

Primer on Quetzal

Dr. Tobias Funke, Max Plank Institut für Xenobiologie Göttingen
Rynem Thriem, former Sovereign of Thriem

This paper is a primer on the 'Quetzal', an alien species originally indigenous to the forth planet of the 61 Virginis system, Cterin.

Introduction

Appearance

Figure 1: Artistic image of a Quetzal



The Quetzal are serpentine in appearance with a body length of ten to fifteen meters and possess two

pairs of arms. Parts of their bodies are covered by multicolored feathers, especially the upper pair of arms, giving them the appearance of wings, the head and a tuft of bright and especially colorful feathers located at the end of their tails.

Their heads, about one half meter in length, closely resemble that of cobras with the shield being replaced by a crest of very colorful and individually colored feathers.

The upper pair of arms is located about one to one and a half meters away from the head with the second pair another thirty to fifty centimeters below the first set of arms. The upper pair of arms is about one and a half meters in length ending with long fingered six digit hands. Each digit is topped by a claw, making them very useful for hunting and fighting. The lower arms are half the length of the upper arms, ending in finer digits that are perfect for fine manipulation and the use of tools.

Biology

The Quetzal are distinctly non human life forms and have evolved on a world with three distinct genesis events and 'Trees of Live'. The Quetzal belong to the Quetzal 'Animal kingdom' which is primarily made up by one of the 'Trees of Live'.

Their average life expectation of the Quetzal is Earth 92 years.

The Quetzal are omnivores, however they prefer a largely carnivorous diet. Next to their stomachs, a liver like organ is the main part of their digestive tract. This organ is essentially a biologic chemical factory able to break down any food they digest and turn it into material their body can make use of. This is because their home world had not only one, but three genesis, leading to three different types of different forms of life with different biologies to co-evolve into a single biome (*1*).

Procreation

The Quetzal do not have genders in the sense as humans know it. Rather they are commonly gender neutral and only develop male or female gender specifics during a special time two years. The selection of the gender for each cycle is random and can not be manipulated. It is possible to suppress the mating season through herbal and chemical needs, as well as the permanent surgical removal of the dormant sexual organs.

The gender of each Quetzal stabilizes within about two weeks, before they fall into a form of mating frenzy. Males and females can mate with up to one hundred different partners within two days. After these two days the males immediately return to the neutral forms, while the females begin to generate up

to fifty eggs. These eggs are then laid into prepared containers where they are incubated. In the past the incubation happened in prepared piles of foliage, where the warmth of rotting warmed the eggs.

Only about twenty five eggs hatch after two month, and only up to eight hatchlings survive their first weeks. This is not seen as a problem by the Quetzal as any more surviving hatchlings would have lead to overpopulation on their home world.

Life stages

Life stage	From (age)	To (age)	Duration (years)
Hatchling	0	3	3
Youngling	3	14	11
Adult	14	54	40
Elder	54		

Hatchling

Shortly after hatching, a Quetzal hatchling largely is a creature of instincts, left over from earlier stages of Quetzal evolution. Here, they are largely capable of living independent and are able to hunt and feed for themselves. A hatchling only slowly develops a consciousness and only after about three years reaches the next stage of life.

It is of note that only about ten to twenty percent of all hatchlings survive the hatchling stage. In some cases diseases, parasites or birth defects lead to death. In others accidents are to blame. Additionally the hatchling is cannibalistic in this life stage and it is possible that one hatchling hunts down and consumes another hatchling.

Physically a hatchling grows to five times its original size, from a length of about 30 centimeters to about 150 centimeters, though the head grows to nearly its full final size.

Adult Quetzal do not form emotional attachments to their hatchlings and they are no negative emotional impacts on the death of one or more hatchlings.

Youngling

After about three years a Quetzal hatchlings enters the Youngling stage, where they have developed a working consciousness. A Younglings mind slowly develops more or less along the line of a human child, while they grow to the adult size.

Adult

Once a Quetzal takes part in the first mating cycle around the age of 14 years, they enter the Adult stage.

Elder

Any Quetzal can take part in up to 20 mating cycles, before a hormonal change causes their bodies to resorb their sexual organs.

Society/Sociology

While the Quetzals evolutionary ancestors have initially been solitary omnivores with a carnivore bias, they have developed into social animals during their evolution. This resulted into the development of large clan like family structures, called Vorem, that can have up to 2000 members, but have usually about 250 members.

