

The Elden Effort: a cohesive document about Elden Ring's Lore V.3

Premise

With this document my intent is to create the most complete possible overview about the game and its mysteries. The goal here is not to get everything right, that will need years as always, but to create a high level and interconnected view of the worldbuilding and plot elements that is consistent enough to facilitate future theories and speculations. Metaphorically speaking, the objective here is to see the forest as clear as possible, not the single trees. In order to keep this document always on point I won't go deep into these creative inspirations citing only the relevant parts we need. This is meant to be an evolving document, meaning that I will constantly revise it as long as meaningful discoveries or new perspectives will be found so please, feel free to add in the comments any interesting things that may improve it. Understanding the lore of Fromsoftware's games is always been a Community effort after all, with only the most sound and fact checked theories surviving to the very end. Of course what you see here its not all my doing so, whenever possible, I'll put all the sources I used at the end on the document.

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1) The One Great and the Fractures

In this chapter we'll investigate the cosmogonic myth of ER worldbuilding which, not surprisingly, draws inspiration from many other popular myths. By definition it has many possible interpretations since it's common to find similarities in mythologies that never have come into contact with each other. It will also be misleading to interpret it in a literal way since the original myths from which it is made weren't meant to be interpreted like that, but more on a metaphorical/spiritual way. The ones you'll see here are just some which I consider the most relevant and will be used throughout the document to explain many other things. Because of this, this Chapter and the following one will be heavy in terms of mythological contextualization and won't dig directly into the "core" of the game. I believe that this will be helpful to create a baseline of common understanding that will make our job easier in the long run, and also to show you that I'm not making up stuff on my own. Before starting I want to specify that I'm not an expert on neither of these topics so if you're knowledgeable about something that I misinterpreted feel free to point it out.

The perfect place to start is Hyetta's dialogue at the end of her questline:

"All that there is came from the One Great. Then came fractures, and births, and souls. But the Greater Will made a mistake. Torment, despair, affliction... every sin, every curse. Every one, born of the mistake. And so, what was borrowed must be returned. Melt it all away, with the yellow chaos flame. Until all is One again."

Now, since this dialogue is very cryptic, let's analyse line by line and see all the possible implications:

"All that there is came from the One Great".

The One Great here is most likely the ER version of "The All", a concept so old that can be back tracked to the roots of western philosophy, religion and esoterism and that can be interpreted in many ways:

- In [Greek philosophy](#) as the most basic and original cosmic substance, the totality of all things, the "One Unit".
- In [Gnosticism](#) as [Monad](#), an adaptation of the Greek "One Unit" interpreting it as the supreme God from which all the other called [Aeons](#) are emanated.
- In the [Kabbalah](#) as [Ein Sof](#), "the Endless One", a [transcendent](#) and [immanent](#) being and the emanator of the 10 [Sefirot](#) and creator of the universe.
- In [Hermeticism](#) as both the most basic and original cosmic substance and as the supreme God creator of everything, itself included.
- In Alchemy as the the [Prima Materia](#), the primitive and formless base of all matter.

The connection with Alchemy is and will be very important since it allows us to talk about the [Philosopher's Hand](#), an alchemical concept symbolising all the ingredients needed for the [Great Work](#) and therefore comparable to the One Great original form before fracturing/emanating itself as we'll now see:

"Then came fractures, and births, and souls".

This line is probably the most important one because it is talking about the first act of creation, probably resembling [Genesis 1](#): these fractures are dividing the physical from the metaphysical and so bringing into the world births and souls, basically the same thing the First Flame did in DS. The term fracture is very interesting and can be associated to the "hatching" of the [World Egg](#), a common mythological motif indicating the beginning of the universe from an original, very dense substance. Following the Hermetic and Kabbalistic interpretations this "substance" could be the One Great, now

fracturing/emanating itself in all the other Aeons/Sefirot, dividing Earth from Heavens, or starting to give form and structure to Itself / the Prima Materia, very common first steps in many cosmogonic myths.

“But the Greater Will made a mistake. Torment, despair, affliction... every sin, every curse. Every one, born of the mistake”.

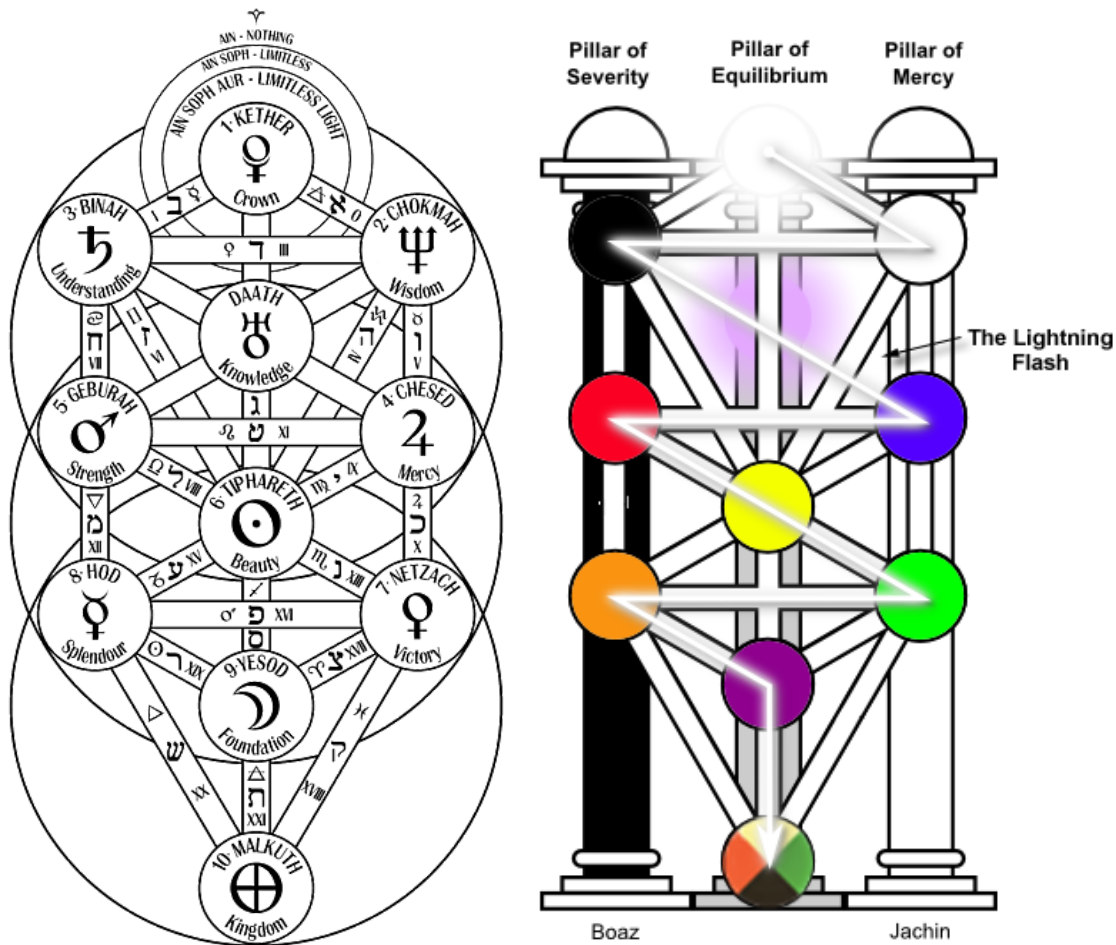
Here the Greater Will can be seen as the ER equivalent of [Sophia](#), last of the Aeons in Gnostic lore and the one considered imperfect due to a “flaw, or a passion, or a sin”, which brings instability in the divine power called [Pleroma](#) and creates the material world as a result, where matter and souls are divided. The concept of imperfect creation its also present in the modern version of Kabbalah, the [Lurianic one](#), leading the world to the fundamental stages of [Tohu](#) (Confusion/Chaos), [Shevirat HaKeilim](#), the "Shattering" of the Sephirot "Vessels" which created the evil opposites of the Sefirot, the [Qliphoth](#), and then [Tikun](#) (Order/Rectification). Returning to Gnosticism though it is very important to say that the other sin associated to Sophia is the creation of the [Demiurge / Yaldabaoth](#), an evil deity usually depicted as ignorant of the existence of its Creator and responsible for the creation of the material world, which could be a very fitting representation of the Elden Beast. We can now understand the perspective of the Three Fingers and what this specific “Sin” was: the creation of the concept of Order/Elden Beast, which will later become the Elden Ring.

