

Baqnor (move from youth)

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

Ritual name	Baqnor
Meaning	move from youth
Pronounced:	băkh-nor

This is a  **Rite of Passage** that all **Qaktoro** are culturally obligated to undergo at the age of 16, and which other species of the Clan may optionally undertake. Prior to undertaking this ritual, a young Qaktoro is known as a *baqli* (child). Beings who are adults and who have not passed the Baqnor do not meet the Clan's definition of a Citizen, as per their **Codex of Clan Law**, though there are exceptions to this requirement in that law.

The Ritual 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. 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.

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, including **Veltin-daho'te (Knife Fighting)**.
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.

Passing the Tests

The Family and House of the person passing the test are notified as quickly as possible, so that the news may be spread to all who know the applicant. The Clan at large is notified of the event through the **Kinfemy Poku Kyn (Clan Lore Network)**, so that distant relatives and far-away friends can be made aware. After passing the Baqnor, the applicant may immediately 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. Sect membership is one of the signs of passage of the Baqnor, and it

would be seen as unusual for a young adult who has passed their Baqnor to delay their joining a Sect.

Members of the Clan who have passed the Basic Training of their Sect wear an [Honor Crest](#) in that Sect's colors. This Crest is a clear indicator that a young Qaktoro has passed their Baqnor.

[Râyjo Vonai \(Bound People\)](#) who pass the tests earn their freedom and citizenship immediately.

Failing the Tests

For Qaktoro and for much of Clan society, the attention and cultural importance placed on the passage of the Baqor makes it a tremendously stressful period for the person attempting the test. Even a Baqli who is well-prepared may worry that the challenge will be adjusted too far in difficulty, and may prove insurmountable. Further, the prospect of failure would be terrifying to most young people. The consequences of failure include not only a possible loss of reputation for the applicant's Family and House, but a terrible choice in the aftermath.

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. Upon the declaration of failure, the Family and House of the person passing the test are notified, and news of the failure is transmitted through the [Kinfemy Poku Kyn \(Clan Lore Network\)](#).

Traditionally, a [Qaktoro](#) child who fails to pass the Baqnor is given two choices: they may undergo reproductive sterilization performed by a [Doctor](#), or they may choose to undergo [Sou Fofi \(Cleansing Death\)](#), which is a cultural form of ritualistic suicide. 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, but they are not allowed to join a Sect or serve as a crewmember on any Clan ship. Either of these paths, sterilization or ritual suicide, is an act meant to remove the taint of shame and lost reputation that might otherwise be suffered by the Family and House of the person who failed the ritual.

Non-Qaktoro and the Ritual

The Baqnor ritual is not obligatory for the children of non-Qaktoro species who are themselves members of the Clan. However, any member of a species above the age of 16 who are part of the Clan but who have not passed the ritual are seen negatively by the society. Only those who have passed the Baqnor may join a Sect, and work performed for a Sect is seen as work that furthers the goals of the Clan. 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 and to be trusted in dangerous situations. Neglecting to attempt the ritual, or worse, *failing* the ritual, implies that the individual is incapable and weak, and unworthy of trust.

[Qakla](#) children may experience more pressure to attempt the Baqnor if their parents wish for them to embrace the [Qaktoro](#) side of their heritage. The [Niko Yârme](#), who are seen as powerful warriors, are fully expected to attempt and pass the Baqnor. The [Tula](#) and [Tuoro](#), given the status of their species in the Clan's culture, receive little societal pressure to attempt the Baqnor; they are first given the option to

attempt the Baqnor at age 13. Other alien species who are part of the Clan may also avoid the Baqnor, but the reduced social status may be a factor in the esteem they may be able to achieve in the Clan. Immigrants of any adult age who are joining the Clan may find it prudent to go through this ritual, so that they may be fully accepted by society.

Non-Qaktoro Failure

If a non-Qaktoro fails the Baqnor, they will forever be seen as inferior to the [Qaktoro](#). There is no esteem or pride in having at least attempted the Baqnor if the result was failure. Only passage of the Baqnor confers any particular respect. Non-Qaktoro of any other alien species are not expected to be sterilized or to undergo the Cleansing Death. They are allowed to simply walk away. No one may attempt to retake 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.

Citizens of Foreign Governments and the Ritual

Aliens who are citizens of other governments may attempt the Baqnor, but there is a process in place. The Applicant, who is the citizen who wishes to attempt the ritual, must first have an individual Sponsor of some esteem among the Clan who has themselves passed the ritual. The Sponsor presents the intended Applicant to the Sponsor's House. The [Speaker of the House](#) must accept or decline to take the Applicant to the next step. That next step involves the Speaker and the Sponsor bringing the Applicant to the [Kavoráy Rây'ai Jael \(Oath Binders Sect\)](#), who themselves have a right to accept or deny the application.

If all those groups agree, the applicant may attempt the ritual. The Clan, notably, does not require proof that the applicant has secured the permission of their government to attempt the ritual.

Prudent Sponsors inform the Applicant of the dangers of the Baqnor, and train the Applicant appropriately.

Such individuals who pass the Baqnor under these circumstances are not made members of the Clan by default, though the offer will most certainly be made.

Rights of Those Who Have Not Passed

Though optional, there are consequences to not passing the Baqnor in Clan society.

- Not a Citizen - According to the [Codex of Clan Law](#), the definition of a Citizen includes the passage of the Baqnor.

- Cannot Join A Sect - Only those who have passed the Baqnor may join a Sect, whether Qaktoro or not. An individual who is not part of a Sect does not have access to a major part of the Clan social structure.
- Unlikely to Marry a Qaktoro - Those who fail or have never attempted the Baqnor can still legally marry, but Qaktoro and possibly even some Tula are unlikely to marry individuals who have not passed the Baqnor. Given the Qaktoro majority in Clan society, and given their dominance in the direction of the Clan and its culture, not being married to a Qaktoro can be an impediment to one's ambitions in the Clan.
- Very Unlikely to Serve on Starships - [Starship Commanders](#) are very unlikely to accept an applicant who has not pass their Baqnor. Serving on a starship in any capacity is an honorable and praiseworthy step in the life of a member of the Clan.

Individuals who have not passed the Baqnor, or who fail it, may still marry, vote as a part of their Family in the [Vonai Jodau Tajo System](#), and own property.

OOO Notes

- Article by [Nashoba](#), updated by [Hollander](#).

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