

Reject Yinrih. Return to Tree-Dweller

The Atavists are a diverse collection of related ideologies that encompass the idea of going back to nature. The original, and most extreme, Atavist group believes that sapience is a curse and wishes to be rid of it. This group is opposed to the Bright Way, as they reject the Bright Way's belief that sapience is a divine gift. Their reasoning is pretty simple: animals aren't gnawed by existential dread, and they don't set up impossible moral standards for themselves and then beat themselves up for not living up to them.

Neo-shamanism also falls under the Atavist umbrella, and they in turn have a number of subdivisions. Some Neo-shamanists still consider themselves Wayfarers, but lead a primitive lifestyle, often living in steadtrees as hunter-gatherers as the tree-dwellers do, while their hearthkeepers tend open bonfires rather than star hearths. Others see themselves as radical traditionalists, rejecting the monotheism of The Bright Way and attempting to reconstruct the primitive animism the yinrih practiced before the Theophany. It's possible that one of these groups ended up as the Machine Cult that formed on Newhome. But the majority of yinrih who self-identify as Neo-shamanists merely put on the trappings of primitive religion as a lifestyle choice without considering the strict personal moral code imposed by the yinrih's primal religion. In particular, intoxication was severely punished in the early days, as a drunk yinrih was at best dead weight to the rest of the group, and at worst actively dangerous. Modern trendy Neo-shamanists not only ignore this rule, they incorporate drug use into their rituals.

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