“And so, what was borrowed must be returned. Melt it all away, with the yellow chaos flame. Until all is One again.”

Luckily enough this whole line can be interpreted in only one way, that the Three Fingers are trying to bring back “*what was borrowed*”, most likely something similar to the original source of divine creative power known as [Divine Spark](#), to it's original owner the One Great by melting everything with the Flame of Frenzy.

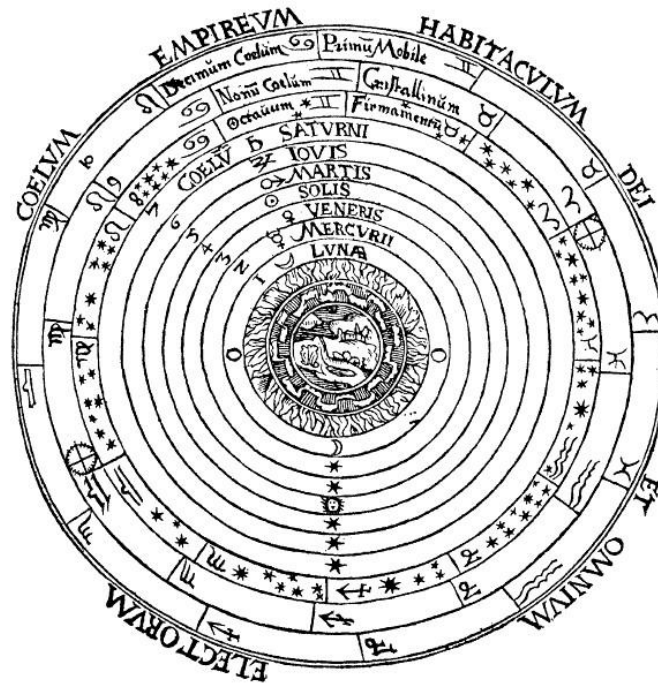
2) Elden Ring's World and how its structured

So, now that we have a rough idea of how things started let's analyse how they shaped in the world in which we play. Again, this Chapter will be really heavy on Religions/Philosophies so brace yourself. The best places to start form me in terms of structure is the [Kabbalistic Tree of Life](#):



This model sees the different Sefirot (meaning [emanations](#)) coming from Ein Sof in its act of manifesting itself and creating both the higher metaphysical realms, from Kether to Yesod, and the physical realm Malkuth. Luckily we don't have to interpret everything in a 1:1 way and so we can avoid the meaning of each Sefirot. What is really important to understand here is that the Sefirot represents different aspects/attributes of Ein Sof, a concept that will return when we'll speak about Outer Gods in Chapter 3. This model is comparable to the Gnostic one which sees Monad, the supreme God, emanating all the different Aeons in a descendant way creating all the different Celestial Spheres until the physical world. A very important concept that its present in both, although with some differences, is the idea of the [Pleroma](#) / [Ohr Ein Sof](#) which can be described as the totality of divine light/essence directly poured from God in all the other lower emanations in the act of creation. The term **poured** is incredibly relevant because it allow us to see the different Sefirot/Aeons as recipient of **only a portion** of this light/essence, a reduced quantity of the whole representing different aspect/attributes of God as said before. A good way to understand this is visualising the light of God as pure white like in the right image above, while the ones of the different Sefirot as all the other different colors except Malkuth / the physical world where all of them are present, divided from one another and materialised, which allows us to understand how the different Outer Gods manage to have influence on the Lands Between.

What is truly fascinating is that this model can also be seen as a representation of an alchemical alembic used to distil (meaning separating) God's / One Great's essence following the various steps of the Great Work through a constant interaction of opposites seen as Boaz (Female action or Positive charge) and Jachim (Male action or Negative charge) in order to create the [Elixir Vitae/Philosopher Stone](#), which in the game is probably represented by the Primordial Crucible (more on Chapter 5). From here let's proceed with the [Celestial Spheres](#) cosmological model, which probably better represent the one of the game:



In short this model, interpreted following [Gnostic Ogdoad](#), sees the world divided in 3 levels:

1. **The Divine level:** comprising the eighth sphere and beyond, where the fixed stars resides and home of the hypercosmic gods like Monad ([Empyreum](#)) and the Aeons (various regions of Pleroma under the Empyreum).
2. **The Archonic levels (archonic = created and ruled by a subordinate God, the Demiurge):** comprising the seven classical planets and their rulers, [the Archons](#).
3. **The Material level:** Earth and Moon sublunary sphere, where mortals resides.

