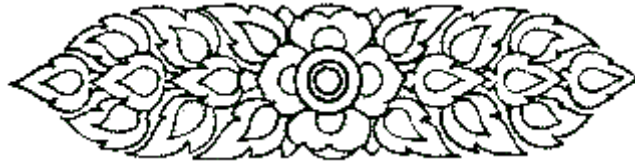


Chaos Theory is webcomic in works about re-imagining endurance and hope as concepts the most faraway from naïvety and passiveness.



the short way to put up Chaos Theory's premise is: A colonial nautical empire has been occupying the lands of – a yet unnamed – continent for about 150 years, although due to various political changes, their position on the global political arena is growing increasingly weaker. this poses danger to people native to the lands, as the fumbling economy makes it so the colonists exploit the peoples even more for easier gains, marking the boiling point for certain workers of the so called furnaces. as the nation that is unwilling to be a nation's independence movement is slowly being resurrected in quiet, they decide that it's better to die off fighting than crushed under a pale fist. and maybe, just maybe – they won't vanish in death and get out once and for all.

OUR GOALS –

i'm mostly focusing on how the colonial system exploits the environment, the people, and everything they have to offer. how, thorough history, similar the empires were, basing on aforementioned economic exploitation, and all the ways used to „legitimize“ it: pseudoscience, supremacy of one over another, invigilation of various systems, and how it influences each aspect in return. another thing i'm focusing on is how colonizers use religion as both a moral system, and as a justification for it – how something so hard to define can become a perfect tool of oppression.

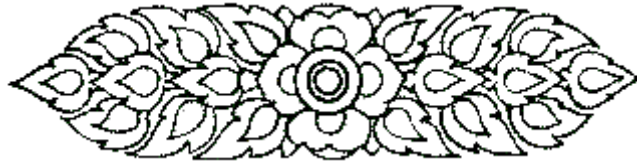
one of the methods we're using to showcase the treatment of the land is the placement (and intersection) of religion and technology on the continent, juxtaposing elements similar to both native cultures and the colonizers, and the way the latter manipulate this fact to their whim, justifying their occupation and racism — but we also want to show how many elements of this action unwrap themselves to be antithetical. language and what you do with it is important.

example: the colonists turned the continent into a singular state with centralised government, with the only official language in the sanctioned bureaucracy is the one native to the empire's core. the matters at hand are more complicated. the continent is multiethnic with cultures speaking languages of completely different origin and lack of mutual illegibility. the interactions between them, some hostile, some full of prosperity and mutual care, are based on eons of history, which cannot be changed in less than two centuries of an unitary state.

- **add-on:** obviously, a lot of cultures and ethnic groups ARE mutually legible and share common roots, but a lot of them do not. this ties into the fact there were at least three different early migration waves onto the continent, all of which



attributed to its cultural landscape, and the divergence of different ethnic identities. with long-term trading of resources, and with the development of technology, the communication between 'unrelated' cultures and cultural borrowings were a natural example of cause → effect.



WORLDBUILDING SNIPPET: RELIGION AND TECHNOLOGY

the place of technology on the continent is an important aspect of Chaos Theory. i don't have it outlined precisely, but its development on the continent specifically happened way back in comparison to our world. its exact origin is unknown to me – but i'm thinking of a weird conglomerate of war tech with toys for children being one of the contributors. as far as i know, it didn't develop in all cultures at once, rather it could had developed in just one, and then later spread throught the continent, or non-linearly in a few different ones, all for similar in-universe reasons.

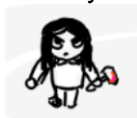
since it had developed early as a cultural process, the majority of people didn't really think of *owning* the land with machines, and the concept of technological and industrial development wasn't really a thing. on the other hand, it *does have* different schools of thought formed over time, so we will see.

i currently have a rather abstract view of technology and what it constitutes. for example, i haven't really sketched out how it contributed to the development of architecture and construction work – i've been mostly focused on more day-to-day stuff instead of buildings that can withstand millenia. this is definitely something i need to go back to, as it ties heavily to specific cultures with their ways of navigating their world.

the constructs themselves vary – from simple steam-powered, or water-powered, engines that serve as an independent mover for boats / canoes, or bigger ones that use the aforementioned engines, usually in shapes of various mythical creatures or humanoids. currently, they are mostly based off hephaestos' automatons – meaning that they are rather big and hefty, with a power supply that is not minimized, a simple anti-rust coating and engravings. this kind of automaton serves a spirituals purpose, taking part in different religious rites and festivities through handling certain kinds of incenses and tools (*thus, turning into a sort of keepers of them*) or performing simple, specific movements – no idea if actual programming and algorithms will become, by some twist of fate, a feature that has emerged. most likely it won't be the case.

though they are definitely the most noticeable ones (and, if we are talking in tourist's standard, „interesting“), they are also one of the least used. the aforementioned engines are much more common, as well as tools that use them, such as farming and irrigation tools that help to improve water quality.

one of the perks of early technology development is the increased accessibility of mobility aids than the one we know from... not only our history, but modern world, i think.



they aids close in their construction to our modern day ones, and besides having improved wheelchairs and prosthetics, there also braces that support weaker joints and muscle groups, and help to keep their condition from degrading, keeping it manageable.

