

Teenage Wasteland

This is another post open to suggestions and critique.

The childermoot is the basic reproductive unit in society. It consists of between 2 to 12 breeding individuals. That number must be equally divided among males and females for a viable womb-nest to form. The childermoot is itself a member of a larger troop/pack/skulk/IDK what the proper collective noun for monkey foxes should be.

The responsibility of raising pups is largely confined to the childermoot they were hatched into, but pups gradually gain more presence in the wider community as they get older. Upon reaching sexual maturity, adolescents are ejected from their childermoot as an inbreeding prevention mechanism. They join an interstitial "teenage wasteland" of maids and bachelors that receives little to no help from the established community in order to encourage them to establish a childermoot of their own. They compete and cooperate amongst themselves as the situation dictates. This second layer of uncommitted but sexually mature adults flows more seamlessly between adjacent territories, although things stay largely "in house".

Adolescent males engage in activities that are considered taboo for established males, such as raiding rival territories and, at least among tree dwellers, killing and cannibalizing their members.

New childermoots form out of this more nomadic layer of society. The new moot will attempt to join an established territory, usually the one that the majority of parents come from. This is done by currying favor with the patriarchs, a group of the oldest males in the territory.

Once the pups are raised, the moot disperses but the individuals remain part of the wider territory, acting as mentors for younger members. The oldest males among these empty-nesters become patriarchs.

The role of shaman is completely absent among tree dwellers, and shows up among the yinrih along with the transition from territory marking to true written language as the yinrih cross the threshold of reflection. Shamans form a female counterpart to male patriarchs. Tree dwellers do not have control over fire, which also shows up alongside writing among the yinrih. Evidence suggests that males may not have known, or been allowed to, start or tend fires, meaning the roots of the Bright Way's monopolies run very deep indeed.

Females, especially empty-nesters, among both tree dwellers and pre-sapient yinrih are responsible for foraging. Zoopharmacognosy behavior is found here, which is how the healers get started. It's likely that the greater knowledge of plant life among females is what allowed them to discover how to control fire as well.

Male empty nesters go on defense against attacking adolescent males from other territories. Sires with developing womb-nests are responsible for guarding their gestating offspring from both

overaptors and rival males from other groups.

So in summary, you can divide primitive monkey fox society into two groups: a sedentary society of childermoots and empty-nesters, and a nomadic society of newly mature males and females seeking to establish a childermoot of their own.

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