According to this model all the spheres are embedded in the [Aether](#), the substance that fills the various regions of the universe. Since the concept of planetary orbit was yet to be introduced the common belief was that were the planetary spheres themselves to move in opposite rotating directions while inside of them the planets remained in a fixed position. The stars instead were considered fixed because, contrary to the planets, they didn't change their position relative to one another although the sphere in which they resided revolved daily around the Earth. Luckily we have something in the game that directly refers to a starry expanse comparable to the starry sphere we've mentioned now, the Comet Azur:

“Legendary sorcery devised by Azur, primeval sorcerer. Fires a tremendous comet in a torrent akin to the distant starry expanse, the place said to be the origin of glintstone. Hold to continue releasing the sorcery's power. When Azur glimpsed into the primeval current, he saw darkness. He was left both bewitched and fearful of the abyss.”

Now we understand that Glintstone comes from the ER version of the starry 8th sphere, but what are the Primeval Current and the darkness glimpsed in it? In order to answer these questions we'll need to dig deeper into scientific topics that won't be coherent to discuss here so for that I'll ask you to wait until Chapter 4. Since this model now seems pretty consistent with the ER world the next question would be: how can we be sure that there are other planets?

The answer might be in the Numen's Template description in the character's editor:

"The face of the Numen, supposed descendants of denizens of another world. Long-lived but seldom born"

Another possible clue might be the presence of the [Moonfolk Ruins](#), directly hinting at the fact that there were people from the Moon living there in the past. Let's see if alchemy can come again into our aid by looking at the description of another character template, the one of the Nightfolk:

"The Features of those known as Nightfolk. Few in number, they were said to bleed silver long ago"

The connection with Silver is very important since it is the metal associated with the Moon, which means that the Nightfolk may be the descendants of the denizens from the Moon, the Moonfolk. To be fair Moonfolk might also simply refer to people associated with the Moon for some reason like the forefathers of the astrologers for example. The idea of divine beings descending from the Moon to the Earth though its a very popular theme in Japanese folklore due to the [Tale of the Bamboo Cutter](#), and since there are strong connections linking the Numen to the Nightfolk which will be discussed in Chapter 11 I won't be surprised to see this confirmed in the future. Let's hope that no other Planet will be introduced since it will incredibly increase the scope of the game bringing more questions than answers. Another possibility may be that this other world is something like the [Garden of Eden](#), a higher divine realm from where the ancestors of the Numen were driven out after committing some sort of sin. I had this idea after reading the Cinquedeia's description, which resemble the idea of a higher being granting knowledge on lower ones like the myth associated to [Prometheus](#):

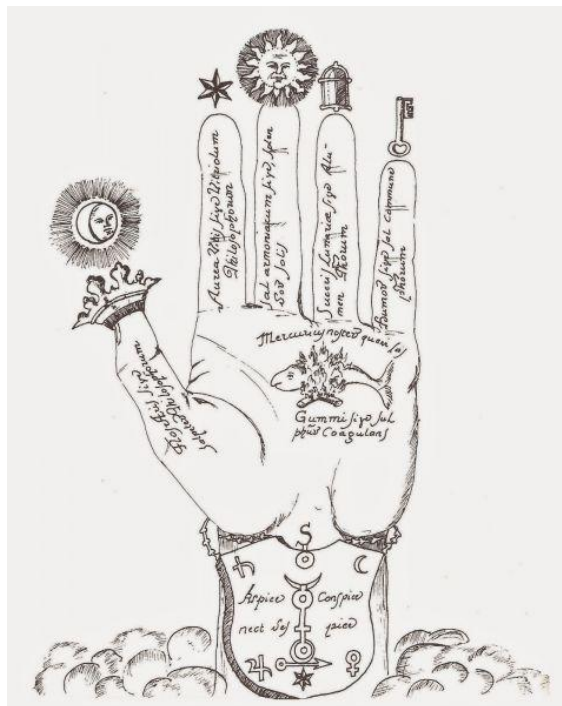
"Short sword given to high ranking clergymen of Farum Azula. Raises potency of bestial incantations. The design celebrates a beast's five fingers, symbolic of the intelligence once granted upon their kind."

Things now start to be interestingly complicated since we can make a great number of associations based on this assumption; Prometheus brought knowledge to human kind in the form of fire, which is also the alchemical means of transformation, what separates and unites, the root of its art, and there are a lot of different fires in the game. Another parallel to this happens in Gnostic lore where the one which brings knowledge to Adam and Eve and in so doing freeing them from the malevolent Demiurge's control is the Biblical Serpent. I won't go into theory-crafting mode right now since there are no basis for concrete ones, but it's certainly a thing to keep in mind for the future.

3) Outer Gods and Gods

Now that we have an idea of how things originated let's proceed with talking about the "divinities" of the ER world. They present similarities with the BB's Great Ones but with a more understandable "influence" on the material world dictated by their fixed role in ER's worldbuilding. I personally think of them more as Forces and Concepts rather than Beings although it's reasonable to assume that they have indeed a physical form in their world/sphere since they can be harmed by specific objects like the Fingerslayer Blade or Mhorgwyn's Sacred Spear. Since this is a Fromsoftware game though all of them will highly unlikely representing good traits and be more oriented towards the Lovecraftian's "unknowable beings". As we've seen in Chapter 2 the Kabbalah seems to be an important reference for the game's worldbuilding and so I'm inclined to think that it was also a reference in the conceptualization of these Gods. As said though they aren't representing positive traits like the Sefirot of the Kabbalah or the Gnostic Aeons so to me they are better represented by the [Qliphoth](#), the evil forces of creation in the [Lurianic Kabbalah](#) (detailed info on the Qliphoth [here](#)). Since they all derive from the One Great they all represent an attribute or concept of existence as we said in Chapter 1 and 2, and exactly for this everything can be an Outer God if Fromsoftware decides so.

The One Great



La main alchimique', Henri de Lintaut.

As we said on the highest divinity level we found the One Great, both the Creator and source of Creation according to the Hermetic lore. From it everything else derives and for this it can be visually associated to the Philosopher's Hand and thematically to the First Flame in DS due to its role in ER cosmogonic myth. As always we don't have to interpret this in a 1:1 way to understand the lore of the game so I won't dig deeper in its symbolism. It's highly likely that its form was the inspiration for the form of the Two and Three Fingers, envoys of the first Outer Gods to be born and representing the primordial opposing forces of Order and Chaos (exactly like the first Qliphoth Thaumiel), the Greater Will and the Frenzied Flame.

The Greater Will



God of the Old Testament, Sistine Chapel painting by Michelangelo Buonarroti.

