust creation through unending Song and Dance, only form will end, with all mind becoming one with Hald and Sand as all gone form in creation has before. So we must dance and sing, not for only for our own joy, but for those who can neither act nor speak. For the rocks and for the flowers and for...” (another Sienf starts here)

Significantly later in the Etyorn it says that after Aerimyl a new song and dance will begin. One with all of creation that has ever been, including Hald and Sand. Finally together this new song and dance will be so beautiful that a new type creation will be born, one of perfect paradise.

◆ Postponement ◆

That excerpt leads very well into Postponement. This process or belief takes up much of Dacrion practice. Dacrions wish to extend creation for as long as possible. So that one day we can all “crumble away together” and have more minds join us in the meantime to join Hald and Sand.

Postponement means encouraging Hald and Sand, and indeed all of creation, to continue the Song and Dance. As only through, ‘intense emotion’ can the Song and Dance of Hald and Sand be truly continued. Encouragement comes in the form of dedication, so Dacrions dance and sing extremely often. Not only ritually, but also in their day to day. So they can “join Hald and Sand, though the action and speaking of the form before the mind of creation becomes one with them.” As well as aid in postponement.

This means that they both prevent apocalypse and hope or long for another apocalypse though the same actions. Although these two different ends are very separate in the Dacrion belief.

In short dance and sing to prevent Bortym and to make Aerimyl all the more joyous and full of mind.

◆ Specific Beliefs and Practices ◆

- Sing and Dance often and for its own joy, also to express emotion be it from loneliness or joy
 - Always sing while dancing (for politeness humming can be accepted in some circumstance)
 - Sing from the Etyorn when possible
 - Listen and learn song and dance from your elders both Dacrion and others
- Never give up
 - As the Sand did not stop while becoming weaker
 - As Half did not stop when overwhelmed by loneliness
- Seek joy in others
 - Sand and Hald always wanted the other, we are that other so bask in the company of others
 - Other also means those natural things of creation
- All natural parts of creation have not only form but also mind
 - Dacrions extend this to things made by sentient beings, such as tools or clothing. Seeing this as a melding of form and mind of the natural world. Though they take this process of creation very seriously.
 - This means everything is sentient and feeling. Though in a way perhaps beyond our understanding.
 - Restricted by form in creation we will see them act in mind with Hald and Sand after form fails.
- There is no ownership only friendship or slavery
 - Making Dacrions pretty ascetic as it comes to material possession.
 - As things have mind (pretty much soul to Dacrion) owning them is somewhat immoral
 - So anything a Dacrion owns is made in specific rituals meant to ‘befriend’ the form and mind
 - As to avoid the slavery of owning anything
 - Things made this way are called “Rutol”
 - Giving Rutol things is also a bit of a process
 - Dacrion avoid currency as it's use is impractical to the point of impossible to use in a Rutol manner
- Crying is a natural part of creation started by the Sand
 - All things cry, a tree can cry sap
 - Even rocks can cry in mind
 - Proper mind will allow the form to cry freely
 - Some Dacrion rituals require crying

- There is a divinity to crying as the Sand once did
- Two hopping for a third
 - This concept comes up a lot in pre-creation
 - This is interpreted that strife between two can be eased with a third
 - So many dances are between groups of 3
 - Conflicts are often solved by a third unrelated party (often an elder)
- Forgiveness is divine for the Dacrion who have ceremony for great forgiveness of three types:
 - Forgive the other
 - Forgive the act
 - Forgive the self
- Natural Form
 - There is nothing wrong with being nude
 - Still the Dacrion understand that many cultures disagree and confirm accordingly
 - Clothing has 2 main uses:
 - Protection from the elements
 - Expressing one's mind through form

◆ Organizational Structure ◆

There are two main Dacrion sects. Although they are one in belief. It is simply that they live different lifestyles under the Etyorn. They generally have no animosity toward one another. In fact they even practice exchange programs of a sort between one another.

Put simply, one group, the “Shifting”, are nomadic. Moving about the world performing, and by that act teaching, the songs and dances of the Etyorn.

The other group, the “Sure”, stay in different places unchanging. Typically places where partial or whole copies of the Etyorn are kept. A location like this is called a, “Place of Sureness”.

Traditionally the Shifting will journey from one “Place of Sureness” to another. Where often some members might exchange between the groups. Family and friends between the sects will rejoice with one another as well.

Importantly this is also a main way in which copies of the Etyorn are expanded upon. With Shifting moving from more complete copies to lesser copies in order to expand them with the aid of the Sure.

Lifestyles and Clothing:

These are the parts in which the sects truly differ. Living fairly differently from one another, and were different garbs. The beliefs and practices that are detailed with the Etyorn being well kept by both sects in their own manner. These two sects are in fact detailed within the Etyorn itself, all though tradition has expanded on this greatly.

Some points to compare and contrast the two, starting with clothing:

The Shifting:

- Garb, while simple in structure, has complex geometric fractal-like patterns. Typically in lighter earth tones. Light grays and light browns (almost yellow) are common.
- Nomadic, moving between Places of Sureness. Living mainly on donations (not of money but of materials and foods that can be made Rutol) for their shows. Which are primarily singing and dancing.

The Sure:

- Garb is both simple in structure and color. Typically being a single dark earth color. Dark Grays and dark browns are common.
- Settled, in different Places of Sureness. Often deeply ingrained in the local community. Also living on donations (not of money but of materials and foods that can be made Rutol). However the Sure mainly get by with their own farms.
- While both sects use mantra in times where song and dance is not possible, the Sure very often use mantra. Particularly when maintaining copies of the Etyorn.

More on Group Structure:

Dacrion groups are very close knit. So much so that communal raising of young being typical. That said, there is a hierarchy, just a fluid one. Without hard-line definitions, instead the elder among them typically have more voice. This is most true of religious matters, which do take up a majority of the day to day.

The social hierarchy often comes down to skill in dance and song. That said the Dacrion admire perseverance very much. So an unskilled dancer who never gives up might have some greater standing socially than a skilled one who only dances as required.

As far as outsiders are concerned Dacrions mainly proselytize through their open shows. New members undergo a sort of initiation and mentorship program for an average of 4 years. Before becoming a ‘full’ member of the group. Which mostly

means being able to participate in open shows, see proper copies of the Etyorn, create Rutol goods, and vote on group issues.

On issues typically an answer is arrived by the elders of any group. For matter that are controversial or serious voting may occur. Voting though is highly screwed Dacrion groups in that years as a Dacrion (Which for many is from birth) count as a vote. So elders have far more votes that the younger among them.

Understanding the Other:

Life as a Dacrion can in some way be isolating to those outside the faith. Perhaps even more for the Shifting who are always on the move. There is one part of Dacrion culture that allows them greater understanding of the 'other'. Like most Dacrion practice it comes from the Etyorn, "So in this way you will have one another to dance with and to sing with. This is good. What if the other still? Those not aiding in postponement? They are the other now. As Hald and Sand sought the other, so shall you. For points in life there must be a strange movement. Like Hald sometimes to be alone is valuable for the sake of reunion."

So as a result Dacrions take a sort of pilgrimage 1-3 times in their lives. Many use it as a chance to experience other kinds of education, some use it as a chance to proselytize. This journey can take place between 1-4 years, and is typically carefully planned out with the aid of elders. Usually it takes place in one location, although there have been accounts of some that change locations throughout. Still there is typically a careful purpose decided by the Elders with input from the person going (sometimes they go in groups of 2). So there is always some kind of learning goal, typically from some part of the Etyorn the person(s) might be struggling with to some degree.