

The “MAYBE” of Dwemer Culture (W.I.P)

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Unfortunately for the typical roleplayer or writer, especially those fascinated by the complex yet vague Dwemer lore, there isn't a lot of valid knowledge we can base our characters or stories around. The Dwemer may be the one of the most major lore figures in the Tes universe, yet we known near nothing about their society, culture and life. Or so we thought.

Yes, not much is known, but I would argue and say we do indeed know a lot more than what we think we do. The games and in-game books are filled with little, overseen hints about the past of the Dwemer. My goal is to put all of these underestimated and overseen pieces of lore on a pedestal, for all to see and use. While remembering that the purpose of this document is to point out the forgotten and overseen obvious, not to theorize, please do take all of what you are about to read with a grain of salt. Or even two.

Disclaimer: I am trying to keep this document within the realm of in-game evidence.

Enjoy.

SEXUALITY & MARRIAGE:

Sex:

In the Dwemer ruins of Bamz-Amschend, you can find a Dwemer tube and Oil (listed as "lubricant" in the Construction Set) on the side of a bed. This would prove that the Dwemer are indeed taking pleasure in sex (One could've previously argued that such beings would only view sex as a means of procreation). The lube laso indicates that the Dwemer practice circumcision, as there would otherwise be no need for lube, had they had their foreskin. Of course, that lube and the toys could also be for the female Dwemer, given that the "toys" are all hard metal, lube would be needed. Either way, both theories work.

Whether these theories are accurate or not, one thing is for certain: Dwemer enjoy sex.

Marriage:

We do not accurately know if the Dwemer practiced marriage, but in the book "The Dowry", part X of the series "Ancient Tales of the Dwemer", it is stated that marriage does indeed exist within Dwemer culture, and it is also not unheard of for a rich and/or influential father to choose the one his daughter will marry, often choosing other influential individuals.

One should keep in mind that the series is probably inaccurate fiction, but there exists the likely theory that Yagrurn Bagarn, a Dwemer, wrote the series under a different name, as all books can be found in his closet. If this were to be true, it's safe to assume he knew what he was writing about.

Prostitution:

There is the possibility that Bamz-Amschend, Hall of Wails -the same ruin mentioned above-, may have actually been a legal prostitution den. (Legal given the fact that Bamz-Amschend was a very important settlement, and it would make little sense for an illegal prostitution den to exist in plain sight). One could assume that, due to the fact that several "toys" and "lubricants" can be found within the ruin, mostly on bedsides, and as it is the only place in the game where such items can be found, it could perhaps mean that the Hall of Wails was specifically designed for this kind of entertainment. All in all, a big room filled with toys and lube in the middle of a ruin which used to be a meeting place for Dwemer councilors, sounds like a whorehouse for politicians.

Different sexualities:

Given the two factors that 1. The Dwemer *enjoyed* sexual pleasure and that 2. The Dwemer were quite the nihilistic race, seeing beyond foolish mortal beliefs, most likely making them a lot more open minded towards different ideas of pleasure, one could safely assume that all kinds of sexualities and perhaps even fetishes were accepted in Dwemer society.

CITY PLANNING:

Guards:

It is safe to assume that the main source of protection within the Dwemer cities and settlements were their Animunculi.

Functionality:

As seen in all Elder Scrolls games which feature Dwemer ruins, their cities were most likely built to be practical, rather than cozy. Although one can find basic quality of life items, such as beds and chairs, it is very safe to assume that functionality was put above cozyness.

Underground:

This one isn't really a spoiler, but I figured I would mention it anyways. Yes, while dwemer ruins are, well, underground ruins, they were most most likely built to function underground. The only parts of the old Dwemer settlements which poke out of the ground are either observatories or towers, which from the inside look a lot like guarding towers, rather than homes. There are also quite a lot of pipes poking out the ground, which look a lot like ventilations, as they have holes in them which lead to the underground.

Private Property:

Beds can be found literally everywhere, with no walls in between and seemingly randomly placed. There are absolutely zero indications that the Dwemer had private housing, in which they privately spent their free time.