The one we know the most due to its huge influence in ER worldbuilding, it can be thematically associated with Gold and with the Gnostic Sophia due to its role in the creation of the Elden Beast/Demiurge. It is unclear the degree of control it has on the game events since, as we'll see when talking about the Elden Beast, the latter seems far more involved and in charge of the situation in the Lands Between. I personally believe that the Greater Will was "in charge" at a certain point in the past before the Golden Order but it gradually lost its grip after its foundation due to the Elden Beast starting to follow its own will. Its goal was, presumably, first to unite and regulate all the people of the Lands Between under the Golden Order like the God of the Old Testament did for the Israelites in the [Book of Exodus](#), giving them a prophet to follow in Marika / [Moses](#) and principles to follow like the [Ten Commandments](#) / Faith in the Erdtree (not sure about this, but you get the idea) through the [Finger of God](#) / Two Fingers as we read in the Two Finger Heirloom talisman:

"A talisman engraved with the legend of the Two Fingers. Raises faith. Fingers cannot speak, yet these are eloquent. Persistently they wriggle, spelling out mysteries in the air. Thus did we gain the words. The words of our faith"

My point is that the faith before the Golden Order, regardless of its name, was very different from the one after it, like the difference and time span between [Judaism](#) and [Christianity](#). Right now it seems that its goal is to restore the Golden Order after the shattering as Enia tells us in one of her dialogues:

"Great Elden Ring, root of the Golden Order. Anchor of all lands, giver of grace, wellspring of all joy. Until it was shattered. The tragic corruption of the Order has taken its toll. Across the realm, life lies in ruin. Fallen to pieces. Foul curses and misery spread, unabating. But the Greater Will has not abandoned the realm, nor the life that inhabits it. So it is that the Tarnished are guided by grace. Called to act. Brave Tarnished, your Great Rune is a handsome shard of the Elden Ring. Seek another of its kind. To become Elden Lord, and restore the Golden Order"

This dialogue is difficult to interpret because as we said we don't know who's truly in charge of the situation. Assuming that the Two Fingers now are truly speaking for the Greater Will we can make 2 hypothesis:

1. The GW is a deceptive deity, clearly lying to us since we know that Grace has returned thanks to Marika's machinations, not because of it: *"In Marika's own words. Then, after thy death, I will give back what I once claimed. Return to the Lands Between, wage war, and brandish the Elden Ring. Grow strong in the face of death. Warriors of my lord. Lord Godfrey."*

2. That it is the GW that its truly guiding Marika's action, helping her in her quest's of defeating the Elden Beast and the corruption of the GO.

The reaction that the Two Fingers have when learning that we couldn't reach the interior of the Erdtree seems of genuine surprise though, which makes me think that the second option isn't so unlikely:

"Well, you managed to return. You know what this means. The Erdtree has spurned you. The Fingers remain still. Shaken by this turn of events, they are busy consulting the Greater Will. When they are finished, the Fingers will once again offer their guidance. But thousands, if not tens of thousands, of moons must first pass. No matter for me. But you? How will you ever manage the wait...My, oh, my..."

I believe that the reason why they are surprised is because they didn't expect Radagon's betrayal since he's a part of Marika, and are trying to figure out a solution that will manage to keep them in charge. As Enia says though, this will take a great deal of time, so we'll need another solution on which they won't agree so much, the burning of the Erdtree:

"It may be thousands upon thousands of moons before the fingers again offer their guidance. My, oh, my. Whatever will you do..."

"The Fingers would never permit it. Nor would the Greater Will.... But here we are... The Fingers, dormant, severing our link to the Greater Will. The realm, and all life, in ruins. Impossible events transpire, beyond the ken of the Fingers. Who is to say that the cardinal sin must be cardinal forever? Go on. Finish the job. Take the course you deem most worthy."

The Elden Beast



Representation of Yaldabaoth, its imperfect nature depicted by the symbol of Lead at the bottom of the image.

As we just said the Elden Beast can be seen as the ER equivalent of the Demiurge / Yaldabaoth, a Gnostic evil and imperfect deity due to its connection to the material world and responsible of its creation, act that may be associated ingame with the transformation into the Elden Ring as stated by the Elden Star description:

“This legendary incantation is the most ancient of those that derive from the Erdtree. Creates a stream of golden shooting stars that assail the area. It is said that long ago, the Greater Will sent a golden star bearing a beast into the Lands Between, which would later become the Elden Ring.”

We can make another important connection based on its remembrance, it is a **living being**, things that further reinforce what we previously said:

“Remembrance of the Elden Beast, hewn into the Erdtree. The power of its namesake can be unlocked by the Finger Reader. Alternatively, it can be used to gain a great bounty of runes. It was the vassal beast of the Greater Will and living incarnation of the concept of Order.”

Another interesting association with could be why it is considered an evil deity in Gnosticism, of which the core concept is the one of [Gnosis](#) from which it takes the name. This is a common concept that can be found in many religions across the world and symbolises the idea of reaching the needed insight or spiritual knowledge of the divine spark within themselves, meaning the portion of God present in every being, which allows the soul to transcend the physical realm and to return to the divine one. What Yaldabaoth does is basically preventing this process by keeping souls captive in the material world, which could be seen as the process of souls returning to the Erdtree and the Erdtree burial in general. It is true though that we have no ingame proof of this, but we know that the Ancestral Follower kept their distance from the Erdtree, probably understanding that there is something wrong with it:

“Raiment fashioned from a bristly pelt. Worn by ancestral follower warriors. The ancestral followers keep their distance from the Erdtree, awaiting new buds. They are certain to sprout from their very flesh, and indeed, their souls.”

This description may perfectly refer to the idea of constant “rebirth”, a concept present in many eastern religions like [Hinduism](#), [Buddhism](#) and [Shintoism](#) although with differences between each other.

The Frenzied Flame



Magnum Chaos, Basilica di Santa Maria Maggiore in Bergamo by Lorenzo Lotto.

Since it is the counterpart of the Greater Will, symbolising Chaos, it is reasonable to assume that it is indeed an Outer God. Since we found the Three Fingers in the deepest part of the Subterranean Shunning-Grounds we can speculate that at some point, like the Greater Will, it sent a star bearing its

envoys to spread its teachings and maybe a God similar to the Elden Beast as hinted by the Fingerprint Stone Shield:

“A great stone shield with an intricately carved fingerprint design. One of the heaviest of all greatshields. Part of the tomb of an ancient god, the Readerless Fingers relayed their message through these imprints, said to be the very seeds from which frenzy first sprouted.”

This God, whatever it was, was probably defeated or sealed in some ancient battle of which we will never know nothing about but it was probably discovered by the Nomadic Merchant of the past since from their armor set we know that they were the first to invoke the Flame of Frenzy:

“Finery of the nomadic merchants. Decorated with tiny gems in a wide spectrum of colors. These merchants once thrived as the Great Caravan, but after being accused of heretical beliefs, their entire clan was rounded up and buried alive far underground. Then, they chanted a curse of despair, and summoned the flame of frenzy.”

