

The Maygus: Reform, Ruin, and What Remains

Lore Article · History

Summary

A full account of the Maygus -- who they were, what they believed, how the Weohstannuk Empire fell, and what evidence suggests about the fate of their inner circle.

Who the Maygus Were

The Maygus were not, at their beginning, conspirators. This is the detail that makes them difficult to dismiss and their legacy difficult to assess cleanly. They were a faction of Imperial Advisors -- wizards and sorcerers serving the Weohstannuk Empire -- who had developed what they believed were genuinely better ideas about how the world should work. Their theories touched three areas: the practice of arcane magic, the structure of governance, and the nature of draconic power as a political and magical force.

On magic: the Maygus believed the Orders of Wizardry had become a regulatory body that served its own institutional interests more than the advancement of arcane knowledge. Their specific objection was not to regulation in principle but to the Renegade Policy's treatment of sorcerers -- particularly those with draconic bloodlines -- as inherently suspect. The Maygus argued that draconic-origin magic was not a corruption of proper arcane practice but a distinct and legitimate tradition that the Orders had suppressed for political rather than principled reasons.

On governance: the Maygus believed that the Weohstannuk Empire's power structure was too diffuse -- too dependent on the consent of factions (the Orders, the elves, the dwarven clans) whose interests frequently diverged from the empire's. They advocated for a more centralized model in which arcane expertise translated directly into political authority, and in which the Emperor's power was reinforced rather than balanced by the institutions around him.

On draconic power specifically: this is where the Maygus's theories became most distinctive and most dangerous. They argued that the Great Spirit Dragons' turn from protectors to overseers was not a corruption but a misapplication -- that the Dragons' impulse to guide mortal governance was correct, but that their method had been wrong. The Maygus believed that a mortal faction that understood draconic magic deeply enough could serve the same governing function the Spirit Dragons had attempted, without the Dragons' tendency toward coercive ideological certainty. In short: the Maygus wanted to do what the Spirit Dragons had tried to do, but better, and from inside mortal institutions rather than above them.

These ideas were not immediately catastrophic. They were articulate, internally consistent, and addressed real grievances that existed within the empire. The Maygus attracted followers not because they were obviously wrong but because they were not obviously wrong.

The Corruptor's Hand

Charoth the Corruptor's portfolio is the corrosion of good intentions -- the sincere reformer who becomes a tyrant, the movement for liberation that becomes an instrument of oppression. His most effective work is never done through obvious manipulation. It is done by finding ideals that are genuinely appealing and guiding their development, patiently and over years, toward conclusions their original proponents would have refused if shown them at the outset.

No document names Charoth as the architect of the Maygus. No surviving account of the Weohstannuk collapse identifies his influence explicitly. What the historical record shows is a pattern consistent with his methodology: a sincere reform movement whose ideas became progressively more radical over the course of a generation, whose definition of who counted as an obstacle to reform expanded incrementally until it encompassed most of the empire's stabilizing institutions, and whose inner circle ultimately embraced methods that its founding membership would have condemned. The Maygus began as reformers and ended having caused an ideological civil war that collapsed an empire. This is not what its founders intended. It is exactly what Charoth's influence tends to produce.

The Orders of Wizardry do not publish this theory. Individual senior Conclave members hold it privately. The reason it is not published is not that the evidence is insufficient -- it is that confirming Charoth's involvement would require acknowledging how thoroughly a sophisticated reform movement inside the most powerful human institution in history was redirected without anyone noticing. This is not a comfortable conclusion for an organization whose purpose is the vigilant regulation of magical power.

The Fall of the Empire

The empire did not fall to a coup. This is important and frequently misunderstood. The Maygus's theories spread through the Imperial Advisory structure, the court, and eventually parts of the military over the course of decades. The empire fractured along the fault line they created -- those who believed the Maygus's reforms were necessary and those who believed they were destabilizing -- and the fracture became irreconcilable before either side had fully understood what was happening. By the time the conflict was recognizable as a civil war, the empire's capacity to govern had already been hollowed out. What collapsed was not the result of a battle lost but of an institution that could no longer hold itself together.

The Maygus inner circle disappeared when the collapse became undeniable. This is documented.

The outer circle -- the followers, the sympathizers, the lower-ranking Advisors who had absorbed Maygus ideas without full knowledge of the inner circle's methods -- scattered. Some were absorbed into the successor factions that eventually became the Settled Lands' current political landscape. Others became what the bestiary catalogs as Maygus Thralls: individuals reshaped by exposure to the dark magic the inner circle had wielded, their will no longer their own, waiting for commands from masters whose continued existence is uncertain.

What Remains

The Maygus Thralls are the clearest evidence that something of the Maygus survives in the present. The magic that made them does not sustain itself passively -- it requires an ongoing source. Thralls that persisted for centuries after the empire's fall either have an active source maintaining them or were created by magic robust enough to outlast its maker by an extremely long time. The Orders regard both possibilities as equally concerning and have not published their assessment of which is more likely.

The inner circle's fate is not documented. They disappeared. Disappearance is not the same as death. Three outcomes are theoretically consistent with the available evidence: they died in the collapse without record; they went into hiding and have maintained that hiding for over three hundred years; or some combination -- some died, some survived, and those who survived are doing something with the time they have had.

In Year 2368 FW, Charoth the Corruptor is free. If the Maygus inner circle survives in any form -- diminished, hidden, waiting -- the release of the entity whose patient influence shaped their movement into what it became is not a neutral event for them. Whether that means they are potential allies against him, potential instruments of his renewed influence, or simply people who have had three hundred years to reconsider the choices that destroyed an empire is a question the historical record cannot answer.

The Orders know where to look for Thralls. They have been looking, with mixed results, since the empire fell. What they have not found is the source. This is either because there is no source remaining, or because whatever remains of the inner circle is better at hiding from the Orders than the Orders are at finding things that do not want to be found. Given that the inner circle spent decades operating inside the most heavily monitored institution in the Settled Lands without being identified, the second possibility should not be dismissed lightly.