ENTERTAINMENT:

Sex:

As I've mentioned above, sex has been proven to have been a source of entertainment for the Dwemer.

Reading:

Bummer. Yes, Dwemer loved to read. Most likely all Dwemer, not only the scholars. Their ruins are riddled with ruined books from their times.

Theater:

In TES V: Skyrim, Mzulft, there is a room which looks a lot like a theatre area. (Not talking about the classroom like area. I won't discuss that one as its purpose seems to be quite obvious).

Drinking:

In the book "Chronicles of Nchuleft", written by an Altmer who presumably witnessed the events of the book, drunk Dwemer are mentioned. This would indicate that Dwemer enjoyed alcoholic beverages.

Tourism & Traveling:

The book "Hanging Gardens", originally written in Dwemeris, then later translated to Aldmeris, speaks of one or more Dwemer following an Altmer "guide" through an Altmer city. The guide also showed the Dwemer some paintings and art. It is unlikely to assume this was a business meeting, seeing as the Dwemer and the Altmer had absolutely no political relationship to each other whatsoever. This would mean that it was most likely a simple tourism/traveling event, most likely for the sake of learning.

Others:

I could mention numerous different possible factors of entertainment for the Dwemer, such as Anumunculi building, writing, debating, et cetera, but all of these would be based entirely on assumptions, with little to no evidence to back it up. Still safe to assume they enjoyed these.

POLITICS:

Mentions of politics/titles in books (Cannot be talked about in great detail, as there is none):

-Lord / Protector / General / several mentions of “Councils” and “Councilors”. It isn’t much, but it gives us a slight but very much needed glimpse into Dwemer politics and some of the titles associated with it.

Gender equality:

The book “Chronicles of Nchuleft” talks about a respected, high ranking, influential, female Councilor. This does not prove entirely that males and females were treated exactly the same in Dwemer culture and society, but it does show us one piece of the puzzle.

Friendship:

Just a quick reminder that the Dwemer most probably viewed friendship as a mere business partnership, with one known rare exception: Dumac and Indoril Nerevar.

RELIGION:

The Gods of Reason and Logic:

Unfortunately we cannot accurately say whether these “Gods” are actual deities or mere metaphors, but given the in-game description reading “But our brethren, the Dwemer, scorned the Daedra, and mocked our foolish rituals, and preferred instead their gods of Reason and Logic”, it is safe to assume that they are a mere metaphor for what could possibly be mathematical and scientific equations. Note how the description very casually says “THEIR Gods”, implying that they are simply mere creations of the Dwemer. One could argue and say it is referring to the Anumidium, but is such a creation truly logical and reasonable? Maybe they talk about Magnus himself. Either way, it is unlikely that the Dwemer worshiped these “gods” ritualistically and religiously, but rather in a business kind of way.

Lorkhan:

If the book “On the Utility of Marbles and Needles”, yet again part of the “Ancient Tales of the Dwemer” series, is accurate, then the Dwemer have never actually worshiped Lorkhan. In the book, a Dwemer is mocking a Nord for “worshiping a God that not only does not exist, but who is also dead”.

ECONOMY:

Currency:

There isn't really a lot to say about this. It is common knowledge that the Dwemer had their own currency, namely coins. Quite heavy coins, making it a lot harder to carry around, which could either indicate that the value of one coin was quite high and that much could be bought using only a few coins, or that the Dwemer had more technologically advanced ways of safekeeping and trading their coins, influenced little by their weight.



Enchantments and/or curses could also be placed on these coins, as one of them summons a hostile Dwemer ghost, in TES III: Morrowind.

The design of the Dwemer coins is noticeably more simplistic and less round than the regular coins one would see in the present world (This has nothing to do with the aged 3D models of the game, as even regular Drakes are more round than that), and the markings on them seem to depict either a Dwemer face/helmet, or the Anumidium itself. The latter one is unlikely.

All I did here was point out the obvious, but that's the whole purpose of this document. Pointing out the forgotten and overseen obvious, not theorizing.

Oh, the ugly "maybe"...