It's not clear if they worshipped it from the start or if their despair summoned it, what we know though is that Shabriri, as hinted by the description of the Howl of Shabriri Incantation, discovered it at some point:

“Incantation originating from the maddening Three Fingers. Releases a maddening shriek that causes madness buildup in foes nearby. This incantation also causes madness buildup in the caster and makes enemies more likely to target them. It is said that the sickness of the flame of frenzy began with Shabriri, the most reviled man in all history.”

It's interesting to note that Shabriri, although most certainly dead in the body, may not be in the soul since he can possess corpses in order to guide possible new Elden Lords to their meeting with the Three Fingers as we know from our own experience and the Fingerprint armor's description:

“Iron armor singed and blistered by fingers. Worn by Vyke, knight of the Roundtable Hold. No other Tarnished was closer to the throne of the Elden Lord than Vyke. But without announcement, Vyke traveled far below the capital, and was scorched by the flame of frenzy. Did he make his choice for his maiden, or did some other force lure him with suggestion?”

His appearances are too perfectly timed to be a coincidence, so he's surely keeping a close eye on everything that happens on the Lands Between and I would really like to know how he manages to do so, probably something to discuss in the future.

The Moon



[Lilith](#), painting from John Collier



[Selene](#), goddess of the Moon in Greek mythology

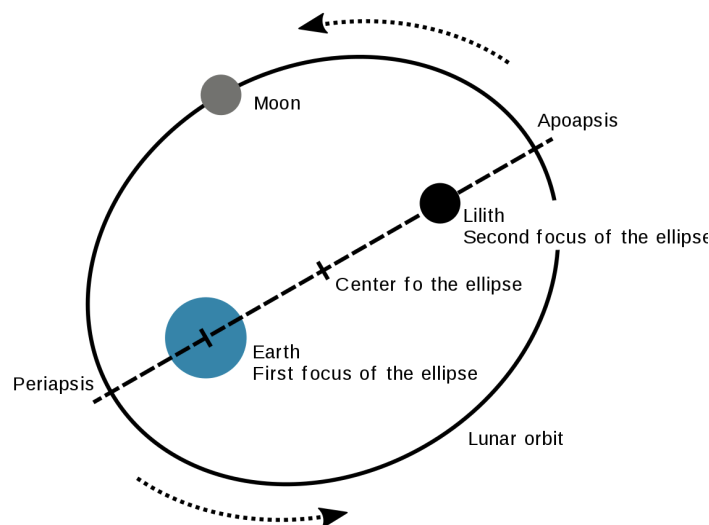
Now, the symbologies behind the Moon are many and with both overlapping and different meanings depending on the mythology and period that we want to analyse. This complexity is also reflected in Astrology, which will be the main lens to analyse what the Moon may represent in ER so, if one of you that are reading this is knowledgeable about the subject, feel free to point out things that I've missed or interpreted badly because it was a difficult research for me. I want to start by saying that there is probably **only 1 Moon** in ER but with **2 different "aspects"**, 2 sides of the same coin which can be seen from the Moon Altar in Liurnia of the Lakes:



These 2 Moon's aspects are both referenced as "Full Moon Sorceries" by the game and Ranni's one is defined as a full moon in the Darkmoon Greatsword description:

"A Moon Greatsword, bestowed by a Carian queen upon her spouse to honor long-standing tradition. One of the legendary armaments. Ranni's sigil is a full moon, cold and leaden, and this sword is but a beam of its light."

These two piece of info made me scarp the idea of them being representations of Lunar phases and lean towards the idea that they can be a reference to 2 common mythological figures that have been reinterpreted in modern Astrology, Selene and Lilith. Selene is the personification of the Moon itself in Greek mythology and her name means "Light, Brightness, Gleam". This is all we need to know for now, unless a third Moon's aspect pops out from a future DLC. Lilith it's a little bit more complex so, keeping things short to the necessary, astrologers from the 1600 to the beginning of the 1900 believed in the existence of a second smaller moon and eventually started to call it Lilith, the supposed wife of Adam before Eve in Judaic mythology, since it was a prominent figure in the occultist and esoteric literature of that time. This Moon was then named "Black" due to it's occult nature and the fact that was almost impossible to spot.



In Astrology they symbolise different things:

- Selene is considered the White Moon (Rennala's one), symbolising common themes associated with the Full Moon Lunar phase as accomplishment and enlightenment; and all the good maternal qualities as altruism, protection, caring and so on.
- Lilith is considered the Black Moon (Ranni's one), symbolising common themes associated with the standard New Moon Lunar phase as a new beginning, a black slate and limitless potential; and qualities like individuality, independence, not repressed sexual drive and so on. In both the Judaic myth and modern Astrology it specifically symbolises female independence and disobedience towards God. In cartomancy instead it has an occult and ominous nature and depending on the interpretation a premature encounter with her may lead to death, which seems reminiscent of what happened to the Eternal Cities. Although it isn't much relevant here Lilith is also part of the Lurianic Kabbalah as the 10th and last Qliphoth, with her name meaning "Queen of the Night",.

The occult and ominous nature of the Dark Moon, and so its connection with Lilith, it's further reinforced by the Freezing Mist sorcery:

"Sorcery said to have been used by the old snow witch. Releases a cold mist before the caster. This sorcery can be cast while in motion. Charging enhances range of the mist. The snowy crone taught the young Ranni to fear the dark moon as she imparted her cold sorcery."

Following a broader perspective they represent the conscious (repressive) mind, and the unconscious (impulsive) one of both male and female, but what exactly they represent in ER?

Let's try to answer by starting with the description of the Moon of Nokstella Talisman:

"This legendary talisman is a treasure of Nokstella, the Eternal City. Increases memory slots. This talisman represents the lost black moon. The moon of Nokstella was the guide of countless stars."

I personally believe the Black Moon mentioned here and Ranni's dark moon to be the same since its position it's consistent with the description of the Memory Stone:

"A black, lightly beguiling stone. Prized by the sorcerers who produce them. Increases memory slots. Said to be a fragment of the black moon that once hung above the Eternal City."

