

# Râyjo Vonai (Bound People)

The [Poku Saeruo Degonjo](#) practices a form of [Slavery](#). The Clan refers to its form of slavery by the term *râyjo vonai*, meaning *bound people*. This is because the subject is bound to the person who 'holds their bindings'; this person is called The Rây'a (*binder*).

## Becoming Bound

Most Bound People in the clan were once prisoners who were captured in battle under the [Ra-alu Jyaon \(Prisoner Rules\)](#). Warriors of the Clan often ask prisoners if they would elect to become Bound People, rather than the alternatives. It is notable that these alternatives often include execution, abandonment on an uncivilized world, or a ransoming back to a faction that may not care to pay for their release.

Individuals wishing to become members of the Clan sometimes begin the process by becoming Bound. This was the case for the [Nekovalkyrja Kohaku Syali](#), who was found adrift in a lifepod by the Clan and who requested that she become a Bound Person as a path to joining the Clan society. Many of the [NMX Nekovalkyrja](#) recovered from [Âmuar \(Dream\)](#) began their life in the Clan as Bound People, and later became the [Niko Yârme](#) minority.

Those becoming bound swear an oath of service to the person who is to hold their bindings. The binder, similarly, swears an oath to treat the bound person with care and respect.

## Status of Bound People

Slaves are not treated as property under the Bound People system, and they cannot be bought, sold, or traded for other slaves. It is notable that prisoners captured in a battle can be ransomed; this practice is allowed under the prisoner rules, but once a prisoner is made into one of the bound people, selling them is forbidden. The Bound Person's actions reflect upon the Binder, and the Binder is accountable for the slave.

## Transferring Control

The control over a Bound Person *can* be transferred, but only in specific circumstances. If the holder of the bindings (the Binder) becomes ill or dies, the control over the bound person is given to an appropriate member of their [Punla \(Family\)](#).

## Freedom

A Binder may voluntarily release a bound person from bondage at any time, but the Binder remains

criminally responsible for illegal acts taken by the freed person for a period of six months after the release is announced. Most Bound People who are released in this manner become [Retainers](#). In most cases, they become a retainer of the family of the binder, but some bound people form connections with other families, and their wish to become a retainer for that other family is granted upon their release. This formerly Bound Person may attempt and hopefully pass the [Baqnor \(move from youth\)](#), if they have not done so already prior to becoming Bound.

Alternately, a Bound Person may, while still bound, attempt the Baqnor. Binders may not prevent their Bound Persons from the attempt, though they are obligated to explain the ritual in full, and are honor-bound to assist the Bound Person in studying. A Bound Person who passes the Baqnor is immediately freed, and further meets the Clan's definition of a Citizen as per their [Codex of Clan Law](#).

## Failing the Baqnor

[Râyjo Vonai \(Bound People\)](#) who are freed, even if they are Qaktoro who have not passed the Baqnor already, have a unique rule applied to them when they attempt the Baqnor. Former bound people who fail the tests are *not* required to commit [Sou Fofi \(Cleansing Death\)](#). Only formerly bound Qaktoro who had not already passed the Baqnor would then be obligated to be sterilized. After this failure of the Baqnor, former bound people are permitted to live as a retainer, but they would not have clan status.

## Cultural Beliefs About This Practice

The making of a Bound Person is considered to be a way of honoring a defeated opponent who fought well. Normally, the person taking the slave would see some sort of potential in the person being bound, or they may feel compassion for their situation, and believe that ransoming a prisoner would lead to their being harmed.

## Unique Instances of Bound People

A few historical instances of the Bound People practice are notable:

### Niko Yârme (Free Neko)

A portion of the former [NMX Nekovalkyrja](#) of the planet [Âmuar \(Dream\)](#) were made Bound People, as part of their transition into Clan society. These Nekos passed the baqnor, and became the [Niko Yârme \(Free Neko\)](#) under the Clan.

### Bound Clones of the Weakening

During the events of the [Niumte \(Weakening\)](#) in 537 CY ([YE -182](#)), the Clan created [Qaktoro](#) clones in

order to keep their society functioning, and to help the Qaktoro repopulate. These clones were made Bound People upon their creation. When the crisis passed, the clones were permitted to undergo the [Baqnor \(move from youth\)](#) and become citizens. Others chose to remain Bound and live out their lives.

## The Clone Descendants

Many now-living members of the Clan are descendants of these clones, and are sometimes viewed as bearing unique souls because of this ancestry. Religious philosophers debate whether the clones all had the same soul of the being from which they were copied. Some wonder whether the descendants of clones are spiritually diluted, and view Clone Descendants with suspicion. Others see the role of the Qaktoro clones during the weakening as a heroic one, and celebrate Clone Descendants as carrying on a tradition of service to the Clan. The perspective a Clan individual has on the Clone Descendants varies, and not every individual Descendants knows, or is willing to reveal, their unique ancestry.

## Violating Bound People Rules

Anyone mistreating any Bound Person is subject to punishment under Clan law, and their actions shame their family and House. Any conspiracy involving the illegal transfer or sale of bound people is severely punished. The act of binding a person is meant to be an honorable state by which a person who is not of the Clan can, potentially, complete a term of service and become a Poku'vonai.

## OOC Notes

- Article created by [Nashoba](#). Updated by [Hollander](#).

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