→ **add-on:** we've been thinking about a very specialised type of a zoomorphic automaton that has been created to transport cargo, although i doubt it will exist, because... people are people, they like when things are easy, so they'll probably just make more advanced carts. i dunno. maybe that kind of construct could be used by some rather conservative / traditionalist sects for rites, which seems fitting.

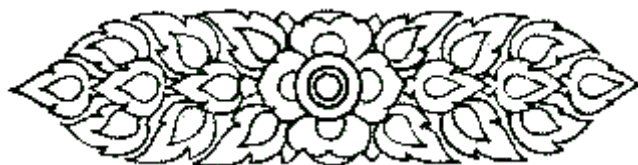
- **post-scriptum:** the development of chemistry, however, wasn't that intense. of course, it would be more advanced, as people had to figure out what concoctions helped to keep the metal in „good health“, but the pharmaceutical are pretty much non-existent, and medicine relies mainly on herbal remedies – although it is something i have yet to think about.
 - **another worldbuilding trivia** i'd like to mention is the fact that calling out that someone acts like a machine is not an equivalent of our world's rather ableist meaning. because of the fact no such thing as complex algorithms and cybernetics exist, the term means someone *very focused on doing a certain task, perceiving it as their duty* or, way more negatively, *a person in a powerful position, but a push-over and easy to manipulate in the end* – deriving from the fact machines need to be operated manually and lead on almost a leash: when to start, when to end, where to go.

as for **religions**, they are very varied, ranging from animism paired with ancestor worship, through polytheistic to nontheistic religious and philosophical systems, with everything in between. this is a fairly underdeveloped part of worldbuilding, as a good Chuck of the existing seedlings of the religions are in very broad strokes with very obvious allusions to buddhism, for example. the relationship with Earth and nature was, and still is, an important part of the religions – and although some of them have this one *really* dilluted, having become anthropocentric and looking at Earth through this lens, some put a much bigger emphasis on this. in their case, think of it as a belief / science / worldview venn diagram that's almost entirely overlapping. that's the thing with the word "religion"... from the anthropological stand point, this word is extremely complicated.

however.

the empire's religion is also about the relationship with Earth. they call it *reverance through transformation*.





THE FURNACES AND THE CARBON CHURCH

the idea for what would eventually become Chaos Theory came to me on 28th March 2022, and i used to call it "organic chemistry for a religion WIP" for a reason i will explain below.

as we have learned more about the history of chemistry, our initial concept turned out to be quite similar to the background of organic chemistry, so allow us to quote it. in nineteenth century, western chemists proclaimed that some amount of chemical compounds were dictated by the ineffable *vis vitalis* — a suspected characteristic of all living organisms. these specific chemical compounds were thought as only being able to be synthesised by, or inside, organisms: therefore, they were named *organic compounds*.

our idea is essentially what turned into the empire's religion over time. it has basically the same approach as this of 19th century scientist, and it essentially worships what is carbon.

with the exception of centering the ineffable *life force* in their worship, what Earth and other organisms can give them, and the energy flowing through people, a big part of the religion's philosophy is how constant self-improvement and not allowing inertia is the key. like how nature is constantly changing and consisting of various cycles, humans must do so too for their well-being. it is important that you incorporate the religion into your daily life, allow for the life force to flow through you, and embrace it.

this is where the Furnaces and the rest of the philosophy come in. because what is a better way of improving yourself than work? Furnaces are a *great place* that offers both job opportunities and religious spaces for the yet-misguided to find their place in the carbon religion. what is a better way of worshipping carbon than helping both yourself and the earth in a slightly changed form reach the goal of complete and higher transformation? what is better than sacrificing your body to it, so that the earth accepts the compounds you have borrowed so that they can be used by the future generations?

the future generations of white supremacy, that is...

the Furnaces are sometimes called places of resocialisation for a reason. the colonial police and various government organisations (*which is something i have to yet nail down – what kind of organisations, except maybe the police and the military? lower government officials in certain administrative regions? i don't know*) primarily to the people it deems as demoralised and often degenerates. age of the delinquent stops mattering when it comes to work.

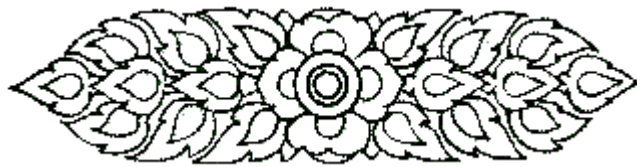
the Furnaces' role is to put these people „on the right life path”, and to show them how they can „better themselves through work to cooperate with their nation more smoothly from now



on". it kind of parallels how people with a criminal record are restricted in a lot of employment opportunities, among many other things. these places have started to be used and justified by the religion as well – they serve not only as a work environment, and practically always as a place to sleep too, but as a place for your spiritual development you ought to attend, because it's an opportunity not granted for people of the likes of you. it also provides as something alongside schools for children in the Furnaces.

missionary schools, that is.

there are different types of Furnaces, but all are called the same name, due to all the above, but also with how all the work here is connected and tied to progressive industrialisation (mining, smelting, metallurgy.. gotta work on expanding this with proper terms). this is one of the main factors that helped the workers so quickly unionise.



The Furnaces dig deep. But this is not for you to know now.