As we'll see in Chapter 11 the Eternal Cities populations were banished underground so, since Nokstella is specifically under Liurnia, I believe my assumption to be at least sound. The last line of the Moon of Nokstella Talisman is very interesting though since, from one of Iji's dialogues, we know that the stars guide the fate of the Carian royal family:

"...The fate of the Carian royal family is guided by the stars. As is the fate of Lady Ranni, first heir in the Carian royal line. But General Radahn is the conqueror of the stars. Who stood up to the swirling constellations, halting their movement in a smashing victory. And so, if General Radahn were defeated, the stars would once again resume their movement. As would Lady Ranni's destiny. Perhaps, even, revealing the elusive path. That leads to Nokron."

We now know that Moon and Stars are related to each other, and the Stargazer Heirloom Talisman may give us the final hint to understand this connection:

"A talisman engraved with the legend of a queen. Raises intelligence. The young astrologer gazed at the night sky as she walked. She had always chased the stars every step of her journey. Then she met the full moon — and, in time, the astrologer became a queen."

This description is clearly referring to Rennala as we all know, and what is very interesting to note here is the meaning of the last two lines. She chased the stars, meaning her fate, and then she

encountered the Full Moon/Selene, which made her become the Carian Queen. In the same way Rennala guided Ranni to her Dark Moon/Lilith:

“Legendary sorcery associated with the Carian queen. Uses the caster as a vessel to incarnate a cold, dark moon, then sends it floating toward foes. The dark moon dispels all sorcery that touches it, and temporarily reduces magic damage negation for those it strikes. This moon was encountered by a young Ranni, led by the hand of her mother, Rennala. What she beheld was cold, dark and veiled in occult mystery.”

With all these info we can finally understand what the Moons represent and their relationship with the Stars, with the latter representing the “path” towards destiny and the former “Destiny” itself, with Rennala’s one being achieving her full magical potential and becoming a Queen, Ranni’s one to be the one that will bring a new age to the Lands Between in a violent and dangerous way and the one of the people of the Eternal Cities to encounter a premature death probably caused by an unwillingness to follow their fate, whatever it was.

The Fell God of the Fire Giants



An interesting parallel that we can immediately draw is the one between the Fell God and the Celtic [Balor of the Evil Eye](#), an evil entity seen as personification of the harmful aspects of the sun such as its scorching nature that would bring crop failure and drought through the destructive power his eye. Conveniently enough in alchemy the Sun is associated with Sulphur, which can also be associated with Fire. Usually the Sun is represented by Gold but since we have already the Erdtree to symbolise it, and due to the fact that Sulphur/Fire can melt the Erdtree/Gold, I believe the connection with Sun/Sulphur to be the most relevant. Another hint of this may be the [Flame of the Fell God](#) Incantations which not only resembles the Sun:



but behaves exactly like the opposing 2 Moon sorceries making the correlation at least reasonable. Another important info on it come from the One-Eyed Shield:

“Tricksome shield made from white stone depicting a malformed one-eyed god. The barrel of a firearm pokes through the open mouth. Once worshipped by the giants, this evil deity is believed to have been slain by Queen Marika.”

From this description we don't only get that this God had a physical form, but also the confirmation that it was indeed an evil entity, which is repeated in the Burn o Flame Incantation:

“One of the incantations that draws directly from the power of the Fire Giants. Raises a series of flame pillars around the caster. Charging further increases the number of flame pillars. The Fire Giants borrowed from the power of a fell god, and still they were defeated. Yet their failure released them from their solitary curse: to serve as keepers of the Flame for eternity.”

The fact that it was considered evil makes me wonder if it can be linked to the concept of sacrifice since the Fire Giant had to offer his own leg in order to awake it and the Fire Monks considered the Flame Grant Me Strength incantations as forbidden since it didn't burn the caster:

“Superior incantation of the Fire Monks. Creates an invigorating fire within that enhances physical and fire-affinity attack power. This incantation does not burn the caster, and so it is considered forbidden by the guardians of the Flame.”

We also know that this God cursed the ones that worshipped it and that it was apparently slain by Marika, which we know of course to be false since we fight it in the second phase of the Fire Giant bossfight. The theme of a curse inflicted by an Outer God to its subjects will be one of the topics of Chapter 6 since it seems to be consistent with many others, namely the Greater Will, the Formless Mother and probably Miquella's one. Another thing that I want to mention here, relative to an intuition I had in writing this document, is that also the Sun may have a “second aspect” like the Moon. This thought crossed my mind when reading the Sun Realm Shield description:

“Shield of honor depicting a city crowned by the sun. It has seen better days. Much like the wear upon the shield, the Seat of the Sun is long faded away.”

My thought is that you don't build a realm over the image of an harmful deity, so probably there is more to it which will highly likely be covered in future DLCs since the info hole is too big to not be intentional. Let's not dig deeper into speculation here though and leave this topic for Chapter 11 when we'll talk about the Ancient Civilizations of the Lands Between.

The Outer God of Scarlet Rot

This is probably the only other Outer God aside from the Greater Will on which we have a good deal of informations, for example we know that it is explicitly an Outer God thanks to the Scorpion's Stinger description:

“Dagger fashioned from a great scorpion's tail, glistening with scarlet rot. A ceremonial tool used by heretics, crafted from the relic of a sealed outer god.”

And that it was sealed by the blind swordsman in the past thanks to the Blue Dancer Charm description:

“A cloth doll depicting a dancer garbed in blue. An ancient heirloom of some sort. Raises attack power with lower equipment load. The dancer in blue represents a fairy, who in legend bestowed a flowing sword upon a blind swordsman. Blade in hand, the swordsman sealed away an ancient god — a god that was Rot itself.”

It also has worshippers or at least subjects has hinted by the Mushroom Crown:

“Mushrooms found growing all over the body. These overgrown mushrooms form a towering headpiece. Raises attack power when something nearby suffers from poison or rot. Long ago, great lords served the scarlet rot. Perhaps such fungal bodies served as their crowns.”

These were probably the people of the ancient Uhl Dynasty since the Scorpion's Stinger is found in the Grand Cloister area of the Lake of Rot which has distinctive Uhl architecture. An important character related to it is Gowry, which gives us a great deal of info in his dialogues:

“Do you have an interest in rot incantations? Then you might like to learn something of the history...of Malenia, goddess of scarlet rot. Queen Marika and her King Consort Radagon were blessed with twin demigods, and Malenia was one of them. She was born an Empyrean, carrying the scarlet rot. An Empyrean...is no mere demigod. In the age of the Elden Ring, and Queen Marika, the precious Empyrean was born. A new god to forge a new Order. Since Malenia fought Radahn, and the great scarlet flower blossomed in Aeonian, I have dedicated myself to her. And to the resplendence of the Order of Rot. The cycle of decay and rebirth.”

