

The Shakeoff

It should not be surprising that the yinrih attempted spaceflight long before they fully understood what was required to put a person in space and bring them back alive. It wasn't as though Wayfarers didn't conduct experiments and unmanned trials, but they were much more willing to take very big chances, make a lot of mistakes, and get very, very messy.

Unpowered flight was the first step toward the starry firmament. Early vulpithecine attempts at flight used hot air and later hydrogen balloons to reach the upper atmosphere, with many aeronauts dying of exposure. As the Claravian understanding of celestial mechanics improved, balloons gave way to manned projectiles (and no, I don't mean rockets, think giant bullets), with an exponential increase in the number of Wayfarers happily making the ultimate sacrifice to get a little closer to fulfilling the Great Commandment. These brave souls are known in English as the Cannonized Martyrs.

While science progressed at a (literal) breakneck speed thanks to these monkey foxes tossing themselves into the air with reckless abandon, the fact that they had yet to achieve their goal of leaving Yih's atmosphere caused some yinrih to question the wisdom of the Bright Way's actions, and eventually, the Bright Way itself. It is at this point in yinrih history that we see the first Neoshamanists and Atavists emerge in a movement known in Commonthroat as the `rpsKjHGp` (literally an act of shaking dust or water from ones fur). With no shortage of resource rich virgin territory remaining on Yih, these heretics simply struck out on their own rather than remain among their former coreligionists.

After some introspection, the Bright Way concluded that they were perhaps a bit too careless with the lives of Wayfarers, and subsequently to the Shakeoff, research monasteries dedicated more manpower to making sure test subjects walked away with their legs and tails intact, albeit with no shortage of singed fur. While their approach to crew safety would still make any NASA scientist balk, there were a lot fewer maroon splatters on the ground.

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