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# **Baqnor (move from youth)**

This page describes one of the *Devotopai (Rituals)* of the *Poku Saeruo Degonjo*.

| Ritual name        | Baqnor          |
|--------------------|-----------------|
| Meaning            | move from youth |
| <b>Pronounced:</b> | băkh-nor        |

This is a Rite of Passage that all Qaktoro undergo at the age of 16. Prior to undertaking this ritual, the young Qaktoro is known as a *bagli* (child), and is not yet able to join a Sect.

#### Non-Qaktoro Baqnor

The ritual is optional for the other *Poku'vonai* who are not Qaktoro, though those who do not take and pass the ritual may be seen negatively by the society. Passage of the Baqnor is a sign that a member of the Clan is capable and strong, and ready to put the Clan before themselves. It would be unusual for any member of the Clan who has not passed the Baqnor to be accepted as a crewmember on a Clan ship, for instance. The Captain and crew would wonder whether that person can be trusted, because they have not yet been tested in the ways of their people.

Tula, Tuoro, Qakla, the Niko Yârme, and even immigrants of other species may take the Baqnor. The nature of the tests are adjusted by the Kavoráy Rây'ai Jael (Oath Binders Sect) so that they remain an appropriate challenge to those taking the test.

### **The Tests**

During this ritual, an applicant must pass a test from each of the *Jaeli (Sects)*. Members of the Kavoráy Rây'ai Jael (Oath Binders Sect) oversee the tests. The tests are not necessarily given in the same order every time, though the Test of Faith is always the last.

- 1. Test of Lore and History (*Kyn Lumu'ai Jael (Lore Keepers Sect)*) The individual must pass a test of their knowledge of Kyn'ka (History) and basic clan law.
- 2. Test of Weapons (*Tavi Fua Jael (Blood Tooth Sect)*) a member of this clan tests the individual's ability with Qaktoro personal weapons.
- 3. Test of Proficiency (*Otâmovi Wiy Jael (Silver Moon Sect*)) The individual has to pass a series of challenges involving current clan technology.
- 4. Test of Patience (*Veltin Usapo Jael (Swift Knife Sect)*) The individual is taken to the The Preserve, or a similar controlled environment. Once there, the subject is given three items: a knife, a length of rope and flask of water. They must travel a proscribed distance within 24 hours while tracking and killing a specified animal along with way.
- 5. Test of Faith (*Detis Goa'ai Jael (Faith Walkers Sect*)) The last challenge is a test of endurance.

#### **Failure**

An applicant who has performed poorly enough in one or more of the tests may be determined by the Kavoráy Rây'ai Jael (Oath Binders Sect) to have failed their Baqnor. It is a rare event for a Qaktoro to fail the Baqnor, but it does happen occasionally. Traditionally, a Qaktoro fails to pass the Baqnor has two choices: they may undergo reproductive sterilization, or undergo *Sou Fofi (Cleansing Death)*. A sterilized Qaktoro is not necessarily viewed with shame, but instead with a kind of pity; they can live a life of quiet service to the Clan, despite their failure. If a member of the other *Poku'vonai* fails the Baqnor, they will forever be seen as inferior to the Qaktoro.

## **Passing**

The family and House of the *Poku'vonai* passing the test are notified as quickly as possible, so that the news may be spread to all who know the applicant. After passing the Baqnor, the applicant may choose to join a Sect. Some Sects have been known to actively pursue particularly promising people who have passed their Baqnor, but only after the Baqnor has been formally passed.

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