According to the dialogue this Outer God is represented by the cycle of decay and rebirth, a cycle that seems a twisted take of the one worshipped by the Ancestral Followers, where new life grows from death as we already seen:

“Item cut from the horns of the Regal Ancestor Spirit. Restore FP upon defeating enemies. A number of new growths bud from the antler-like horns of the fallen king, each glowing with light. Thus does new life grow from death, and from death, one obtains power.”

This allows us to make a parallel with the Chaos Flame in DS, which represents the “natural power” of the First Flame but totally out of control and capable of originating monstrosities like the Demons or the Kindreds of Rot. To put it simply: Rot = Chaos Flame : First Flame = Natural Cycle

As we know it has chosen Malenia as its vessel, probably wanting to make her a God as stated in the Scarlet Aeonian description:

“Technique of Malenia, the Goddess of Rot. Creates a gigantic flower that blooms into an explosion of scarlet rot. Each time the scarlet flower blooms, Malenia's rot advances. It has bloomed twice already. With the third bloom, she will become a true goddess.”

We don't know though if the one in the bossfight was indeed the third time she blossomed since she became a Goddess or simply the second since the first was against Radahn.

The Formless Mother

Very little is known about this Outer God, with the confirmation that it is actually one coming from the Mohgwyn's Sacred Spear's description:

“Trident of Mohg, Lord of Blood. A sacred spear that will come to symbolize his dynasty. As well as serving as a weapon, it is an instrument of communion with an outer god who bestows power upon accursed blood. The mother of truth desires a wound.”

The name “mother of truth” it's certainly interesting, but what it refers to it's unclear, let's leave it here for now until we have more info. From the Bloodboon incantation we learn that Mohg met the Formless Mother in his exile in the sewer of Leyndell:

“Sacred incantation of Mohg, Lord of Blood. Thrust arm into the body of the Formless Mother, then scatter the bloodflame to set the area ablaze. This incantation can be cast while in motion. The mother of truth craves wounds. When Mohg stood before her, deep underground, his accursed blood erupted with fire, and besotted with the defilement that he was born into”

This description gives us 2 important info, that the Formless Mother has power on the “accursed blood” and that is power is called Bloodflame. We know that the blood in question here is the Omen Blood, the one linked with the Crucible, a sign of impurity under the Golden Order:

“A talisman fashioned from a bony knot that embodies the aspects of various creatures. Said to have grown on the human body long ago. Reduces damage and impact of headshots taken. A vestige of the crucible of primordial life. Born partially of devolution, it was considered a signifier of the divine in ancient times, but is now increasingly disdained as an impurity as civilization has advanced.”

These informations unfortunately have everything we know on the Formless Mother, and to me it will be premature to go into theory-crafting mode right now with a so large amount on uncertainty. What I can say though is that the Formless Mother seems closely linked to the concept of impurity, which may be why there are Albinaurics in the Mohgwyn palace.

The Twinbird’s Outer God

We know of the existence of this Outer God thanks to the Twinbirds Kite Shield description:

“Shield featuring a vividly painted twinbird. The twinbird is said to be the envoy of an outer god, and mother of the Deathbirds. At dwindling levels of HP, this shield slightly boosts both attack and defense.”

The heraldry about this shield seems interesting since its depicting a [double-headed eagle](#), which is generally a symbol for royalty/rulership. Unfortunately I wasn’t able to find an interesting point of view on it so it may as well be a red herring or something that I didn’t got, feel free to explore the idea and return back to me if you have better insights. Through the Deathbirds we can assume that it is involved in something like ritual/sacrificial death as stated by the Sacrificial Axe description:

“Hatchet used in ancient sacrificial rite. A Deathbird is depicted as a malevolent deity. The power of the rite yet lingers. A small amount of FP is restored upon slaying a foe.”

This ritual is probably something that survived until it was incorporated into the Golden Order as we read from the Mausoleum Knight Armor:

“Armor worn by headless knights who endlessly guard the Wandering Mausoleum. The wing-shaped ornaments on its back evoke the Deathbird. A self-inflicted curse that ties the spirits of these loyal knights to the land, having willingly beheaded themselves so that they may serve their masters in death.”

Thanks to the Explosive Ghostflame description we know that the Deathbirds were the ones that “managed” death before the Age of the Erdtree:

“Sorcery of the servants of Death. Strike the ground with the staff, triggering an explosion of ghostflame that burns the surrounding area. In the time when there was no Erdtree, death was burned in ghostflame. Deathbirds were the keepers of that fire.”

This seems to suggest that [funeral pyres](#) were an important part of this “cult”, a practice present in most of the cultures in the world although with different meanings and purposes. As a proper cult, it also had priests:

“Ritual spear used by priests of old who were permitted to come among the Deathbirds. The priests became guardians of the birds through the rite of Death, which also serves as an oath sworn to their distant resurrection.”

We don't know much of its apparent source of power though, the Ghostflame, aside from the fact that it is created burning the bones of the dead:

“Metal torch that burns with cold ghostflame. Tool of the Fallen Hawks who prowl the underground rivers. When the band's last embers were used up in their long search, they began to burn the bones of their fellows, acquiring the cold ghostflame, but sealing their fate as dwellers of the underground for all eternity.”

The most interesting piece of info on the ghostflame of the entire game comes from the Helphen's Steeple:

“Greatsword patterned after the black steeple of the Helphen, the lampwood which guides the dead of the spirit world. The lamplight is similar to grace in appearance, only it is said that it can only be seen by those who met their death in battle.”

This description opens a lot of topics that we aren't able to address due to being mentioned only here: What is Helphen? Since there is a spirit world, how it works in relation to the others faiths/orders and the natural cycle of death and rebirth? What's the deal with “those who met their death in battle”?

On the last point we might have a little bit more info coming from the Blue-Feathered Branchsword:

“A talisman adorned with blue feathers, once used in ancient death rituals. Raises defense when HP is low. The heart sings when one draws close to death, and thus does one cling so tenaciously to life - to render up a death worth offering.”

From this description I got the impressions that the mentioned death ritual involved combat, making me think that there is some sort of glorification of death going on. What is strange also is that in the same spell category of the aforementioned sorceries (Death Sorceries) we find also Fia's Mist, which we know comes from Godwyn power as the Death Prince, to which I'll return at the end of this chapter. The last piece of info I want to talk about is from the description of the Tibia's Summons:

“Sorcery of the servants of Death. Summons a group of Those Lost in Death. Three skeletons will appear some distance from the caster and attack foes before disappearing. The dead have long been left to wander; what they need is leadership.”