In a traditional Vorem, the Elders are for the most part charged with looking after the Hatchlings and raising the Younglings, while the Adults are responsible for providing for the Vorem by plying various trades. These traditional Vorem usually live in a single building complex which has been equivalent to towns during the Quetzal Stone ages. Trade between these small towns also involved exchanging members of the Vorem itself.

In the Quetzal early Bronze age these small towns grew to contain multiple Vorem and these started to specialize towards one or two trades, like metal working, farming or trading. Since then Merchant Vorem have become among the largest of the Vorem, spread out over multiple building complexes and multiple towns or cities.

The rather high reproduction rate of the Quetzal results in population pressure from overpopulation and diminishing natural resources, forced the development of towns and cities, which in turn lead to the formation of nations, which are traditionally seen as larger versions of the traditional Vorem.

Biologically the Quetzal possess what is called 'stepped survival instinct' (SSI), which in turn has effects on their society. In essence this can be simplified as following in order of importance:

1. Survival of the Quetzal
2. Survival of the Nation
3. Survival of the City/Town
4. Survival of the Vorem

5. Survival of the Individual

Additionally a Quetzal will freely give his life to protect his Vorem, a Vorem will accept destruction to protect its town or city, a city will do its best to protect its nation. In the end result it meant that all nations were willing to accept destruction to protect some fleeing Vorem as it meant that the Quetzal as a whole would survive.

The SSI, in combination with the traditional Vorem, leads to the Quetzal being a collectivist society. National governments have usually used these traits to reduce population pressure by declaring wars on other nations, partly to decrease the number of Adult and Elder Quetzal, which in turn reduced the number of Hatchlings and Younglings, as well as taking over new resources and fertile lands.

Also due to the SSI, there are no effective civilians among the Quetzal and the entire population of a town, down to Younglings, will try to fight off any invading force, more often than not resulting in the destruction of the entire population than not.

Technology Level

Quetzal technology is more advanced than Earth technology (2150) by at least fifty years. While they do possess an advanced FTL drive, most other technologies are simply more advanced versions of already existing technologies.

From what is known of their ships, they are/used to be generally of utilitarian shape with only a minimum of differences between the designs, depending on the nature of their construction.

Unique Technologies

Due to the population pressure, the Quetzal have begun to develop technologies to establish ocean going towns and cities during the early Iron Age and refined them since then. This led to the establishment of purely ocean going nations living off fishing, deep sea resource extraction and trade.

Government

Over the course of Quetzal history, the Quetzal have developed almost the same governmental structures that have been developed by humanity, though their more collectivist nature as well as their survival drive lead to a socialist bias in Quetzal politics.

Religion

Quetzal religion is largely a result of the Quetzal biology and the existence of a soul is taken as a given. The high mortality rate of Hatchlings and the high percentage of infertile eggs lead to developing the more or less general believe that the number of souls is limited. While souls are limited in number, new souls do get born, but need to 'mature' by being born again and again, with the 'immature soul' being unable to keep the body alive. Only when a Quetzal survives to become a 8 year old Youngling, the soul is seen as fully 'mature'. This in turn means that reincarnation is accepted as being normal.

For the most part Quetzal religions are polytheistic in nature with only two monotheistic religions. Another single religion does has no deities at all.

Quetzal on Earth

At least three Quetzal have been confirmed to have been on Earth around 1000 BC.

The first one, named Quetzalcoatl (actually a military rank similar to NATO OF-1), crashed down near the Mexican coast in a lifeboat and survived for at least thirty years, being worshiped as a god by the Olmecs in the area.

The second one, only known as the Imperial Dragon, crashed down in China and was then taken as the Qin as a prisoner, before managing to become the advisor of the Qin Emperor. He lived for at least twenty years. From his dictionaries, taken in Qin Chinese, he used to be a deckhand on his ship, responsible for maintaining shuttle craft and lifeboats.

A third Quetzal has landed in Germany, where he his is spacecraft in a cave in the Drachenfels, near Bad Honnef. He was eventually killed by a human in the area, which somehow collapsed the cave. The scene is repeatedly compared to the 'Nibelungenlied'.

It is possible that other Quetzal have survived the destruction of their ship near Earth and made it to our planet in their lifeboats. The Japanese Naga myth could be related to the Quetzal.

References and Notes

1. Tobias Funke and Rynem Thriem. Cterin biological wonders. *Public Library of Science*, January 20, 2156.