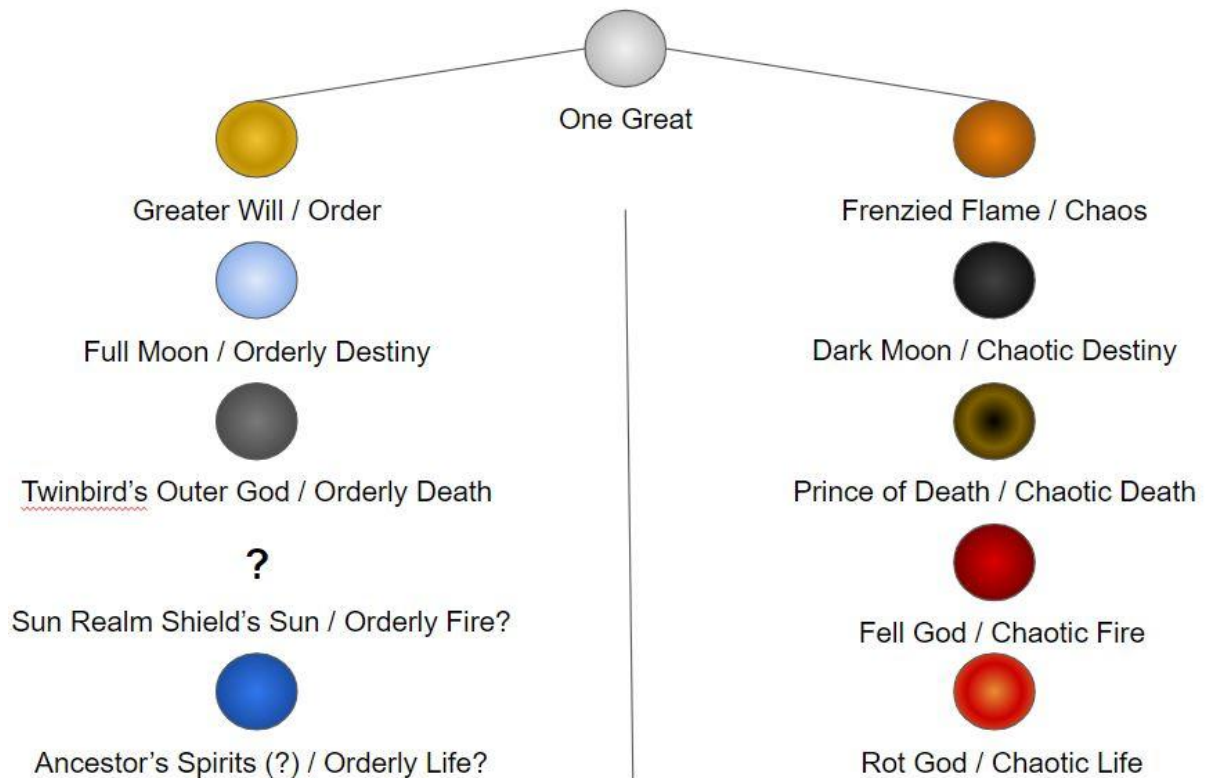
From this we don't only understand that there are indeed spirits that are “Lost in Death”, probably meaning outside the cycle of life of the Golden Order, but also that they are lost and without leadership for a very long time, which allow us to make the connection with the Rosus' Axe:

“Usher of Death, Rosus, who shows the path to the catacombs throughout the Lands Between, is depicted on this ritual axe. The dead easily lose their way, and have always been in sore need of a guiding hand.”

These last description makes me think that the Twinbird's Outer God isn't necessarily a god of Death like e.g. [Thanatos](#) but more a sort of [Psychopomp](#), meaning a divine being with the duty of guiding the dead to the afterlife like the well know Charon, Hermes and the Valkyries; or maybe a god of the Dead and the Underworld like [Hades](#). The introduction of the Golden Order probably left it “without a job” since the souls are now managed by the Erdtree, reason why its presence on the Lands Between is so weak.

I want to end this section with a more general discussion on a “gut feeling” I had while writing this. I want to specify that this isn't a theory, just something that I want to continue to observe because I've started to see a common thread. As we already seen a number of times pre-christian philosophies and religions had a strong dualistic symbology, which will later become a very important aspect of alchemy since it is the studying of the interaction between opposites. These opposites are represented ingame by the two fundamental concepts of Order and Chaos, the Greater Will and the Frenzied Flame. What we've also seen is that the Golden Order absorbed some of the practices

existing under a different Outer God in itself like the sacrificial practice of the Twinbird's Outer God, the Glintstone Sorceries of the Full Moon and the Lightning Incantations of the Dragons. I know I didn't speak of the Dragon Outer God; that's because there are no reasons to believe that there is one in the first place and because I have a personal theory which goes in another direction, which I won't discuss here. Returning on topic: we've also seen that the Golden Order hasn't incorporated the powers of other Outer Gods like the Rot one, the Formless Mother and the Fell God of the Fire Giants. All this has put a flea into my ear and I'm now starting to consider that there may be **2 different "aspects" of the power of all the Outer Gods**, one more Orderly and one more Chaotic. By this I don't mean that every Outer God has an opposite, but that its power can be used and manifested in 2 different ways, here's an image to make it more clear:



It is still a half backed idea, and in order to prove or dismiss it we'll need to understand what are Miquella's and the Formless Mother powers and also know more of the history of the Lands Between. Another good question could also be where the Black Flame is positioned in this scheme, of which I have no answer. What I find interesting though is where this idea leads: if we consider that "originally" everything was following the natural cycle and so was balanced and in harmony the fact that the Golden Order clearly separated these two aspects of the different powers may have lead to the more direct and violent manifestation on the chaotic ones. What I mean by this is: The power of the Death Prince would have manifested so violently, or in the first place, if the Golden Order hadn't meddled with the Rune of Death? Same question goes for the Rot and the natural cycle of death and rebirth and the power of the Fell God with the "draining" of the Sun. I personally believe that this was what lead to the period of stagnation in which the Lands Between are, the clear separation of opposites hindered the normal interactions between these natural powers and the consequent change they would have brought, the common Fromsoftware's theme that if you mess with the natural cycle things will start to go to shit.

- 4) The Primeval Current, the Lands Between and the Laws of the World WIP**
- 5) The Primordial Crucible and the Erdtree WIP**
- 6) The Elden Ring, the Order and the Curse WIP**
- 7) Elden Lord, Emphyreans and Vessels WIP**
- 8) Glintstone Sorceries, Incantations and Magic Stats WIP**
- 9) Ancient Civilizations and their architectures WIP**
- 10) Races, Factions and side Characters WIP**
- 11) Main Characters and their Motivations WIP**
- 12) The Cycle WIP**
- 13) Timeline and Plot WIP**
- 14) Endings WIP**

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